

Congratulations to the 2024 BILLD class of legislators

For the 29th year, The Council of State Governments' Midwestern Legislative Conference provided leadership training to its members and affiliate members: legislators from 11 states, the Canadian province of Saskatchewan and three Canadian affiliate provinces. The MLC congratulates all of the members of this year's Bowhay Institute for Legislative Leadership Development (BILLD) class and is pleased to recognize them in this publication. The intensive, five-day institute is held annually in Madison, Wis. It helps newer legislators develop the skills necessary to become effective leaders, informed decision-makers and astute policy analysts. This year's Fellows join nearly 1,000 current and former legislators who have graduated from the program. Many BILLD alumni have gone on to become top legislative leaders and to hold high-level positions in state executive and judicial branches. Others are now serving in the U.S. Congress. Learn more at csgmidwest.org/billd/.



BILLD



Rep. Munira Abdullahi

In 2022, Munira Abdullahi became the first Muslim woman elected to the Ohio General Assembly. She has used her experiences as a first-generation Somali-American who grew up in the center of Columbus to inform her legislative career.

Her experience in urban public schools drives her passion to close education gaps. As a person with type-1 diabetes, Abdullahi also is passionate about policies that ensure affordable health care and medication. After receiving her bachelor's degree in political science and international relations from The Ohio State University, she worked for local nonprofit groups for 10 years, advocating for youth, women and Muslim Americans.

Columbus, Ohio
Democrat
first elected: Nov. 2022

- Standing Committees:
- Behavioral Health
 - Higher Education
 - Public Health Policy
 - Technology and Innovation
 - Transportation



Sen. Jeffrey Barta

Jeffrey Barta has served his community in many capacities while pursuing a career that has included stints as an athletic trainer, small-business owner and insurance agent. He is president of the Board of Directors for St. Joseph's Social Care, a group that helps individuals and families in need. Barta also has held leadership positions with his local Chamber of Commerce, Special Olympics, his local church, and various health organizations.

Barta has a bachelor's degree from the University of North Dakota and an MBA from Troy University. His legislative priorities include building a skilled workforce for the state.

Grand Forks, North Dakota
Republican
first elected: Nov. 2022

- Standing Committees:
- Industry and Business
 - State and Local Government
- Interim Committees:
- Government Finance
 - Health Services
 - Workforce



Sen. Scott Alexander

Scott Alexander believes strong leadership should be rooted in a commitment to listening and collaboration. He learned these lessons as a 10-year member of the Delaware County Council, including the final three years as council president, before joining the Indiana General Assembly. Alexander's interest in state issues stems from his work in real estate and his longtime advocacy in support of policies to reduce local property taxes.

Outside the legislature, he is the owner and operator of Alexander & Company Real Estate Appraisers Inc. Alexander studied at Vincennes University (flight school) and Ball State University (business).

Eaton, Indiana
Republican
first elected: Nov. 2022

- Standing Committees:
- Agriculture
 - Judiciary
 - Local Government
 - Natural Resources

- Interim Committees:
- Courts and the Judiciary
 - Education
 - Government
 - Roads and Transportation



Rep. Steven Bradley

Steven Bradley's nearly four-decade tenure in dentistry, as well as his many years of policy advocacy in support of his profession and the citizens of Iowa, prepared him to be a leading voice on health care policy.

Even before joining the Iowa House, Bradley had spent considerable time in the state Capitol thanks to leadership roles with the Iowa Dental Association and the Iowa Dental Board. Key to success in his profession is listening to his patients, and he takes a similar approach to legislating: Listen to your constituents first, then find solutions. Bradley has a bachelor's degree from the University of Iowa and a D.D.S. from the Marquette University Dental School.

Cascade, Iowa
Republican
first elected: Nov. 2020

- Standing Committees:
- Education
 - Health and Human Services
 - Labor and Workforce



Rep. Clinton Anderson

As a former city council member in his hometown of Beloit, it's no surprise that one of Clinton Anderson's main policy interests is local control. During his first term, he worked on multiple bills to give local governments more autonomy and flexibility.

Additionally, Anderson's bipartisan work on measures regarding artificial intelligence earned him appointments to special committees examining this issue for the Wisconsin Legislature. His time on the Beloit City Council included stints as its vice president (2019-2021) and president (2021-2022). Anderson earned a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater.

Beloit, Wisconsin
Democrat
first elected: Nov. 2022

- Standing Committees:
- Agriculture
 - Campaigns and Elections
 - Local Development
 - Rural Development



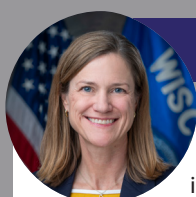
Sen. Brian Chavez

Brian Chavez's first experience with the legislative process came when he made a visit to his state senator to advocate against a proposed tax increase. "Where have you been? Why haven't I heard your story?" the senator asked Chavez. Now a legislator himself, Chavez places great importance on hearing and learning from the stories of his constituents. They inform his policymaking.

Prior to joining the legislature, Chavez was a member of the Ohio Oil & Gas Commission, a reflection of his experience and leadership in this industry. Chavez has a chemical engineering degree from the University of New Mexico and is the owner/operator of small independent natural gas and oil companies.

Marietta, Ohio
Republican
appointed: Dec. 2023

- Standing Committees:
- Government Oversight
 - Insurance
 - Transportation
 - Veterans and Public Safety



Rep. Deb Andraca

A former school teacher, Deb Andraca also worked in the field of communications, including time as communications director for the Environmental Law and Policy Center. Stemming from both her professional and personal experiences, she has a commitment to working across the aisle on a whole range of policy issues. That includes her legislative priorities, such as gun safety and education policy.

Andraca has a bachelor's degree from Syracuse University and a master's degree in political management from The George Washington University.

Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin
Democrat
first elected: Nov. 2020

- Standing Committees:
- Education
 - Finance
 - Forestry, Parks and Outdoor Recreation
 - Joint Committee on Finance



Rep. Mary Frances Clardy

During a nearly 30-year career with St. Paul Public Schools, Mary Frances Clardy has been a teacher, educator mentor and leader in efforts to improve student achievement and reduce achievement gaps. She also has served on many statewide education boards and committees.

Clardy has quickly emerged as a legislative leader on education. Her other legislative priorities include issues related to mental health, health disparities and housing instability. Nineteen of her bills passed during her first year in office. Clardy has a bachelor's degree in psychology from Minnesota State University, Mankato, and a master's degree in curriculum and instruction from Grand Canyon University.

Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota
Democrat
first elected: Nov. 2022

- Standing Committees:
- Education Finance
 - Human Services Finance
 - Sustainable Infrastructure Policy
 - Veterans and Military Affairs Finance and Policy



Rep. Joseph Aragona

Joseph Aragona worked as a staff person in the Michigan Legislature before being elected to his local township board, where he served for four years.

He has a wide range of policy interests that drive his legislative work — water quality and recreation, help for local economies, proper regulation of recreational marijuana, and improvements to the roads. Outside the Legislature, Aragona is actively involved in a number of philanthropic organizations that help support a local animal shelter, raise money for less-fortunate families during the holiday season, and provide scholarships to local high school graduates. He has an MBA from Michigan State University.

Clinton Township, Michigan
Republican
first elected: Nov. 2022

- Standing Committees:
- Energy, Communications, and Technology
 - Insurance and Financial Services
 - Regulatory Reform



Rep. Jennifer Conlin

Jennifer Conlin decided to run for office soon after covering the Oxford, Mich., school shooting for *The New York Times*. Having spent four decades as a journalist, the experience caused her to want to do more for her community and state.

Since joining the Legislature, Conlin has sponsored several successful pieces of legislation, including a measure to allow spouses and dependents of National Guard members to use their tuition assistance, and another that sets standards for consent contracts between surrogates and parents. She also has worked on bills to combat the growing cost of insulin. Conlin has a master's degree from Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism.

Ann Arbor, Michigan
Democrat
first elected: Nov. 2022

- Standing Committees:
- Agriculture
 - Education
 - Health Policy
 - Military, Veterans and Homeland Security
 - Transportation, Mobility and Infrastructure



Rep. Liz Conmy

Prior to joining the Legislative Assembly, Liz Conmy was executive director of Prairie Action ND and an assistant professor at Minnesota State University's School of Communication and Journalism. She also has been the owner and operator of a grain farm since 2009.

Conmy's legislative priorities include improving education policy in the state, from pre-K to college, with a particular interest in building state supports for early-childhood screenings. She has a bachelor's degree from North Dakota State University and a master's degree in business communication from the University of St. Thomas (Minnesota).

Fargo, North Dakota Democrat
first elected: Nov. 2022

- Standing Committees:
- Education
 - Energy and Natural Resources
- Interim Committees:
- Government Services



Sen. Richard Holdcroft

Richard Holdcroft is a decorated Navy veteran whose 28 years of military service included two assignments at U.S. Strategic Command. He also built a successful career as an aerospace executive.

In 2019, Holdcroft was named Knight of the Year by the Nebraska Knights of Columbus and received the Distinguished Service Award from the University of Nebraska Alumni Association. He holds a bachelor's degree from the university, as well as a master's degree in computer science from the Naval Postgraduate School.

As a legislator, Holdcroft's priorities include improving Nebraska's corrections and criminal justice systems.

Bellevue, Nebraska Nonpartisan legislature
first elected: Nov. 2022

- Standing Committees:
- Agriculture
 - General Affairs
 - Judiciary



Rep. Kimberly Edwards

A dedicated and MSW-accredited social worker, Kimberly Edwards is committed to pursuing policies in the Legislature that provide adequate medical, mental health and social services to communities and individuals across Michigan.

Among her early legislative successes: the passage of a new law to ensure that medical coverage for individuals is not denied or canceled based on pre-existing physical or mental health conditions. Prior to joining the Legislature, Edwards worked as a social work care manager for a hospital. She earned her master's in social work (MSW) from Walden University and a bachelor's degree in psychology from Bennett College.

Eastpointe, Michigan Democrat
first elected: Nov. 2022

- Standing Committees:
- Education
 - Families, Children and Seniors
 - Judiciary
 - Transportation, Mobility and Infrastructure



Sen. Teresa Ibach

Teresa Ibach brings many years of community leadership and business experience to her work in the Legislature. The co-owner and operator of a family farming and ranching operation since 1988, she also served as property manager for DP Management, LLC, successfully managing day-to-day operations at a large shopping center.

Ibach's public service has included leadership positions on the NEBRASKAland Foundation, the Nebraska Farm Bureau Foundation, and the Nebraska FFA Foundation, as well as work as a volunteer and teacher for Junior Achievement. Her legislative priorities include state policies that foster sustainable agriculture across Nebraska.

Sumner, Nebraska Nonpartisan legislature
first elected: Nov. 2022

- Standing Committees:
- Agriculture
 - Business and Labor
 - Judiciary
 - Nebraska Retirement Systems



MLA Shane Getson

Before becoming the parliamentary secretary for Economic Corridor Development, Shane Getson was literally building economic corridors — as the owner of Major Projects Consulting Company, which leads industrial construction projects in many sectors.

He also is an ardent supporter of the Canada-U.S. relationship through his membership with The Council of State Governments' Midwestern Legislative Conference, the Pacific Northwest Economic Region, and the Energy Council. Getson received a diploma in civil engineering technology from the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology. In his spare time, Getson, who is an accomplished pilot, enjoys pursuing his passion for flying.

Onoway, Alberta United Conservative Party
first elected: April 2019

- Committees:
- Alberta's Economic Future
 - Conflicts of Interest Act Review
 - Ethics Commissioner and Chief Electoral Officer Search
 - Legislative Offices
 - Members' Services



Rep. Jenna Jacobson

During a career devoted to teaching people how to meet their financial goals, Jenna Jacobson learned the value of listening to clients. She has taken some of those same lessons to her time in public service, as a local village trustee and now as a state legislator.

Her legislative interests run the gamut, from education to health care to the preservation of family farms. But more broadly, she aims to make government feel as accessible to her constituents as financial goals were to clients. Along with being a financial services representative and business finance analyst, Jacobson has volunteered her time as a financial coach. She has a bachelor's degree in consumer finance and planning from Purdue University.

Oregon, Wisconsin Democrat
first elected: Nov. 2022

- Standing Committees:
- Agriculture
 - Consumer Protection
 - Financial Institutions
 - Workforce Development and Economic Opportunities



Rep. Jason Goetz

Jason Goetz spent two decades in church pastoral roles before running for Kansas state representative. As a pastoral leader, he practiced the "servant leadership" lessons instilled in him by his parents, including a deep respect for people from all walks of life and understanding that time-honored ways of doing things should be respected.

As a legislator, he has focused on honing those skills in all he does, especially in the area of education, where he has worked to build collaboration to improve and sustain the public K-12 system. Goetz has a bachelor's degree in philosophy and religious studies from Sterling College.

Dodge City, Kansas Republican
first elected: Nov. 2022

- Standing Committees:
- Education
 - K-12 Education Budget
 - Water



MPP Bhutila Karpoche

In 2018, Bhutila Karpoche became the first person of Tibetan heritage to be elected to public office not only in Canada, but in all of North America.

Since joining the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, she has served as deputy opposition whip and currently serves as deputy speaker. She holds degrees from the University of British Columbia and University of Toronto, including a master's degree in public health. Outside the Assembly, Karpoche is a Ph.D. candidate in public health policy at Toronto Metropolitan University. She also holds an adjunct appointment at the University of Toronto's School of Social Work.

Toronto, Ontario New Democratic Party
first elected: June 2018

- Current Roles:
- Critic, Affordability
 - Critic, Greater Toronto Area Issues
 - First Deputy Chair of the Whole House



Rep. Michele Grim

Michele Grim joined her caucus leadership team (as assistant minority whip) in only her second year in the Ohio House. She also has championed bills requiring free period products in schools as well as the right of survivors to know the status of their rape kits.

Previously, Grim was a member of the Toledo City Council and worked to establish its first stand-alone committee on health. Additionally, she spearheaded Toledo's groundbreaking medical debt relief initiative with Lucas County and led efforts to strengthen medical care for the underserved. Grim has a master's degree in public health from the University of Toledo and a doctorate in law and policy from Northeastern University.

Toledo, Ohio Democrat
first elected: Nov. 2022

- Standing Committees:
- Behavioral Health
 - Economic and Workforce Development
 - Finance
 - Government Oversight
 - Primary and Secondary Education
 - Public Health Policy
 - Rules and Reference
 - Transportation



Rep. Joanna King

Joanna King brings extensive involvement in her community and success as a business entrepreneur to her work as a legislator. She started her first business, JoJo's Pretzels, soon after graduating from high school, and then went on to own several tourism and hospitality businesses as part of King Corp.

King's public service has included 14 years as a school board member and time as president of her Local Boys & Girls Club. These experiences cemented her belief in a leadership style that values collaboration and an openness to hearing differing perspectives. The assistant majority floor leader is committed to this approach as she pursues her legislative priorities, including advances in public health.

Middlebury, Indiana Republican
appointed: Dec. 2020
first elected: Nov. 2022

- Standing Committees:
- Courts and Criminal Code
 - Government and Regulatory Reform
 - Public Health
 - Veterans Affairs and Public Safety
- Interim Committees:
- Public Safety and Military Affairs



Rep. Jackie Haas

Jackie Haas has taken to legislative life very quickly, rising to the position of assistant Republican leader in just her second term and serving as the Republican lead on the Health Availability and Access and the Mental Health and Addiction committees.

These committees are a natural fit for Haas, a licensed clinical social worker who has served as the president and CEO of a not-for-profit outpatient mental health center in her community for more than 20 years. She has degrees in social work from the University of Illinois Chicago (master's degree) and Valparaiso University (bachelor's degree).

Bourbonnais, Illinois Republican
first elected: Nov. 2020

- Standing Committees:
- Appropriations - Health and Human Services
 - Health Care Availability and Access
 - Human Services
 - Mental Health and Addiction
 - Prescription Drug Affordability



Rep. David Kull

David Kull retired from policing after 41 years on the job — a career that included being police captain in Sioux Falls and police chief for the city of Brandon. Kull has always viewed police work as a form of community service, one that requires a mix of empathy, skepticism and decision-making skills. In the Legislature, where he serves on the House Judiciary Committee, he still relies on these attributes and his law enforcement background.

Kull has been a member of the Brandon City Council since 2019, and for six years, he served as a board member of South Dakota Special Olympics. He was the first director and organizer of the South Dakota Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics.

Brandon, South Dakota Republican
first elected: Nov. 2022

- Standing Committees:
- Health and Human Services
 - Judiciary



Rep. Mike McFall

Before joining the Legislature, Mike McFall served as a city council member, led redevelopment of his community's downtown, and spent much of his career in the nonprofit sector dedicated to enhancing the lives of others. He also worked for the Williams Syndrome Association before being elected.

McFall has been pursuing policies that help individuals stay out of poverty and on a path to economic prosperity — for example, strengthening financial literacy and helping people save for retirement. A certified public manager, he has a bachelor's degree in community development and public administration from Central Michigan University.

Hazel Park, Michigan Democrat
first elected: Nov. 2022

- Standing Committees:
- Energy, Communications and Technology
 - Government Operations
 - Insurance and Financial Services
 - Natural Resources, Environment, Tourism and Outdoor Recreation
 - Regulatory Reform



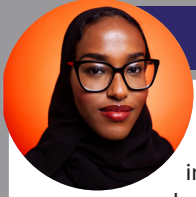
Rep. Dan Osman

Dan Osman began his legislative career with a determination and plan to eliminate civil asset forfeiture in Kansas. By his own admission, it took him three years of learning how to do it right. But this year, by working with a variety of experts and legislative colleagues, a bipartisan bill to radically change the process was approved and signed by the governor.

The president of the law firm Osman Consultants, LLC, Osman has a bachelor's degree in behavioral sciences and the law from the University of Wisconsin and a law degree from the University of Kansas. He previously served two, three-year terms on his local school board.

Overland Park, Kansas Democrat
appointed: July 2021
first elected: Nov. 2022

- Standing Committees:
- Commerce, Labor and Economic Development
 - Joint Committee on Fiduciary Financial Institutions Oversight
 - Judiciary



Sen. Zaynab Mohamed

Zaynab Mohamed grew up on the South Side of Minneapolis, part of a working-class immigrant family from Somalia. That experience, along with the lessons she has learned as a young community leader, shapes the work she does in the Legislature, including policies that improve housing opportunities for families, reduce homelessness and expand rights for renters.

Mohamed previously served as a senior policy aide for the Minneapolis City Council and as community advocacy director for the Council on American-Islamic Relations. She is a graduate of the University of Minnesota and deputy executive director of Ayada Leads, a nonprofit group dedicated to diversifying Minnesota's political landscape.

Minneapolis, Minnesota Democrat
first elected: Nov. 2022

- Standing Committees:
- Capital Investment
 - Finance
 - Housing and Homelessness Prevention
 - Jobs and Economic Development



Rep. Renee Pack

In 1986, Renee Pack enlisted in the U.S. Army to honor her father's military legacy. She served for six years, training and working as a behavioral specialist. Pack's dedication to public service continued long after her time in the military, through her work as a school district's college and career readiness supervisor, as an advocate for improvements in early-childhood literacy, and as a teacher at a community-based reading program.

She serves as ranking minority member of the House Veterans Affairs and Public Safety Committee. Pack has a bachelor's degree from Indiana Wesleyan University and a master's degree in educational leadership from Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis.

Indianapolis, Indiana Democrat
first elected: Nov. 2020

- Standing Committees:
- Commerce, Small Business and Economic Development
 - Family, Children and Human Affairs
 - Veterans Affairs and Public Safety
- Interim Committees:
- Government
 - Public Health, Behavioral Health and Human Services
 - Public Safety and Military Affairs



MLA Mike Moroz

In 2023, Mike Moroz became the first New Democrat to win and represent the Winnipeg constituency of River Heights since the creation of the riding in 1957. He is a member of the Legislative Assembly Management Commission.

Prior to his election, Moroz spent 12 years as a political staffer at both the provincial and federal levels. He also taught high school for 27 years in a wide range of subject areas, from theater and history, to English and psychology. While teaching high school, he created the boys and girls hockey program and served as head coach of the school's three teams. Moroz has bachelor's and master's degrees in theater, as well as minors in history and psychology.

Winnipeg, Manitoba New Democratic Party
first elected: Oct. 2023

- Current Roles:
- Member of Legislative Assembly Management Commission

Note: Manitoba's Standing Committees do not have permanent membership lists. The MLAs serving on each committee change from meeting-to-meeting.



Sen. Rodney Pol

Rodney Pol has been a public servant for most of his professional life, with a career path shaped by being raised in two very different communities in northwest Indiana. One of the most striking differences observed by Pol: the very different experiences each community had with the criminal justice system.

That led Pol to pursue a legal career. He would eventually serve as a public defender and as an attorney for the northwest Indiana city of Gary. Now, as the ranking member of the Senate Corrections and Criminal Law Committee, he uses this background to advocate for policy change. Pol has a bachelor's degree in psychology and a law degree from Indiana University.

Chesterton, Indiana Democrat
appointed: Oct. 2021
first elected: Nov. 2022

- Standing Committees:
- Corrections and Criminal Law
 - Ethics
 - Judiciary
 - Local Government
 - Pensions and Labor
 - Rules and Legislative Procedure



Rep. Patricia Mueller

A longtime educator, Patricia Mueller's career spans 20 years and several continents. She has taught in Haiti, Malaysia, China, and in the U.S. states of Minnesota and Indiana. The educator-turned-legislator believes accessibility and visibility are paramount to public service and leadership.

Mueller's legislative priorities reflect her passion for education. She is working to create new teacher residency programs and pathways as well as a statewide program to encourage more work-based learning opportunities. Mueller has a doctorate in educational leadership and a master's degree in curriculum and development from Minnesota State University, Moorhead.

Austin, Minnesota Republican
first elected: Nov. 2020

- Standing Committees:
- Education Policy
 - Public Safety Finance and Policy



Rep. Abdelnasser Rashid

Government and technology are rarely thought of in the same context, but Abdelnasser Rashid wants to change that. Merging these two passions, he passed legislation in his first term creating the Generative AI and Natural Language Processing Task Force. He is serving as the group's co-chair.

Before winning election in 2022, and becoming Illinois' first Palestinian-American legislator, Rashid held leadership roles and led modernization efforts in the Cook County Clerk's and Assessor's offices. He has a bachelor's degree from Harvard University and an MBA from the University of Chicago.

Bridgeview, Illinois Democrat
first elected: Nov. 2022

- Standing Committees:
- Appropriations - Health and Human Services
 - Cybersecurity, Data Analytics and IT
 - Economic Opportunity and Equity
 - Energy and Environment
 - Housing
 - Small Business, Tech Innovation
 - Transportation: Regulations, Roads and Bridges



Rep. Jeremy Olson

As a high school student, Jeremy Olson enlisted in the National Guard, the start of a distinguished period of military service. After graduating from West Point, he became a captain in the U.S. Army, serving as a platoon leader and executive officer.

He subsequently embarked on a successful career in the energy industry, holding several leadership positions. Energy policy is now among his legislative priorities. Olson is also a local township officer and a board member for the North Dakota Safety Council and the North Dakota National Guard Foundation. He has an MBA from the University of Mary (North Dakota).

Arnegard, North Dakota Republican
first elected: Nov. 2022

- Standing Committees:
- Energy and Natural Resources
 - Finance and Taxation

- Interim Committees:
- Government Services
 - Water Topics Overview



Sen. Dave Rowley

Dave Rowley's background as a professional musician and in the property and casualty insurance field contribute to his sense of teamwork and commitment to crafting legislation built on sound business principles. In the Legislature, his primary interest is in improving economic development in the state's rural areas.

Rowley also brings experience in local electoral politics with him to the Iowa Senate, and he has served as the president of three nonprofit community boards in his longtime home of Spirit Lake. Rowley earned a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Iowa.

Spirit Lake, Iowa Republican
first elected: Dec. 2021

- Standing Committees:
- Appropriations
 - Commerce
 - Health and Human Services
 - Judiciary
 - Ways and Means
 - Workforce



Rep. Melissa Oropeza

As a longtime nurse practitioner — the first to serve as a legislator in Kansas — Melissa Oropeza says she greatly appreciated being welcomed by other health care professionals from the opposite party as she began her legislative career. She is committed to returning the favor with an open, approachable and transparent leadership style on health policy and other issues.

In 2017, Oropeza was nationally recognized by the American Association of Nurse Practitioners as the Nursing Advocate for Kansas, joining 49 of her colleagues from across the country. She has a doctor of nursing practice from the University of Missouri-Kansas City. Her community service includes 21 years as a T-ball coach.

Kansas City, Kansas Democrat
first elected: Nov. 2022

- Standing Committees:
- Elections
 - Health and Human Services
 - Legislative Modernization



Rep. Stephanie Sauder

Rep. Stephanie Sauder spent three decades as a K-12 educator. However, as part of a longtime farming family in South Dakota, her legislative heart lies in agriculture. She uses the breadth of her experience to inform debate on agriculture-related bills.

As a teacher, Sauder taught at many grade levels, in several subject areas, and also became a respected mentor for newcomers to the profession. Her varied background also includes serving as mayor of the city of Bryant and as the publisher of the *Bryant Dakotan*. Sauder has a bachelor's degree from Dakota State University and a master's degree in educational leadership and administration from Northern State University.

Bryant, South Dakota Republican
first elected: Nov. 2022

- Standing Committees:
- Agriculture and Natural Resources
 - Education
 - Military and Veterans Affairs



Rep. Megan Srinivas

When Megan Srinivas realized her work as a physician could only go so far in addressing the health needs of her patients and community, she decided to run for a legislative seat and advocate for state-level policy changes that can improve access and outcomes.

Srinivas has degrees from Harvard University, completed her internal medicine residency at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, and has a medical degree from Iowa University's Carver College of Medicine. Outside the Legislature, she serves on the Iowa Supreme Court's Access to Justice Commission and sits on the board of the Iowa chapter of the National Alliance for Mental Illness.

Des Moines, Iowa Democrat
first elected: Nov. 2022

Standing Committees:

- Agriculture
- Commerce
- Judiciary
- State Government



Rep. Laura Williams

In 2016, Laura Williams became a first-time mom and launched her own marketing business. The experience ultimately inspired Williams to run for the Legislature. Since her election, she has pursued measures to improve child care access for families and help small businesses. That includes eliminating barriers for child care facilities and providing tax credits for families.

Williams is the owner and brand and marketing consultant for Wilde Creative Co. She also volunteers her time to help resettle refugees in her Kansas community. Williams earned her bachelor's degree in communications with a minor in geography from the University of Kansas.

Lenexa, Kansas Republican
first elected: Nov. 2022

Standing Committees:

- Commerce, Labor and Economic Development
- Energy, Utilities and Telecommunications
- Financial Institutions and Pensions
- General Government Budget
- Joint Pensions, Investments and Benefits
- Joint Fiduciary Financial Institutions Oversight



Rep. Dennis Tipword

The Tipword family has a long and storied history of public service, dating as far back as Griffin Tipword's service in the Revolutionary War.

Dennis Tipword has continued that family legacy, spending three decades as a police officer, including 10 years as chief deputy for the Woodford County Sheriff's Office. He brings this experience to the Illinois General Assembly, serving on all of his legislative chamber's criminal justice and public safety standing committees.

Tipword is a graduate of Western Illinois University and has continuing education credits from the University of Illinois and Northwestern University.

Metamora, Illinois Republican
first elected: Nov. 2022

Standing Committees:

- Appropriations - Public Safety
- Ethics and Elections
- Health Care Licenses
- Judiciary - Criminal
- Mental Health and Addiction
- Police and Fire



Rep. Kady Wittman

As a first-term legislator, Kady Wittman aims to be a voice for people who are overlooked or unheard — a goal that has led her to focus on policies to reduce and end homelessness, increase access to nutritious meals for public school students, and help families facing housing instability.

She is the director of development for the Sioux Falls Family YMCA and previously served in a similar role for the Multi-Cultural Center of Sioux Falls. She has also worked as a case worker at a homeless shelter, helping clients to get rehoused and to address underlying issues. She has a bachelor's degree in sociology and women's studies from Augustana University in South Dakota.

Sioux Falls, South Dakota Democrat
first elected: Nov. 2022

Standing Committees:

- Agriculture and Natural Resources
- Local Government



Sen. Bonnie Westlin

Bonnie Westlin is an attorney and small-business owner, having run her own family law and mediation practice since 2004. She brings that professional background to the Legislature, whether it's using her skills in conflict resolution and consensus building or lending her subject-matter expertise. She is the only family law attorney in the Senate and has authored several bills to improve and update Minnesota's statutes.

Westlin also is a legislative leader on gun safety and was instrumental in passing measures related to universal background checks, extreme risk protection and safe storage. Westlin has a bachelor's degree in English and a law degree from Hamline University.

Plymouth, Minnesota Democrat
first elected: Nov. 2022

Standing Committees:

- Education Finance
- Elections
- Judiciary and Public Safety

THE BOWHAY INSTITUTE FOR LEGISLATIVE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT (BILLD) is the only leadership training program designed exclusively for Midwestern legislators. The purpose of BILLD is to help newer legislators develop the skills necessary to become effective leaders, informed decision-makers and astute policy analysts. The program offers a unique opportunity for lawmakers to improve their leadership skills and explore the issues of the day with nationally renowned scholars, professional development experts, and legislative leaders and colleagues from across the region. The Council of State Governments is a nonpartisan, nonprofit association charged with promoting excellence in state government. As the only association representing all three branches of government, CSG has been committed to putting the best ideas and solutions into practice since 1933. CSG's Midwestern Office serves 11 states — Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin — and the Canadian provinces of Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario and Saskatchewan.

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Each year, the Bowhay Institute for Legislative Leadership Development is supported by organizations, foundations and corporations that believe in the importance of legislators having the opportunity to develop their leadership and policymaking skills. CSG Midwest gratefully acknowledges our partners for their generous support of the 2024 BILLD program. Their contributions help make the Bowhay Institute possible.

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