State of the States:
Budgeting in the Trump Era

Speaker Biographies

Joseph Henchman is vice president for legal and state projects at the Tax Foundation, where he analyzes state tax trends, constitutional issues, and tax law developments. He has testified or presented to officials in 36 states, testified before Congress six times, and has written over 75 major studies on tax policy. He holds a bachelor’s degree in political science with a minor in public policy from the University of California, Berkeley, and a law degree from the George Washington University.

John Hicks is executive director of the National Association of State Budget Officers (NASBO). Previously, Hicks served in the Kentucky state government for 32 years, including 25 years in Kentucky’s Office of State Budget Director. For 10 years, he was deputy state budget director and oversaw budget development and execution. Hicks graduated from Murray State University in Murray, Kentucky, and received his master of public administration degree from the University of Kentucky’s Martin School of Public Policy and Administration. A past member of NASBO, Hicks served on the association’s executive committee from 2007 to 2013 and was NASBO’s president from 2011 to 2012. Hicks received NASBO’s 1987 George A. Bell Service Award and the 2013 Gloria Timmer Award, which each recognize outstanding contributions and service to public budgeting and management in state government.

Nick Johnson is senior vice president for state fiscal policy at the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. He directs the center’s State Fiscal Project, which publishes frequent reports on how state budget and tax decisions affect families and communities, and he develops policies to enhance fiscal responsibility, equity, and accountability. Johnson’s analysis and commentary have been featured in national, regional, and local newspapers, and he is a frequent television and radio commentator on state fiscal issues. He is a regular contributor to the Center’s blog, Off the Charts, and speaks regularly at conferences in Washington, DC, and around the country. He is also an adviser to members of the State Priorities Partnership, a network of independent state-level policy organizations. In 2004, Johnson was awarded an Ian Axford Fellowship in Public Policy and was an adviser to the New Zealand Treasury and the New Zealand Ministry of Social Development, analyzing that country’s programs of tax relief and cash assistance for low-income families. In 2014, Johnson was named to the Nonprofit Times’ Power and Influence Top 50. In 2010, State Tax Notes magazine named Johnson to its All Decade State Tax Team. Johnson holds an undergraduate degree from Yale University and a graduate degree from Duke University’s Terry Sanford Institute of Public Policy. He came to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities in 1996 from the US Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.
Mark Mazur will replace Leonard E. Burman as the Robert C. Pozen director of the Urban-Brookings Tax Policy Center on February 1, 2017. Until recently, Mazur was the assistant secretary for tax policy at the US Treasury. Mazur’s 25 years of public service includes stints at the Internal Revenue Service, where he was director of the Office of Research, Analysis, and Statistics; the US Department of Energy, where he was a senior adviser to Secretary Bill Richardson and administrator of the US Energy Information Administration; and the Joint Committee on Taxation, the President’s Council of Economic Advisers, and the National Economic Council. Mazur received a BA in financial administration from Michigan State University and a PhD in economics, business, and public policy from the Stanford Graduate School of Business.

Kim Rueben is a senior fellow at the Urban Institute and director of the State and Local Finance Initiative at the Urban-Brookings Tax Policy Center. Her work examines state and local public finance, focusing on state budget and tax issues, intergovernmental relations, fiscal institutions, and the economics of education, including federal and state financing of K–12 and postsecondary education and how decisions affect different people across states. Rueben is also an adjunct fellow at the Public Policy Institute of California, has served on the council of economic advisers for the controller of the State of California, and is a member of the Washington, DC, Tax Revision Commission. She also recently served on the National Academy of Sciences’ commission on the Economic and Fiscal Consequences of Immigration. Rueben received her BA from Brown University, MA from the London School of Economics, and PhD in economics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Lori Montgomery is deputy national editor at the Washington Post, where she helps lead the paper’s signature coverage of Washington, politics, and the nation. For years, she was a congressional and economic policy reporter, chronicling the Obama administration’s efforts to expand health coverage and manage the economic and political fallout of the Great Recession. In 2015, Montgomery pioneered the position of America editor, which energized and focused the Post’s coverage of national issues outside the Beltway. In that role, Montgomery oversaw creation of the first database of fatal police shootings. The database and related stories won numerous national awards, including the Pulitzer Prize for National Reporting. Before coming to the Post, Montgomery was Europe bureau chief for the Detroit Free Press and Knight-Ridder Newspapers, leading coverage of the war over Kosovo and the post-Communist democracies of Central Europe. She began her career at the Dallas Times Herald, covering the rise of Ann Richards and the failings of the Texas criminal justice system. Montgomery is a graduate of Northwestern University.