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Pioneer Institute Announces Winner of 20th Annual Better Government Competition

Texas Governor Rick Perry to Deliver Keynote at September 13th Awards Ceremony

BOSTON, MA – Pioneer Institute is pleased to announce that “**A Proposal for State and Local Government Pension Reform,**” submitted by [State Representative Will Brownsberger](#) (D-Belmont), is the winner of the [20th annual Better Government Competition](#) (BGC). If implemented, Brownsberger’s proposal would make Massachusetts’ pension system fairer, more transparent, and financially sustainable.

The winner and four runners-up were selected by a distinguished panel of judges from the business, academic, and media communities:

- Ralph Jones, Ph.D., Managing Director, The Cadmus Group, Inc., Watertown
- Brian Shortsleeve, Growth Equity, General Catalyst Partners, Cambridge
- Chris Sinacola, Editorial Page Editor, *Worcester Telegram & Gazette*
- Peter Skerry, Ph.D., Professor of Political Science, Boston College
- Patrick Wilmerding, Chairman, Private Signals, Inc., Boston

The winning entry proposes enrolling new hires at all levels of government into a single pension program, ultimately consolidating boards and alleviating taxpayer burden. Representative Brownsberger has submitted this plan as legislation.

The four runners-up to the BGC 2011 Competition are:

- **Healthy Indiana Plan (HIP)**, submitted by Seema Verma. This proposal established the nation's first consumer-driven coverage program for low-income, uninsured adults, as an alternative to traditional Medicaid. HIP features a comprehensive high deductible health plan and a modified Health Savings Account, which encourages members to become thoughtful and engaged health care consumers.
- **Arizona Correctional Industries**, submitted by Bill Branson. Under this plan, private sector companies commit to the parameters set by a government agency to provide inmate labor at telemarketing centers, manufacturing plants, or off-site locations for agricultural services.
- **Tele-ICU Initiative**, submitted by the New England Healthcare Institute at the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative. This proposal would deploy a single Tele-ICU command center to remotely provide specialized care for up to 500 ICU patients. Physicians and specialists could remotely care for up to 75 patients at a time. Implementation would result in improved care, lives saved, lower costs, and increased productivity. Clinical savings to date are estimated at \$122 million per year.

- **Florida Plan Review**, submitted by Diann Worzalla. This proposal accelerates the licensing process, improving customer service and protecting public health.

To learn more about this year's winning entry, runners-up, and special recognition recipients, please visit Pioneer's website: http://pioneerinstitute.org/programs_bgc.php.

“Deep fiscal challenges and a persistently weak economy mean we can't put off big reforms any longer,” said Pioneer executive director Jim Stergios. “It's time to get serious and put real solutions on the table to long-term liabilities and ‘budget busters.’ This year's winning ideas are a blueprint to make our pension and Medicaid systems sustainable well into the future, without undermining the purpose of these important programs.”

[The 20th annual Better Government Competition Awards Ceremony](#) is scheduled to take place on Tuesday, September 13th from 6:00 to 9:00 pm. At the event, Pioneer Institute will recognize award winners before an expected audience of over 350 elected officials, policy leaders, and members of the business community. To mark the 20th anniversary of this nationally acclaimed citizens' ideas contest, Pioneer will produce a retrospective that features short video clips of two decades of winners and a publication containing brief overviews and updates on their proposals.

[Texas Governor Rick Perry](#) will deliver the Keynote address at the ceremony. Governor Perry's four terms have focused on reforms in the areas of education, border security, litigation, fiscal responsibility, and economic development. He began his public service career as a United States Air Force pilot, before winning election to three consecutive terms in the Texas House of Representatives. He served as Lieutenant Governor and Commissioner of Agriculture, prior to becoming Governor in 2000.

“The over 200 submissions to this year's Better Government Competition were exceptional, full of common sense policy reforms that can save money at every level of government,” says Shawni Littlehale, director of the Better Government Competition. “I believe that the judges chose the five winning papers that reflect innovations that will help state and local governments balance their budgets.”

Over the last two decades, ideas generated by the Better Government Competition have helped Pioneer save taxpayers of the Commonwealth over half a billion dollars and, just as importantly, improve the quality of the services they receive.

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[Pioneer Institute](#) is an independent, non-partisan, privately funded research organization that seeks to improve the quality of life in Massachusetts through civic discourse and intellectually rigorous, data-driven public policy solutions based on free market principles, individual liberty and responsibility, and the ideal of effective, limited and accountable government.