



Midwestern Legislative Conference

THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS

For immediate release

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Representative Jesse James completes regional leadership institute

(Lombard, Ill.) October 5, 2021 -- State Representative Jesse James of Altoona was among 36 select lawmakers to complete a leadership training program that identifies and assists emerging state and provincial leaders in the Midwest.

Representative James met with fellow lawmakers from Wisconsin, 10 other Midwestern states and the Canadian province of Saskatchewan on October 1-5, in Minneapolis, for The Council of State Governments' 26th annual Bowhay Institute for Legislative Leadership Development (BILLD).

"The Bowhay Institute is one of the premier leadership training programs in the nation," says Iowa Sen. Amy Sinclair, who serves as co-chair of the institute's steering committee. "The legislatures in the region have benefited greatly from the skills their members have gained through this unique educational experience. Many of the graduates now hold leadership positions in their states."

Legislators from Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, Saskatchewan, South Dakota, and Wisconsin were chosen to participate through a competitive, nonpartisan selection process.

BILLD was founded in 1995 to help new legislators meet the demands of federal devolution and, in many states, term limits. These two emerging forces have highlighted the shortage of training available for legislators, a void that BILLD aims to fill.

A program of The Council of State Governments' Midwestern Office, BILLD is held in partnership with the Center for the Study of Politics and Governance at the University of Minnesota's Humphrey School of Public Affairs. Seminars are conducted by Humphrey faculty, Midwestern legislative leaders, and professional development experts. In addition to courses designed to develop leadership skills, the program analyzes a variety of public policy issues, including election security and administration, U.S.-Canada trade relations and supply chain, and the regional economy.

The program is funded through grants from foundations, organizations and corporate sponsors, as well as in-kind contributions provided by The Council of State Governments' Midwestern Office and the Humphrey School.

The Bowhay Institute for Legislative Leadership Development is named in honor of the late James Bowhay, longtime director of The Council of State Governments' Midwestern Office. Founded in 1933, The Council of State Governments has national headquarters in Lexington, Ky., and regional offices in Atlanta, Chicago (Lombard, Ill.), New York City and Sacramento, Calif. The goal of the national, nonpartisan organization is to assist and advance state government.

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