Justice Sandra Day O’Connor and Bill Gates to Talk about the Future of Education at the ECS National Forum on Education Policy in Atlanta

Denver – Justice Sandra Day O’Connor and Bill Gates will join an exemplary lineup of speakers at the Education Commission of the States’ (ECS) 2012 National Forum on Education Policy in Atlanta on July 9-11. The meeting, “Innovation and Opportunity: Moving the Needle on Student Success,” will convene 400 of the top state policymakers and education leaders to hear from some of the world’s most innovative and thoughtful education reform experts.

Retired Associate Justice Sandra Day O’Connor will make the case for civic education and how we can ensure our country’s children are active participants in our democracy.

In a separate keynote address, Bill Gates, Chair of Microsoft and co-Chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, will talk about the importance of quality teacher evaluation and development programs and why it is important for state policymakers to play a key role in these efforts.

The 47th annual ECS National Forum on Education Policy is the ideal venue for these discussions. State policy leaders from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. territories will discuss critical issues facing U.S. education—from PreK through postsecondary. As the nation’s premier education policy event, the National Forum provides the unusual opportunity for governors, legislators, chief state school officers, state higher education leaders, business leaders, and practitioners to hear from experts on current education trends and engage in balanced and thoughtful discussions on how state policy can increase student achievement and educational attainment.

This year’s meeting will tackle a wide range of issues states are currently addressing, including the Common Core State Standards, college readiness, postsecondary affordability, early childhood education, using technology to improve achievement, and how to increase the civic literacy of citizens. Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper, current ECS Chair, will preside over the meeting.

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ECS is the only nationwide organization to bring together governors, legislators, chief state school officers, higher education officials and others to identify, develop and implement public policies to improve student achievement. Since 1965, we have tracked policy, translated research, provided unbiased advice, and created opportunities for state policymakers to learn from one another. ECS is located in Denver and maintains the nation's most extensive clearinghouse on education policy.

*Equipping Education Leaders, Advancing Ideas*