



Annual Highlights

INTERNATIONAL Legislators' Forum

Over more than two decades, the International Legislators' Forum has focused on the following regional issues:

MB 2001 Winnipeg	Sponsorship of 2Nation Tours, a travel and tourism program among the four jurisdictions.
MN 2002 St. Paul	Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) among legislative leaders in the four jurisdictions to meet annually and provide substantial support for Conservation Reserve Enhancement Programs (and analogous programs in Canada) to address flooding, drought, and water quality issues.
SD 2003 Brookings	Established a regional renewable fuel working group, Powering the Plains (PTP), and began efforts toward cooperation and coordination among emergency management officials from the four jurisdictions.
ND 2004 Fargo	Launched study of methamphetamine and pharmaceutical issues across borders to address addiction and incarceration alternatives.
MB 2005 Winnipeg	Building on cross-border methamphetamine agreements, broadened discussion to collaboratively address interjurisdictional criminal justice issues.
MN 2006 St. Paul	Emphasized the importance of basing water-related public policy issues on sound science. Supported efforts of the four jurisdictions' attorneys general and justice minister to address methamphetamine and criminal justice issues, and the signing of an interjurisdictional Amber Alert MOU to enhance mobilization in child abduction cases.
SD 2007 Pierre	Provided broad support for the Regional Energy Roadmap developed by PTP participants, supported the enhancement of broadband technology in rural areas, and expressed significant concerns to the US Department of Homeland Security and relevant Canadian entities about the implementation of the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative.

ND 2008 Bismarck	Highlighted issues related to rural community development, health, and infrastructure issues, including the need for further enhancement of broadband technology in the region, and continued discussions of water (LIDAR mapping), energy, and cross-border identification issues.
MB 2009 Gimli	While specifically focusing on Lake Winnipeg, delegates developed agreements to address regional water quality and quantity issues, regional energy issues, and cross-border security, identification, and tourism.
MN 2010 Moorhead	Discussed water issues in the Red River Basin, including recommendations from the Red River Basin Commission regarding management, impoundment, retention, and diversion. Additional highlights included energy, commerce, border security, and the media.
SD 2011 Brookings	Updates on developments in the Red River Basin; explored research and development efforts within the four jurisdictions and existing and potential opportunities for collaboration.
ND 2012 Grand Forks	Focus on energy (integrated regulations), water (basin-wide collaboration), and trade (coordination and harmonization of regulations and policies).
MB 2013 Winnipeg	Surveyed existing regional economic relationships and explored options to leverage cross-border relationships to strengthen the economic future of all jurisdictions. Outlined a set of general principles regarding energy development and related policies.
MN 2014 Moorhead	Focus on agriculture: historical aspects, current industry role regionally and nationally, existing and developing technologies, and increasing food supply demands for the world's growing population.
SD 2015 Deadwood	Addressed infrastructure and highway and railway regulation, current and future workforce needs, and updates, regulations, and initiatives in the Missouri River Basin.
ND 2016 Grand Forks	Explored differences in Canadian and US regulatory models concerning genetically modified organisms; aquatic invasive species regulation and management within and between jurisdictions; and Canadian and US federal laws and jurisdictional steps to decrease human trafficking.
MB 2017 Winnipeg	Discussed farmland use of drain tile, criminal justice reform and reinvestments, and alternative energy and energy systems. Toured the Canadian Museum for Human Rights.
MN 2018 Biwabik	Focus on international trade impacting the northern plains and environmental permitting and review. Toured Soudan Underground Mine State Park and US Steel Corporation's Minntac Mine in Mountain Iron.
SD 2019 Sioux Falls	Examined local efforts to improve Big Sioux River water quality, regional impacts of marijuana legalization, and the opioid crisis in the northern plains.
Virtual 2020	Three virtual sessions to discuss the economic and public health impacts of COVID-19, and how to govern in a time of pandemic.
Virtual 2021	Two virtual sessions to discuss drought and water rights in our region, along with cross-border commerce during COVID-19 and strengthening regional economies.
ND 2022 Bismarck	Delegates returned to gathering in person after two years of gathering virtually. Primary topics included tribal sovereignty and government relations, and freight movement and trucking concerns.

MB 2023 Winnipeg	Explored North American water issues, Indigenous and rural behavioral health, and government-to-government collaboration. Delegates toured the Manitoba Legislative Building and learned about the Canadian parliamentary system.
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