

Alaska

On January 28, Governor Mike Dunleavy (R-AK) focused his address on Alaska's pandemic response, "recently recognized as the best in the nation," and the economic impacts that have followed. He highlighted the vulnerabilities that Alaska faces in terms of access to larger markets. "As a result, I charged my administration with researching how Alaskans can become more self-reliant within the framework of federalism. Part of becoming a truly self-reliant sovereign starts with the basics: food, security, energy, and medicine. My administration has embarked upon a process to strengthen our agricultural sector. We're going to start by making it easier for farmers to secure land with fewer regulations. We're going to support the growth of our agricultural sector and allow farmers to prosper."

He also talked about meeting the state's energy needs. "If Alaska is to survive on its own, we must prioritize energy independence. For too long, our economy has been held back by the extreme cost of energy in many parts of our state. Alaska is surrounded by abundant sources of energy, both traditional and renewable, yet our energy costs are the second-highest in the nation.... We can start by harnessing the incredible renewable energy resources within Alaska itself. Alaska possesses more tidal energy than the rest of the nation combined. Our potential for wind, geothermal, in-shore and pumped hydro is practically unlimited."

California

On March 9, Governor Gavin Newsom (D-CA) delivered his address from Dodger Stadium, one of the country's largest vaccination sites. He primarily highlighted California's response to the pandemic, education, and addressing homelessness. He also discussed the impacts of climate change and California's historic wildfire season. "In 2020, we simultaneously faced two once-in-a-generation crises when we combated the worst wildfire season in our state's history in the middle of the pandemic. The fact is, the hots are getting hotter, the dries are getting drier, and not just here in California, but all across the globe.... Just consider last summer's heat dome on the West Coast of the United States, which led to world-record breaking temperatures here at home. And in just one 24-hour period last August, 12,000 lightning strikes sparked 560 wildfires, requiring heroic efforts by our firefighters and national guard, who landed helicopters into flames to save fellow Californians. This year, we are budgeting more than \$1 billion for fire prevention, including fuel breaks, forest health, and home hardening. We forged a historic partnership with the U.S. Forest Service to radically ramp up forest management efforts."

Colorado

On February 17, Governor Jared Polis (D-CO) highlighted several issues in his address to the Colorado legislature, including "building back stronger than before the pandemic, creating jobs, tax relief, helping small businesses, saving people money on health care, taking bold climate action, achieving 100% renewable energy, and building an economy that works for all."

He also highlighted the importance of public lands and addressing climate change. "Addressing climate change isn't just essential to protecting our health and building our economy. It's an essential part of protecting Colorado's iconic public lands, which - as we've weathered this pandemic - we have learned to appreciate even more for the sanctuary they provide.... Our public lands are a treasure we must never take for granted, and always work to nurture and protect."

Montana

On January 28, Governor Greg Gianforte (R-MT) delivered his first state of the state address to a joint session of the Montana legislature. He focused on the economy of the state, the need to improve Montana's competitiveness to attract business, and the role of regulations in improving that competitiveness. "To make Montana more competitive, we also need to get a better handle on our regulatory scheme. Burdensome, unnecessary red tape ties up our small businesses, farms, and ranches. These regulations cost time and money... I have charged the [Red Tape Relief] task force to complete a comprehensive, top-to-bottom review of regulations in every single state agency. They are to leave no stone unturned as they identify excessive, outdated, and unnecessary regulations."

He also highlighted his team of cabinet members, including Amanda Kaster at the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC). "I have charged [Kaster] at DNRC to bring more federal lands into active

forest management to prevent catastrophic wildfires, have healthier forests, improve wildlife habitat, and bring back some of our good-paying Montana timber jobs.”

Nebraska

On January 14, Governor Pete Ricketts (R-NE) started his address focused on state pandemic response: “As this session begins, I know that many are excited to turn the page on 2020; however, I believe that when we look back on the last year we will see a year that brought out the best in Nebraskans. We began with high hopes of moving forward as we recovered from the historic floods of 2019. But 2020 was interrupted by a new and unforeseen challenge: the coronavirus pandemic. Nebraskans took on this new challenge in the same spirit we have for generations: We rolled up our sleeves and put our grit, tenacity, and determination to work the Nebraska Way.”

He highlighted the legislature’s work: “This body is to be congratulated for the work it accomplished in the 2020 session despite the circumstances of the pandemic. Even with these challenges, you were able to pass property tax relief, incentive renewal and reform, veterans tax relief, flood relief, pandemic relief, relief for the tunnel collapse in the Panhandle...” Looking forward, Ricketts focused on priorities for the 2021 session, including property tax issues, maintaining the strength of public schools, health care licensing reform, public safety and broadband access.

Oklahoma

On February 1, Governor Kevin Stitt (R-OK) discussed his administration’s response to the pandemic, economic growth, and improved transparency, accountability and efficiency of state government. He presented his legislative plan, “The People’s Agenda” with three main pillars: (1) make Oklahoma a Top Ten state for business; (2) deliver taxpayers more for their money; and (3) invest in Oklahomans.

He also discussed “the most pressing issue for our state’s future,” how the recent Supreme Court ruling, *McGirt v. Oklahoma*, affects the sovereignty and jurisdiction of the state of Oklahoma, including how water, agriculture, energy and zoning will be regulated. The ruling “overturned the conviction of a [criminal] on the grounds that the Creek Nation’s reservation was never disestablished for criminal jurisdiction. State courts no longer have the authority to prosecute crimes committed by or against Oklahomans who are also tribal members.” It called into question state authority on tribal lands that have been considered state lands for the past 115 years.

Texas

On February 1, Governor Greg Abbott (R-TX) delivered his address virtually. He focused on the state’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the strength of the Texas economy, funding education, expanding telehealth, ensuring public safety, protecting personal freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution, and regulatory review. “Opportunity is what Texas is all about. No doubt, we faced hard times this past year. But as Texans, we never shy away from challenges. Instead we can embrace them.... Just as Texans have united and put their differences aside to support one another through the pandemic, we in the capitol must also come together to work on their behalf. We must seize this opportunity to make our state healthier, safer, freer, and more prosperous for all who call Texas home.”

Washington

On January 13, Governor Jay Inslee (D-WA) delivered his state of the state address virtually, with a focus on the impacts of the pandemic, growing forward to address issues around equality and justice, and addressing the challenges of public health and climate change. “We cannot let the short-term crisis of COVID-19 blind us to the long-term health cataclysm that is climate change. Pollution and climate change also hurt our health, from respiratory disease to new infectious vectors, to threats from natural disasters directly linked to a changing planet. There was no shortage of evidence for that in 2020. It was one of our worst wildfire seasons on record, fueled by blazes of an intensity previously unseen by our firefighters.... Both the virus and climate change have fatal results. Both can be solved through science and ingenuity. We can - and we will - pursue solutions to both at the same time.

“Washington’s roaring economy of the last eight years was built on innovation in technology, aviation, agriculture and clean energy. But climate change threatens to unmake the state we know and love, from the growing number and intensity of our wildfires to the acidification of our waters and the evaporation of our snowpack, which can hit our communities with the double whammy of flooding early in the year followed by drought. Climate change is creating extremes that cannot be denied or ignored if we are going to continue to prosper.”

Wyoming

On March 2, Governor Mark Gordon (R-WY) highlighted the need to maintain a balanced budget despite challenging times, and emphasized a broad energy portfolio that includes both traditional and renewable fuels. "I say this with both confidence and conviction, to achieve meaningful climate goals, and provide a resilient affordable energy supply, fossil fuels, coupled with a commitment to improving the ways we utilize them, must remain a substantial supply option. As Governor, my position remains clear and firm. I will continue to fight for our state's future, and defend the right to responsibly develop all of our resources." He added the importance of agriculture to the Wyoming economy. "Agriculture will play an ever more significant role in our economic revival. The experience of this past year has laid bare the food insecurity that plagues our entire country. Wyoming is not immune to those issues."