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State and Local Government by the People is about the institutions and political forces that shape policy-making and policy outcomes in state and local communities. To those of us who are students of American politics, states and their local government subdivisions are fascinating political laboratories that allow comparisons among different political systems and traditions. States vary in the powers given to governors, the structure of their legislatures, their judicial review and selection processes, and their policies, including how they impose taxes. The party system is much weaker in some regions of the country than in others. State legislatures in some of the smaller or rural states meet for just a few months a year, whereas in other states, they meet year-round. The importance of interest groups and the media varies from state to state and from city to city. Generalizations are sometimes difficult, yet we try in this book to summarize what political scientists know about state and local politics and government.

One particular current policy choice illustrates the continuing role of state and local governments—the Affordable Care Act or “Obamacare.” More than half of the states joined business groups and others in challenging the constitutionality of the legislation. Since the Supreme Court ruled most of the act constitutional but made the expansion of Medicaid voluntary, the states face the choice of whether or not to implement the Medicaid expansion provisions. Decisions made by the individual states will have consequences for the people in those states. Like welfare reform in the 1990s, health care reform is an issue that impacts governments at all levels.

State and local government is the most common way government services are provided because it is closer to the people. Those who want better government in their communities and states will be more likely to achieve it by doing something to make it happen. If government by the people is to be more than just rhetoric, citizens must understand state and local politics and be willing to form political alliances, respect and protect the rights of those with whom they differ, and serve as citizen leaders and citizen politicians. We hope this book will motivate you to appreciate that every person can make a difference, and that we should each work toward this end.

New to This Edition

The new edition of State and Local Government by the People builds on the long-standing reputation of this book for strong coverage of the foundations of American state and local government that is accurate, accessible, and current. We integrated the latest in scholarship on American politics and government, the 2012 elections, recent Supreme Court appointments and decisions, and comparisons with countries around the world into a book that introduces you to the subject and the discipline of political science.

Chapter 1 begins with an example of the current budget challenges faced by California. This and other new examples in the chapter illustrate how the economy and even international relations affect governments at all levels. The chapter has a new section on how individuals can influence state and local governments.

Chapter 2 opens with a discussion of recent state regulations on undocumented aliens. Several states—Alabama and Arizona are examples—have passed tougher legislation on undocumented aliens than the U.S.
government has. The constitutionality of these efforts was tested in a 2012 U.S. Supreme Court case. A new feature directs students to a Web site that allows them to create tables and graphs displaying information about their state.

Chapter 3 has been updated to include a timely discussion of state constitutional efforts to deal with the question of same-sex marriage, one of the most hotly debated topics in politics today and an excellent lens through which to analyze the importance of state constitutions. An expanded section on new judicial federalism addresses the important role state courts play in protecting individual liberties as the courts increasingly decide cases using their own state constitutions rather than the U.S. Constitution.

Chapter 4 reviews the impacts of the reapportionment that occurred in 2011 and 2012 and provides a current and expanded discussion of the redistricting process. The chapter also explores the important agenda-setting role of ballot initiatives and referendums. With states experimenting with new ways to vote—by mail or electronically, for example—the chapter examines why these reforms were instituted and what has changed as a result of their adoption.

Chapter 5 places state legislatures in their historical context as predating the U.S. Constitution. The chapter explores similarities and differences between state legislatures and the U.S. Congress. One important similarity is a reliance on committees to do much of the work. New to this edition is information on how to contact your representative in the state legislature on a new, contentious policy issue—hydraulic fracturing for natural gas.

Chapter 6 has been updated to include results from the 2010 and 2012 elections in a broader analysis of gubernatorial elections. Although states vary in the power they give the governor, all governors have important formal and informal powers. For example, governors typically have the power to pardon criminals. As discussed in the new opener, former Illinois Governor George Ryan exercised that power when he pardoned four death row inmates and commuted the sentence of all 167 death row inmates to life sentences.

Chapter 7 includes an updated and enhanced discussion of judicial elections and campaign contributions. State courts, like their federal counterparts, are becoming increasingly diverse, and this chapter also includes updated data on the presence of women and racial and ethnic minority judges in the state judiciary. The chapter has a new section evaluating the different state judicial selection procedures. It includes new discussions on the changing treatment of the death penalty in the states, the role of court monitoring groups, and efforts in some states to publicly fund judicial elections.

Chapter 8 taps into service delivery by local government. The example of volunteer fire departments in suburban New York City is provided to demonstrate how local governments are attempting to provide effective and efficient services in a time of financial difficulty. Local units of government—counties, cities, towns, school districts and special districts—are described and analyzed. The chapter also presents an example of how people can make a difference in local zoning and school decisions.

Chapter 9 examines the policy-making that occurs at the state and local levels. Using education as an example, the chapter includes a current examination of efforts by governments at all levels to improve public education. Of particular interest to college students is a section on higher education funding and the issue of increasing student debt to pay for the shifting costs of higher education.

Chapter 10 includes an updated discussion of an important consequence of the economic challenges faced by the United States in recent years: growing debt in some states and many localities. There is a renewed focus on lowering costs in local and state governments, as well as adequately staffing government in a time of shrinking budgets. A new feature in this chapter examines the growing occurrence of local government bankruptcy and the political and financial issues that result from this.
Features

We have not forgotten the long tradition of scholarship that has always made this book credible to the political science community, but we have brought new perspectives, current examples, and timely data to make sure every student knows that American government is as relevant to their lives today as it was when our book was first published.

We are obviously proud of what our co-authors produced in prior editions. At the same time, we do not rest on the past by merely updating what has come before. We want this book to live on as an example of how to integrate the basic arguments about what the framers created with what is happening now and changing.

Toward this goal, we continue to present the book in an accessible tier of increasingly detailed knowledge—we start each chapter with a clear introduction intended to engage the students in the topic. From our first chapter on state and local politics we turn to federalism and the constitutional foundations of state governments and then to parties and elections in the states. We then focus on institutions in successive chapters: legislatures, governors, and judges. Our focus then turns to local government. We conclude the book by looking at policy-making, staffing, and financing at the state and local levels. The book flows naturally from one section to the other, but we invite you to present these chapters in any order that fits your own teaching plan.

Whatever the order you use, you will always find four features in each chapter that ask students to think critically about how a government of, by, and for the people operates:

- **Diversity in America.** In important ways, the people of the United States today are much more diverse than at any previous time. This feature explores the impact of the ever-increasing level of diversity in the American political landscape, including how race and gender are changing the way the American government works. These unique boxes are designed to reflect the concerns and experiences of ethnic and minority groups in American politics.

- **Making a Difference.** Citizens have many options for influencing government—for example, combining data sets to create mash-ups that help explain pressing problems such as obesity, telling their stories to news organizations, tracking government spending, staying in touch with the governor’s office, lobbying for education policy, tweeting their state legislators, and becoming involved in campus and community life by building playgrounds, registering voters, and even monitoring college investments.

- **Government’s Greatest Endeavors.** The public has asked government to solve many difficult, important problems in the effort to meet the Constitution’s promise of a more perfect union. This feature asks students to explore the benefits and challenges of great endeavors such as reducing disease, fighting discrimination, creating a safe voting process, reducing crime, building the Internet, and fighting campaign corruption.

- **You Will Decide.** Your students face a daunting list of choices about the difficult, important problems ahead. This feature asks students to think through a real decision they will help government decide, such as end of life choice, hydraulic fracturing for natural gas, eminent domain, and federal efforts to encourage states to increase funding for higher education. Given the pros and cons of each question, students are asked to make the call.

This edition expands on the framework of learning pedagogy to help you see the structure of each chapter’s discussion, focus on the most important
concepts, and apply what you are learning to understand American politics and government. The author team has developed a list of learning objectives—the concepts professors teaching this course most often want their students to understand—to shape and guide the development of this edition. Each chapter opens with a list of these learning objectives, highlighting the learning goals for that chapter. Key terms are called out in the text margins as the concepts are discussed, and a summary and self-test at the end of each chapter provide students with a final check of their understanding of the chapter.

These many features, tools, and updates bring the book into the present. Students will see how an example is related to their reality. They will better understand why the Constitution and history matter to solving big problems and making a difference in our highly polarized debate. The challenges facing the United States today are clearly explained as well as why they matter to citizens.

Ultimately, the book draws upon its own past to show students that others have made a difference before, and that they can make their own difference today. We want all students to become active participants in our democracy, and we have written a book that gives them an invitation to engage. This is the enduring commitment of the book and one that we take very seriously when we sit down every two years to bring state and local government back into focus through a vibrant emphasis on what they need to know as citizens and participants.

Supplements

Pearson is pleased to offer several resources to qualified adopters of State and Local Government by the People and their students that will make teaching and learning from this book even more effective and enjoyable. Several of the supplements for this book are available at the Instructor Resource Center (IRC), an online hub that allows instructors to quickly download book-specific supplements. Please visit the IRC welcome page at www.pearsonhighered.com/irc to register for access.

**MYSEARCHLAB.** For over 10 years, instructors and students have reported achieving better results and better grades when a Pearson MyLab has been integrated into the course. MySearchLab provides engaging experiences that personalize learning, and comes from a trusted partner with educational expertise and a deep commitment to helping students and instructors achieve their goals. A wide range of writing, grammar, and research tools, and access to a variety of academic journals, census data, Associated Press newsfeeds, and discipline-specific readings help students hone their writing and research skills. To order MySearchLab with this text, use ISBN 0-205-96653-5.

**INSTRUCTOR’S MANUAL/TEST BANK.** This resource includes learning objectives, lecture outlines, multiple-choice questions, true/false questions, and essay questions for each chapter. Available exclusively on the IRC.

**PEARSON MYTEST.** This powerful assessment generation program includes all of the items in the instructor’s manual/test bank. Questions and tests can be easily created, customized, saved online, and then printed, allowing flexibility to manage assessments anytime and anywhere. Available exclusively on the IRC.

**POWERPOINT PRESENTATION.** Organized around a lecture outline, these multimedia presentations also include photos, figures, and tables from each chapter. Available exclusively on the IRC.
Acknowledgments

The writing of this book has profited from the informed, professional, and often critical suggestions of our colleagues around the country. This and previous editions have been considerably improved as a result of reviews by the following individuals, for which we thank them all:

State and Local Government by the People began in 1948 when two young assistant professors, James MacGregor Burns of Williams College and Jack W. Peltason of Smith College, decided to partner and write an American government text. Their first edition had a publication date of 1952. Their aim was to produce a well-written, accessible, and balanced look at government and politics in the United States. As authors have become a part of this book, they have embraced that objective. Tom Cronin of Colorado College and David O’Brien of the University of Virginia have been co-authors and made important contributions to the book. As the current authors of State and Local Government by the People, we are grateful for the legacy we have inherited.

Writing the book requires teamwork—first among the co-authors who converse often about the broad themes, features, and focus of the book and who read and rewrite each other’s drafts; then with our research assistants, who track down loose ends and give us the perspective of current students; and finally with the editors and other professionals at Pearson. We are especially grateful for the work of Carmine Scavo on this edition. He has brought an energy to this revision that we have all felt. Research assistants for the current edition of State and Local Government by the People are Troy Anderson, Ethan Busby, Olivia Crellin, Rebecca Eaton, Eric Hoyt, and Katie Van Eaton Kleinert of Brigham Young University. We express appreciation to the superb team at Pearson who have been so supportive and worked so hard to produce this beautiful new edition: political science editor Vikram Mukhija, development editor Corey Kahn, production editor Joan Foley, Marisa Taylor at GEX for composition and layout, Carolyn Arcabascio at PreMediaGlobal for photo research, and editorial assistant Emily Sauerhoff.

We also want to thank you, the professors and students who use our book, and who send us letters and e-mail messages with suggestions for improving State and Local Government by the People. Please write us in care of Pearson Education or contact us directly:

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