P.S. to the NEWS
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INNOVATIVE IDEAS FOR STATE LEGISLATURES

A 1980 Source Book of suggested state legislation, including drafts of statutes, has just been published by the American Legislative Exchange Council, a non-partisan forum for the exchange of innovative and constructive ideas for state legislators.

It includes several proposals for state constitutional amendments to limit taxes, spending or debt. Under the Tax Limitation Amendments, the tax revenue limit is set at between 6 and 14 percent of the total annual personal income in the state. Under the Spending and Debt Limitation Amendments, the growth of state spending is limited by the requirement that the state can exceed the spending limit only by a 2/3rds vote of the legislature.

The Death Tax Reform Act would limit the estate tax paid to the state upon a person's death to the maximum credit for payment of state taxes allowed against the Federal estate tax. This would remedy much of the injustice which results when survivors are forced to sell family property in order to pay taxes based on inflated dollar values.

The More American Energy Program is a series of 30 private-enterprise legislative suggestions to provide incentives for energy production and conservation through state tax code revisions and government reforms. Those recommendations provide property tax incentives, sales tax incentives, personal income tax incentives, corporate tax incentives, and reduced regulatory incentives to reward individuals and businesses which invest in America's energy future.

The Sagebrush Rebellion Act establishes a mechanism for the transfer of millions of acres of public lands from the federal government to the states. The federal government owns an average of 50% of the land in 13 western states, much of it containing vast energy and mineral resources. Restrictive federal land policies deny multiple use of must of this land and prevent development of 84% of our proven and projected oil reserves, 72% of shale oil reserves, and 37% of natural gas reserves.

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The Washington, D.C. Amendment Rejection Resolution provides state legislatures with a formal method of voicing their reasons for rejection of the proposed constitutional amendment which would (if ratified by 38 states) entitle Washington, D.C. to elect two U.S. Senators and one or two U.S. Congressmen. Previous to this rejection resolution procedure, state legislatures had no formal method of relaying their objections to the U.S. Congress.

The Crime Victims Compensation Act sets up Crime Victims Compensation Boards to hear claims and make monetary awards to innocent persons who suffer catastrophic loss as a result of violent crime. Some 20 states have established compensation programs.

The Senior Citizen Protection Act is designed to reduce crimes against the elderly by requiring greater prison sentences for persons convicted of such crimes. Senior citizens are the most frequent victims of mugging, purse-snatching, pickpocketing, and fraud, and the effects of such crimes fall disproportionately on the elderly.

The Enterprise Zone Act establishes a mechanism for coping with urban decay by removing governmental obstacles and disincentives to entrepreneurial activity. Among the techniques are a system of phasedin property taxes, removal of wage and price regulations, and the sale of state and local property to private interests.

The Honor America Act requires that all public school students recite the Pledge of Allegiance during each school day. The Voluntary School Prayer Resolution urges the U.S. Congress to propose a constitutional amendment authorizing the states to enact legislation permitting voluntary nondenominational prayer in public schools.

The Student Freedom of Choice Act would prohibit the collection of mandatory student activities fees in state-operated colleges and universities. These fees force students to support speakers, publications, and activities they disapprove of (such as political candidates, funded abortions, and pornographic and radical newspapers).

This Source Book is the third annual volume of suggested state legislation published by the American Legislative Exchange Council, and far and away the best. Copies may be obtained at $6.50 from Miss Kathleen Teague, Executive Director, American Legislative Exchange Council, 418 C Street, N.E., Suite 200, Washington, DC 20002.

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