

Alaska

On January 23, Alaska Governor Mike Dunleavy delivered his 5th State of the State address outlining his vision for growing the economy by capitalizing on new opportunities for investment and economic growth and building a more secure, independent Alaska. He said: "My vision for the next four years is to build momentum for food security and independence that's unstoppable. By setting the right public policies around regulations, land, and infrastructure, we'll unleash the private sector that's ready and able to feed not just Alaskans, but people around the world. We're blessed with the resources of today, but we're also blessed with the resources of tomorrow. We'll continue to lead in the production of oil, of natural gas, of conventional and critical minerals. At the same time, our potential will allow us to emerge as the global leader in new forms of low and no carbon energy.... As we look to the future, we'll tap into new markets for our resources, we'll responsibly develop them, and we'll remain the good stewards of our environment that we've always been." <https://files.constantcontact.com/40a57e32901/f5a1b444-a0c5-4908-ba2a-cddcf4993034.pdf?rdr=true>

Arizona

On January 9, Governor Katie Hobbs focused her first State of the State address on investing in public education, securing Arizona's water future, and making the State more affordable. She said: "Experts here in Arizona and across the nation agree there is no 'silver bullet' solution to our current water challenges. We must evaluate and invest in both short- and long-term efforts that will help us achieve our goals. This reality drives the three components of my plan for a Resilient Arizona. First, my administration has heard loud and clear that re-establishing the Governor's Energy Office is a priority for communities across the state. In response, we will relaunch this entity as the Governor's Office of Resiliency, which will focus on water, energy, and land use solutions. This office will help coordinate efforts with the many departments, tribal governments, universities, organizations, and others involved in this effort. Arizona needs partnerships on a local, state, regional, and national level, and I intend to put us in the best position to do so. Next, my administration will issue an executive order to launch the Governor's Water Policy Council to modernize and expand the Arizona Groundwater Management Act. Facing our current reality, it's time to update groundwater management tools and protect groundwater supplies – particularly in our rural communities."

She continued: "We must take these actions today because in many parts of our state, there are effectively no restrictions on groundwater pumping and local communities have little-to-no support to manage water supplies. As a result, a new water user can move in, dig a well, and pump as much water as possible – even if it dries up the community's aquifer. This is why you see a Saudi Arabian conglomerate pumping local groundwater nearly unchecked in La Paz County today, to grow water-intensive crops and send them to the other side of the planet. We all know that's not right. Our groundwater should be used to support Arizonans, not foreign business interests. Let's close this water poaching loophole and work together to modernize the Arizona Groundwater Management Act."

She said: "In addition to this action, my budget allocates funds to help rural communities set up Active Management Areas. All cities and towns in our state need to proactively manage our groundwater, and by funding this program we're providing a powerful tool to ensure we strike a balance between usage and recharging our water table. For the last part of this approach, I look to you, members of the legislature. We are all in this together. Bring forward innovative solutions to this challenge of our time. We cannot let the same old partisan fights drag us down. My administration is ready and willing to work with you and we will always do what's best for Arizona and its people. It is my belief that we all understand the gravity of the challenges before us – and it is my hope that we will use this opportunity to once again prove to the people of our state, the nation, and around the world Arizona's visionary leadership when it comes to ensuring a stable water supply for the millions of people who call this place home." <https://azgovernor.gov/office-arizona-governor/news/2023/01/transcript-governor-hobbs-2023-state-state-address>

Colorado

Governor Jared Polis, on January 17, used his State of the State address to outline his vision for where the Centennial State would be in three years, the State's sesquicentennial (150th anniversary). The key component of this vision was affordable housing and various resource and environmental problems raised by a workforce commuting long distances between communities. He said: "Issues like transportation, water, energy, and more, inherently cross jurisdictional boundaries, it becomes a statewide problem that impacts all of us. We need an approach that creates more housing now, protects Colorado's resources and reduces sprawl. It's clear that the actions of one jurisdiction impact others, especially when it comes to housing, our environment, transportation systems, roads and transit, water and sewer infrastructure, and indeed our economic prosperity and growth.... The people of Colorado expect us to deliver to make housing more affordable. And if we don't act now, we will soon face the point of no return. Just look West. In California, decades of poor planning has led to interruptions of drinking water and electricity for entire towns and cities, average home prices over a

million dollars in major cities, and 16-lane freeways with bumper to bumper traffic. We are not California, we are Colorado. And I refuse to let us make those same mistakes.”

Governor Polis continued: “Just as the future of our state is tied to housing, it’s also tied to water. Water is life in Colorado and the west, it’s as simple as that. But we’re at a crossroads. Increased demand, chronic and extreme drought, conflicts with other states, and devastating climate events are threatening this critical lifesource – and we’ve all seen the impacts. Wildfires have destroyed hundreds of thousands of acres, and devastated entire communities. Farmers and ranchers across the state fear that Colorado won’t have the water resources to sustain the next generation of agricultural jobs. When Colorado is 150, I want our state to have the water resources necessary for our farms, communities, and industries to thrive, and the tools in place to protect our state’s waterways and defend our rights. Your work around housing will truly go a long way to protect water – our most precious resource. But we must also continue investing in water projects around the state.”

He said. “We don’t want to see a single dollar left on the table. For every dollar the state invested in Water Plan grants last year, we got four dollars back. In the last fiscal year, we awarded more than \$23 million in grants that supported nearly \$100 million in projects, and we’re hoping to once again position Colorado to punch above our weight and pull down major investments from the federal government. This includes funding for water infrastructure and water quality projects like the Arkansas Valley Conduit. This project has been years in the making, and the combination of state and federal funding will help get it off the ground, delivering clean drinking water to dozens of communities throughout Southern Colorado. These dollars also translate to restoration of critical streams and waterways, greater access to water for our producers and ranchers, and water security for our communities.”

He added: “But the most important thing we can do for water security is protect our waterways and rights. Hotter, drier conditions have strained our resources in a time when demand continues to grow. Our rivers and streams aren’t just life sources for Colorado, but for the entire American West. We must continue to fight for our rights and lead the way to a sustainable future. The road ahead will be paved with challenges, but we aren’t leaving anything to chance. We are gearing up, and bringing in the expertise we need to defend what is ours. This is about water, but it’s also about our future, our livelihoods, and the very foundation of who we are as Coloradans. The same goes for our approach to climate. We have already secured more than 80% renewable energy by 2030. By the time Colorado is 150 years old, we look forward to having a clear path to 100% renewable energy by 2040. And from there, we will work to make progress towards our statewide climate goals.” <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1jxObT0YaKty058SNrYCADGp4LtDrtKcV/view>

Idaho

On January 10, Governor Brad Little, outlined a new long-range plan for the State during the first State of the State address of his second term. He noted that Idaho’s “tremendous pace of growth is putting a strain on services at the local level,” raising local property taxes. He proposed better ways to pay for growth by making “long-range strategic investments in roads, water, and other key areas to maintain our high quality of life.” He said: “Over the past two years, we made the biggest investments ever in our most precious resource – water. When we invested in drinking water and wastewater infrastructure, we saved Idaho citizens the local taxes or fees they would otherwise pay to cover those improvements. Now I am proposing more investments in water quantity and water quality infrastructure to not only reduce the burden on local property taxpayers but also to secure abundant clean water for years to come.” <https://gov.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/2023-sots.pdf>

Kansas

On January 24, Kansas Governor Laura Kelly, delivered her State of the State address, in which she spoke about making Kansas the best place to raise a family in the country. She outlined her agenda to reduce taxes, improve early childhood services, conserve water, and continue to expand the State’s economy. She said: “This past fall, Secretary of Agriculture Mike Beam and I traveled throughout Western Kansas. We met with leaders from Goodland, to Liberal, and no matter with whom we spoke – Republican or Democrat – we heard one thing over and over: The single most important issue facing Western Kansas – and perhaps all of Kansas – is water. Our water supply is diminishing. Parts of western Kansas have an estimated 10 years left. That’s 10 short years until the water that has powered our booming farming economy dries up. For decades, politicians have kicked the can down the road when it comes to water. Waiting for some miracle to happen is not an option. We have to do something. All that we’ve achieved in the past four years is put at risk by inaction. We are one state, and if any part of our state suffers, we all suffer.”

She continued: “In recognition of this problem, last year, we updated the State Water Plan for the first time since 2009, and we fully funded it for the first time in 15 years. We also paid off state debt on two major water storage projects, freeing up \$30 million for additional water preservation efforts. In this year’s budget, we fully fund the State Water Plan for the second year in a row. We’ll divert more money to water projects by paying off other debt early...and we’ll make additional investments to work with our producers and irrigators to ensure our water quality and quantity.”

She said: “That includes Ron and Marsha Schilling, respectively fourth- and fifth-generation family farmers, whom I met on my trip to Edson, a town near Goodland – along with their granddaughter, Kaelyn. In the early 2000s, water tables indicated that there were very few years left to continue irrigated agriculture in the Goodland area. Instead of throwing up their hands, Ron and Marsha literally threw down their plows, implementing water conservation practices like strip-till and watersaving irrigation technology. Now, 20 years later, it turns out that their work has more than paid off. The Schillings are growing more bushels with less water, increasing the life of the Ogallala Aquifer in their region. In short, they’re making it possible for Kaelyn to become the seventh generation to work their family farm.... Farmers like Ron and Marsha are showing us a path forward. To replicate their success statewide, we will bring even more producers to the table – along with other stakeholders – to ensure a clean, abundant water supply for generations to come.” <https://governor.kansas.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Governor-Laura-Kelly-Delivers-2023-State-of-the-State-Address.pdf>

Montana

On January 25, Montana Governor Greg Gianforte delivered his second State of the State address. He highlighted Montana’s accomplishments over the past two years and emphasized the promise of Montana’s future. Governor Gianforte outlined his priorities, including affordable housing and related water infrastructure. “Last year, I brought together a diverse, bipartisan Housing Task Force.... I made their mission clear; help make owning or renting a home an affordable reality again for more Montanans. They delivered many strategies to increase the supply of affordable, attainable housing. As an example...the HOMES Program invests \$200 million to expand water and sewer infrastructure, and ultimately expand housing capacity throughout our state. I ask you to pass the HOMES Program. Get it to my desk so we can increase the supply of housing – and get more Montanans into a home of their own.” <https://news.mt.gov/Governors-Office/Governor-Gianforte-The-American-Dream-Is-Alive-and-Well-Here-in-Montana>

Nebraska

On January 25, Governor Jim Pillen delivered his first State of the State address. He spoke about bolstering the State’s workforce and improving the State’s critical infrastructure. He noted that prosperity comes from the hardworking people rather than the government. He said: “But we do expect government that does well in those limited functions that only it can perform. We expect low taxes, carefully controlled spending, transparency, and accountability. We expect the business of the people to be handled like business. We expect good schools, quality roads, and safe neighborhoods. We expect a government that promotes opportunity instead of limiting it. And we expect the leaders we elect to work together to find real solutions to difficult challenges. Great people want limited government that respects their freedoms, does its job, and then gets out of their way. Great people want the opportunity to succeed through grit and determination. Great people want to live and work around other great people, and they want their children to do the same. That’s why great people want to live in Nebraska. The demand for the Good Life is as strong as ever, but today, we have real obstacles to overcome. Too much of our talent leaves the state. We have to do a better job of keeping our kids here, equipping them with the skills they’ll need, and attracting even more top-tier talent from across the nation.” <https://bloximages.newyork1.vip.townnews.com/omaha.com/content/tncms/assets/v3/editorial/6/00/60038d54-8d2f-11e4-b06a-870ca472e0f7/63b72566e3843.pdf.pdf>

Nevada

On January 23, Governor Joe Lombardo delivered his first State of the State address. He talked about dealing with water challenges through leadership and partnership. “Our greatest challenge over the next decade may very well be water. Dealing with it will require both partnership and leadership. The Colorado River is in the midst a 22-year drought and Lake Mead is at its lowest level since 1937. Southern Nevada’s unique ability to capture, treat and return water to the Colorado River is a clear competitive advantage, but our future is dependent on our ability to conserve and prioritize our use of water. It is also dependent on our ability to work with the seven basin states and Mexico to deal with short and long-term water resource solutions. Nevada must lead by example and demonstrate our firm resolve to achieve a new balance on the river. Going forward, I will be more involved along with Nevada’s best water experts, in future negotiations with other states, purveyors, and users to bring about necessary change. At the same time, we must apply the same diligence and resolve to protecting Lake Tahoe, so that future generations of Nevadans can enjoy it as much as we have. There are no simple solutions to these complicated water challenges, but we must be assured that our neighbors share the same commitment that we ask of ourselves.” https://gov.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/gov2022nvgov/content/Newsroom/PRs/2023/GovernorJoeLombardo_2023_StateOfTheStateAddress.pdf

New Mexico

On January 17, Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham issued her fifth State of the State address laying out her legislative priorities for the 2023 legislative session. She talked about affordable housing and infrastructure “that brings jobs and opportunity to the people of our state. That’s why I’m also calling for \$128 million in water infrastructure improvements...” and investments in critical workforce development in a cradle-to-career approach.

She talked about the devastation to communities affected by the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon fire and efforts to make them whole with state and federal funds. "We know that these fires were intensified by extreme weather brought on by climate change, and since the beginning of my administration, we have taken that threat seriously – embracing science in order to mitigate climate change's devastating impact, protect our environment and ramp up clean energy production. Through our 30x30 initiative, we are guarding New Mexico's natural resources, increasing access for outdoor recreation and building climate change resilience. We've more than doubled our wind energy capacity and authorized community solar projects – creating exciting clean energy opportunities and jobs that are powering our state."

She continued: "In the days to come, we will redouble our commitment by launching a \$75 million Land of Enchantment Legacy Fund to create sustained funding for state programs that protect our environment, combat issues like drought and water scarcity, and address the roots of climate change. This fund will bolster initiatives like the River Stewardship Program, which safeguards our waterways so New Mexicans can continue to hunt, fish and access clean water – offering economic benefits for this generation and those to follow while strengthening our fragile ecosystems. It will support work like the Healthy Soils Program, which promotes resilient farming, ranching and other agricultural management so that the fruits of our land can continue to feed our people. It will provide resources to endeavors like the Outdoor Equity Fund, which allows young people from every background and community to take advantage of the great outdoors. Already, the Fund has supported 130 organizations that are introducing 37,000 young people to transformational recreational experiences and has become a model for other states and for the nation. Every New Mexican should be able to enjoy and benefit from the unmatched natural resources our state has to offer – not just now, but always. We will also take another step in our sustainability efforts by codifying our zero-emissions goal in state statute – because there should be no question that New Mexico is committed to a cleaner, healthier future. In the coming months and years, we intend to design and implement a range of projects and initiatives to achieve that objective. We will take on this challenge the same way we have approached all others: with creativity, with tenacity, and with the bold and innovative spirit that has always driven us forward." <https://www.governor.state.nm.us/2023/01/17/new-mexico-on-the-move-gov-lujan-grisham-delivers-first-state-of-the-state-address-of-her-second-term-announces-legislative-agenda-for-the-2023-session/>

North Dakota

On January 3, Governor Doug Burgum addressed a joint session of the 68th Legislative Assembly as part of his 2023 State of the State address and called for significant infrastructure investment to help diversify and grow the State's agriculture and energy industries. He also emphasized the need to address the State's workforce challenges. He noted the near-record inflation over the past year and said: "We're grateful to this Legislature for passing a historic bonding bill in 2021 that allowed us to avoid inflation and take advantage of lower interest rates and construction costs, thereby saving millions of taxpayer dollars on roads, bridges, water projects and other critical infrastructure. We've made great progress on DOT's 10-year infrastructure plan, investing \$318 million so far this biennium to rebuild aging roads and bridges and our executive budget proposes an unprecedented \$2.4 billion to accelerate our work. We can also build on the work done on water infrastructure last session by investing over \$600 million to advance flood protection and our regional and critical water supply infrastructure across the state." <https://www.governor.nd.gov/sites/www/files/documents/2023%20State%20of%20the%20State%20Address%20script%20-%20FINAL%20for%20upload.pdf>

South Dakota

On January 10, Governor Kristi Noem, delivered the first State of the State address of her second term. Her speech focused on the economic growth the State experienced under her leadership. She spoke of legislation recognizing occupational licenses from other states, apprenticeships, and other efforts to meet workforce challenges. Concluding her remarks, she said: "In 1790, less than one year after taking office as the first President of the United States, George Washington delivered the first State of the Union Address. Some people think it was the best State of the Union ever delivered. It was the shortest. President Washington delivered an important point that I think we should all remember today: 'The welfare of our country is the great object to which our cares and efforts ought to be directed. I shall derive great satisfaction from cooperation with you in the pleasing – though arduous – task of ensuring to our fellow citizens the blessings which they have a right to expect from a free, efficient, and equal government.' That is still our task today: to ensure a free, efficient, and equal government for the people of South Dakota. I look forward to working with all of you to get it done." https://news.sd.gov/news?id=news_kb_article_view&sys_id=0160a6f91b1029901de443bae54bcb0f

Texas

On January 17, Governor Abbott delivered his Inaugural Address. He said: "Our great economy has produced another record. We now have the largest budget surplus in the history of our state. But make no mistake, that money does not belong to the government. It belongs to the taxpayers. We will use that budget surplus to provide the largest property tax cut in the Texas history." Among other budget priorities, he said: "To ensure that our booming state can meet the needs of our future, we must work this session to bolster our infrastructure including, the roads we drive on, the water we use at home and in the fields, and the ports that we use to ship products around the globe." <https://gov.texas.gov/news/post/governor-abbott-delivers-2023-texas-inaugural-address->

Washington

On January 10, Governor Jay Inslee delivered his first in-person State of the State address since 2020. Heading into the 2023 Legislative Session, Governor Inslee called on Washington's state legislators to address the housing crisis, climate change, salmon recovery, and other social priorities. He said: "On another positive note, one effort we've made tremendous progress on is climate. When we see the tremendous damage climate change is causing in our state, it's understandable to feel some despair. But I think we're also entitled to feel deep pride in what we're accomplishing together. The tremendous pace of innovation, together with the policies we've adopted, ought to give us a significant dose of hope. When I travel and meet with other government leaders from around the world, they know about the work we're doing in Washington. We've passed several landmark policies that are transitioning us to clean transportation, clean electricity and clean buildings. Just last week, our clean fuel standard and cap-and-invest programs went into effect. And we're doing this in a way that ensures overburdened communities will experience the economic and health benefits of this transition."

He talked about the need to shift the focus to implementation and investment, and expanding research and development capacity. "On the investment side, the Climate Commitment Act (CCA) we passed in 2021 is now live. Our state's new cap-and-invest program will allow us, this year, to transform how we invest in transportation and our communities.... The CCA will provide an estimated \$1.7 billion that we will use for projects to drive down emissions, create jobs and make communities healthier. The act is also helping us invest in the strongest suite of salmon recovery actions in state history. Salmon are iconic to our state, and to tribes' cultures and way of life. This will also fund a new voluntary riparian grant program that offers landowners assistance to protect and recover these habitats statewide. Unfortunately, climate change will continue increasing the temperatures of our waters and killing salmon. Providing shade that helps cool rivers and streams is even more critical for the years to come." <https://www.governor.wa.gov/news-media/news-media/speeches/2023-state-state>

Wyoming

On January 11, Governor Mark Gordon addressed the 67th legislature in his State of the State address. As he talked about Wyoming's natural resources, he said: "We in Wyoming are also blessed with another vital resource, water. Managing that water in the midst of a historic drought presents more challenges than ever. We...are hard at work on many fronts, but right now, I want to focus on two – usage and infrastructure. Watersheds across Wyoming are severely stressed. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the Colorado River Basin. Challenges like water curtailments for agriculture, municipalities, and industry are almost inevitable, and we must be prepared to protect our interests. I am asking again for resources that are essential to boost our ability to respond and advocate for water users effectively. That is why I urge you to support the Joint Appropriations budget proposals for the State Engineer. The time has come when action can no longer be delayed. It is undeniable that Wyoming's irrigators, municipalities, and industries are at immediate risk of losing authority over their future."

He continued: "Likewise, old and crumbling infrastructure must be addressed. We are using federal funds effectively in this important area. In 2022, we allocated \$50 million for water projects. Bear in mind, though, the demand was four times that. In the coming years, our state will deploy millions of federal dollars across Wyoming. We know all too well that federal funds come with too many strings. And a gap remains, leaving our smallest communities vulnerable. The Mineral Royalty Grant [MRG] program has filled that gap for decades and remains essential. It has been so critical for communities, especially small communities, across the state to address emergencies, from collapsed sewer lines in Glenrock and ruptured water lines in Thermopolis and Clearmont to the failed water tank in Opal. The SLIB [State Loan and Investment Board] has helped towns make good use of these funds. I ask you to restore funding to the MRG program."

Governor Gordon said: "Over the past four years, my office has worked hard to forge partnerships between the State and the Tribes. We have identified a number of issues severely impacting our Tribes, but that also affect us all.... Second, this year my office has engaged in discussions about settling long-standing disagreements over Tribal off-reservation treaty hunting rights made more acute by recent court rulings. Our conversations were based on recognizing Tribal sovereignty – while respecting the State's authority over conservation and hunting outside the Wind River Reservation. To that end, I am supporting a bill providing the Governor's Office with the authority to enter into agreements with Tribes to resolve hunting rights claims on lands in Wyoming. Finding agreement on this issue will support shared hunting values better than any court decision ever will, and I look forward to passage of this bill." <https://governor.wyo.gov/news-releases/governor-gordon-offers-a-blueprint-for-wyoming-to-lead-the-nation->