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Recession and Budgets: Where Do States Stand for 2011 and Beyond?

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Ray Scheppach, PhD, is the executive director of the National Governors Association (NGA). Dr. Scheppach oversees the day-to-day operations of the association and works closely with NGA's chair and vice chair and their staffs to help identify priorities for the nation's governors. The association has three major missions: to produce information and analysis of state innovations and practices, to create a bipartisan forum for governors to establish and implement policy on federal issues and to assist governors in managing state government. Prior to his appointment to NGA in 1983, Dr. Scheppach worked for seven years at the Congressional Budget Office, serving the last two years as deputy director. Prior to that, he worked for seven years in economic consulting and for two years as an economist with the Standard Oil Company (Ohio). He has written numerous professional articles on various public policy issues and has authored and co-authored four books on economics, including co-writing the 1984 book *New Directions in Economic Policy: An Agenda for the 1980s*. His specializations include federal and state budgets, health care policy, energy policy, and United States competitiveness in the world economy.



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Kathleen Gifford is a principal with Health Management Associates (HMA). Ms. Gifford specializes in Medicaid and other government-financed health care programs. Prior to joining HMA in January 2002, Ms. Gifford directed the state of Indiana's Medicaid program, a \$3 billion program providing care to over 650,000 members. Ms. Gifford also chaired the Indiana Prescription Drug Advisory Committee and worked at the Indiana State Budget Agency in various roles including assistant director for Health and Human Services, assistant director for Education and Economic Development, and deputy budget director. In those roles, she was responsible for budget development, policy, and fiscal analysis on a wide range of issues including welfare reform, school funding equalization, and Medicaid.



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Beth Kohler Lazare is the deputy policy director and policy advisor for Health and Human Services for Arizona Governor Janice K. Brewer. Prior to her service in the governor's office, Ms. Lazare was a managing consultant in the Phoenix office of Navigant Consulting, where she assisted numerous clients with Medicaid and other health care projects. She has also served as the research staff assistant director for the Arizona State Senate, as staff to the Arizona Senate Health Committee, and as a senior fiscal analyst for the Arizona Joint Legislative Budget Committee.



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Donna Cooper serves as secretary of the Governor's Office of Policy and Planning. The Office of Policy and Planning coordinates program planning and policy development among the executive branch agencies and works closely with the Governor's budget, legislative, and Washington offices to ensure that federal and state policy options are thoroughly examined for their fiscal, legislative and programmatic consequences.

Ms. Cooper most recently served as the executive director of Good Schools Pennsylvania, a public education advocacy organization. She served as deputy mayor for Policy and Planning in the Rendell administration, advising the then-mayor on all aspects of city policy.

As part of the Governor's executive staff, Ms. Cooper has worked to move Gov. Rendell's agenda and his Plan for a New Pennsylvania forward.

Ms. Cooper received her master's degree from the Fels Institute of Government at the University of Pennsylvania.

