

Legislator Compensation in Connecticut and Other States

By: Kristin Sullivan, Chief Analyst
February 3, 2020 | 2020-R-0041

Issue

Compare legislator compensation, including base salary increases, in states with part-time legislatures that are similar to Connecticut's legislature.

Summary

The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) maintains compensation information for all 50 state legislatures. It designates Connecticut and 25 other states as having “hybrid” legislatures, generally meaning that they are part-time but share some characteristics of full-time legislatures. Typically, legislators in these states spend more than two-thirds of a full-time job on legislative work but have other income sources. In addition, these legislatures typically (1) serve states in the middle of the population range and (2) maintain medium- to large-sized staff.

According to NCSL, in 2019, the following hybrid states paid the five highest annual base salaries to legislators: Washington (\$52,766); Maryland (\$50,330); New Jersey (\$49,000); Alabama (\$48,123); and Delaware (\$46,291). These hybrid states paid the five lowest annual base salaries: Texas (\$7,200); South Carolina (\$10,400); Nebraska (\$12,000); North Carolina (\$13,951); and Georgia (\$17,342).

Since 2000, nine hybrid states have increased legislators' annual base salaries at least five times, whereas 11 states, including Connecticut, have increased legislators' annual base salaries once or not at all. One state, Oklahoma, decreased the annual base salaries by 8.8% in 2019.

Of the 26 hybrid states, eight, including Connecticut, use some form of a compensation commission in the salary-setting process, according to NCSL. (In Connecticut, the commission makes recommendations for action by the General Assembly, which then sets the amount in statute ([CGS § 2-9a](#)).) Alabama ties legislator salary to the state's median income. In the remaining states, the legislature sets the amount in statute.

Current Legislator Compensation

In most hybrid states, legislators' salary consists of an annual base salary, as well as a sessional per diem allowance. For the 26 hybrid states, Table 1 lists the 2019 base salary and the session rate. (The table does not include transportation reimbursement, which most states also provide.)

Table 1: Legislator Compensation in Hybrid States: 2019

State	Base Salary (annual, unless noted)	Session Rate (per day, unless noted)
Alabama	\$48,123	Up to \$100, depending on trip length
Arizona	\$24,000	\$35 or \$60 for regular sessions, depending on residential distance from the Capitol; an additional \$10 for special sessions
Arkansas	\$41,394	\$55 or \$149, depending on residential distance from the Capitol
Colorado	\$40,242, for terms beginning Jan. 2019	\$45 or up to \$171, depending on residential distance from the Capitol
Connecticut	\$28,000	\$5,500 per year for senators; \$4,500 per year for representatives
Delaware	\$46,291	\$2,637.60 per year
Florida	\$29,697	\$163, based on the number of days spent at the Capitol
Georgia	\$17,342	\$173
Indiana	\$26,490	\$181
Iowa	\$25,000	\$126.75 or \$169, depending on residential distance from the Capitol
Kentucky	\$188.22 per day	\$163.90
Louisiana	\$16,800 (senators) \$22,800 (representatives)	\$161
Maryland	\$50,330	\$109 for lodging; \$47 for meals
Minnesota	\$45,000	\$86 for senators; \$66 for representatives
Missouri	\$35,915	\$119
Nebraska	\$12,000	\$55 or \$149, depending on residential distance from the Capitol
Nevada	\$159.89 (up to 60 days)	\$149

Table 1 (continued)

State	Base Salary (annual, unless noted)	Session Rate (per day, unless noted)
New Jersey	\$49,000	None
North Carolina	\$13,951	\$104
Oklahoma	\$35,021	\$156
Oregon	\$31,200	\$149
South Carolina	\$10,400	\$170
Tennessee	\$24,316	\$61 or \$240, depending on residential distance from the Capitol
Texas	\$7,200	\$221
Virginia	\$18,000 (senators) \$17,640 (representatives)	\$213
Washington	\$52,766	\$120

Primary Source: NCSL, [State Legislatures Legislative Compensation and Living Expense Allowances During Sessions](#), 2019

Changes in Legislator Salaries Since 2000

Tables 2 and 3 below show the percentage increases in hybrid states' legislator salaries from 2000 to 2009 and 2010 to 2019, respectively. Table 3 also provides the total number of salary increases since 2000.

Table 2: Percentage Increases in Legislator Compensation: 2000 to 2009

State	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Alabama	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Arizona	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Arkansas	-	2.1%	-	7.7%	-	2.3%	-	5.0%	2.0%	2.0%
Colorado	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Connecticut	28.5%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Delaware	3.8%	8.8%	-	4.2%	4.9%	9.0%	-	5.6%	1.8%	-
Florida	2.8%	2.8%	-	-	7.2%	-	-	3.6%	3.0%	-
Georgia	-	42.8%	-	-	-	2.0%	-	5.0%	-	-
Indiana	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	95.0%
Iowa	-	-	-	-	3.0%	-	-	16.9%	-	-
Kentucky	1.7%	3.0%	3.3%	-	-	4.2%	-	6.1%	2.0%	1.0%
Louisiana	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Maryland	-	3.0%	-	-	-	28.5%	-	7.4%	-	-
Minnesota	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 2 (continued)

<i>State</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2004</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2006</i>	<i>2007</i>	<i>2008</i>	<i>2009</i>
Missouri	-	8.5%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14.6%
Nebraska	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nevada	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6.1%	-	6.1%
New Jersey	-	40.0%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
North Carolina	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Oklahoma	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Oregon	4.1%	2.0%	-	-	-	5.8%	-	13.0%	8.0%	8.7%
South Carolina	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tennessee	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9.8%	-	4.9%
Texas	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Virginia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Washington	10%	3.0%	-	4.7%	2.0%	-	-	6.1%	13.7%	2.0%

Primary Source: NCSL, Legislator Compensation: Salary Change by Year (2000-2019)

**Table 3: Percentage Increases in Legislator Compensation, 2010 to 2019,
and Total Increases Since 2000**

<i>State</i>	<i>2010</i>	<i>2011</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>Total Increases Since 2000</i>
Alabama	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4.5%	7.5%	4.0%	3
Arizona	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Arkansas	-	3.3%	-	-	-	148%	-	-	5.00%	-	9
Colorado	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	34.1%*	1
Connecticut											1
Delaware	-	-	-	3.0%	-	1.1%	-	1.7%	-	2.2%	11
Florida	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
Georgia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Indiana	-	-	-	-	6.7%	-	2.2%	3.1%	2.0%	2.1%	6
Iowa	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Kentucky	-	0.8%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
Louisiana	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	35.7%**	-	1
Maryland	-	-	-	-	-	3.9%	1.9%	3.7%	5.4%	-	7
Minnesota	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	44.5%	-	1
Missouri	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Nebraska	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Nevada	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3.0%	-	6.1%	4

Table 3 (continued)

State	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Total Increases Since 2000
New Jersey	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
North Carolina	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Oklahoma	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-8.8%	-1
Oregon	-	-	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%	2.0%	2.2%	2.7%	-	28.8%	13
South Carolina	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Tennessee	-	-	-	-	6.3%	3.4%	-	8.5%	-	7.3%	6
Texas	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Virginia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Washington	-	-	-	-	-	-	3.0%	2.0%	2.0%	8.3%	11

*for terms beginning Jan. 2019

**for representatives only

Primary Source: NCSL, Legislator Compensation: Salary Change by Year (2000-2019)

KS:kl