

THE  National Association of
NAFSL NEWSLETTER
Former State Legislators

Balanced Federalism ★ State Sovereignty ★ Representative Governance

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Welcome to the first edition of the NAFSL newsletter! In the days ahead, we will be using this format to provide NAFSL updates, links to relevant content, coming soon events and projects, as well as member thoughts and commentary.

Recently, you may have heard about the Texas state legislators who fled their state to block the passage of legislation they did not support. As we launch our association, it is well-timed that we are presented with a remarkable example of decisions and actions that are unbecoming of state legislators.

First of all, we are fortunate to live in a republic where we have a representative form of governance. Whether in the majority or minority, the voice of the people is effectively expressed through those they elect to represent them. When elected representatives fail to participate in the legislative process, the sacred obligation they consented to with their constituents is broken.

Secondly, the presiding officers in the House and Senate are duty bound to guarantee the presence of the people's voice during debate and voting. They need to make sure that a quorum is always at hand so that the urgent and necessary work of the people can be carried forward, regardless of the issue. Legislative leadership has the authority to mandate the presence of elected representatives and lawfully penalize any unexcused absences.

Finally, and most importantly, a state legislator is responsible to guard the sovereignty of their state; to uphold and respect the balanced federalism defined in the US Constitution. This fundamental trust was blatantly breached when the Texas state legislators traveled to Washington, DC to collude with the national government in their quest to violate the sovereignty of the states with yet another proposed edict that is clearly unconstitutional.

In essence, through their actions, these state legislators have disqualified themselves from holding office and ought to be replaced with public servants who better understand the fundamentals of governance, and who are prepared to represent the voice of their constituents and the sovereignty of their state.

Moving forward, I am hopeful that the NAFSL will have a positive influence on elected state legislators across the country: educating, providing counsel, and helping them to be more discerning in the future.



James Kallinger, President
National Association of Former State Legislators