



Information Sheet

NGA Office of Management Consulting & Training

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Governors' Legacy Projects

Building a Record of the Administration's Work & Accomplishments

During the final year in office, many outgoing governors and their staff undertake legacy projects in order to preserve a record of the work and accomplishments of their administration. The format, scope, and content of legacy pieces vary widely based on the objectives of each administration.

While the formats may differ, most legacy pieces are organized as follows:

1. The introduction consists of an overview or summary of achievements, and a letter or statement from the governor.
2. The main text is usually organized by key issue areas and accomplishments, or possibly by year in order to describe significant actions and highlights from the governor's term(s) in office.
3. The closing section provides a final summary of the administration's achievements and often includes a listing of state cabinet members; biographies of the governor, lieutenant governor, and governor's spouse; and final pictures or notable quotes about or by the governor.

Unique additions which are often included are photos (of significant events, outings throughout the state, bill signings, and the First Family); excerpts from speeches such as state of the state or inaugural addresses; and succinct timelines of the governor's years in office. Some legacy books are written in a narrative format while others are developed as a record of accomplishment with short, bulleted summaries.

It is helpful to take into account both technology and longevity when deciding on the best approach for your governor's legacy project. Using a variety of mediums can help make this effort an ongoing "work in progress" during the final year while also reaching out to a wider audience. For example, using the governor's website can help create an online summary for public view, and then this version can be the basis for a more formal electronic or hard copy available for distribution or archives. Finally, the most important consideration is to develop a plan from the beginning of the governor's term in office. To leave a lasting legacy, decide on day one the best way to consistently record and archive the significant achievements of the administration.

Additional Information

For more detailed research on specific state legacy projects, please contact Christie Amberman, Senior Management Analyst in NGA's Office of Management Consulting & Training (202/624-5370; camberman@nga.org).