ARE THE RADICALS TAKING OVER?

House Control Will Hinge On The Dirty Thirty

2019's Policy Victories (So Far)
Contents

4   President’s Overview: Are the Radicals Taking Over?  
    Adam Brandon, President

6   The Center for Economic Freedom  
    Parissa Sedghi Fornwalt, Vice President of Development

8   The Dirty Thirty  
    Adam Brandon, President

12  Freedom Files: Adam Brandon with Congressman Russ Fulcher  
    Andrew Hill, Senior Grant Relations Coordinator

14  Member of Congress Spotlight: Congressman Jody Hice (R-GA)  
    Jason Pye, Vice President of Legislative Affairs

16  2019’s Policy Victories (So Far)  
    Jason Pye, Vice President of Legislative Affairs

20  Worth Repeating: Green is the New Red  
    Stephen Moore, FreedomWorks Senior Economic Contributor

21  Book Review: Our Lost Declaration  
    Andrew Hill, Senior Grant Relations Coordinator
22 Activist Spotlight: Chris Hopkins
Emily Stack, Director of Campaigns

24 Worth Repeating: Peppa Pig Mocks the Insulting Conceit of Elizabeth Warren
John Tamny, VP and Director of the Center for Economic Freedom

25 Worth Repeating: “Expert Opinion” is Wrong Again
Adam Brandon, President

26 Booming Vs. Bust
Clara Del Villar, Director of Senior Initiatives

28 Cutting Red Tape
Daniel Savickas, Federal Affairs Manager

29 Partner Profile: Working with Allies
Colby Bledsoe, Director of Campaigns

30 10 Things I Hate About Federal Price Controls on Drugs
Ken Cuccinelli, Director of the Regulatory Action Center

32 Freedom at Work: Derwood Chase
Phil Bel, Director of External Affairs

34 FreedomWorks 2019 May Activist Fly-In
Emily Stack, Director of Grassroots
With 23 Democrats now seeking their party’s nomination for President of the United States, the race for 2020 is on. If you believe in the Constitution, free markets, and individual liberty, it’s nothing less than a horror show.

In the mad rush to get to the front of the pack, every one of the candidates in the primaries is veering further left than we’ve ever seen the Democrat party go with their embrace of poisonous identity politics, reparations, packing the U.S. Supreme Court, full-blown government-run healthcare, the “Green New Deal,” draconian restrictions on political speech, and massive new taxes and spending.

“Socialism” is now fully embraced by most of the Democrat Party. In fact, one candidate – former Governor John Hickenlooper (D) of Colorado – was actually booed at the California State Democratic Convention for simply stating, “Socialism is not the answer.”

Governor Hickenlooper would have been considered on the left wing of his party not that long ago for his embrace of nationalized healthcare and the “Green New Deal.”

But today, we’re seeing a Democrat Party that’s more radical than any we’ve ever seen.

Why?

The Left’s grassroots are emboldened. They believe President Trump will be political toast in 2020. They believe the Deep State, the bogus “Russia collusion” investigation, and constant media attacks have inflicted a mortal political wound on the President.

They don’t think they need to be “practical” to win. They think they have 2020 in the bag.

The truth is, it’s not just the media and President Trump’s low approval numbers that has the Left so emboldened today. It’s the grassroots machine they’ve built.

MoveOn.org, Indivisible, and other left-wing groups are flush with cash and energetic activists. As the ACLU’s Executive Director Anthony Romero stated, “We have bodies the likes of which we’ve never had before. We actually have dollars the likes of which we’ve never seen before.”

2020 promises to be one of the most hard-fought election years America has ever seen. And the stakes could not be higher.

With everything that’s on the line, we have to start fighting back now.

By Adam Brandon
The good news is, your support for FreedomWorks is helping us lay the groundwork for a successful 2020. In the following pages of this magazine, you’ll see how your contributions are making a difference – whether that’s passing reforms at the state level, implementing our “Dirty Thirty” Campaign Plan to help take back the U.S. House in 2020, our work educating the American people on free market economics with the Center for Economic Freedom, or the Regulatory Action Center’s efforts to unwind the Regulatory State.

Each of these efforts is an important part of our full-scale plan for 2020.

The good news is, despite liberal excitement, only three incumbent Presidents have lost reelection since World War II. The economy is strong. Unemployment is at 50-year lows. African-American and Hispanic unemployment are at historic lows.

And thanks to the support of our donors, FreedomWorks is committed to fighting back while ensuring every dollar you give is spent wisely.

Instead of high-priced TV ads, which enrich the consultant class and make less of an impact in today’s political environment, we’re focusing on building our online grassroots presence.

This is where the Left is continually pouring in resources. And we cannot allow ourselves to be left in the dust.

The good news is, your support is making a difference.

Not long ago, we were ranked #1 among conservative advocacy groups by Forbes for our online programs.

We’ve turned heads in the White House as we’ve seen Kellyanne Conway and Donald Trump, Jr. react to our social media.

And we’re continuing to build our grassroots army and ensure they’re trained on the best online practices so they’re ready to fight in 2020.

Ultimately, I believe grassroots power will decide 2020. The Left is convinced they have the upper hand and they’ll be victorious. If they’re right, it will be nothing short of a nightmare for the country.

So with your support, FreedomWorks is fighting to ensure it’s our side that comes through victorious. And we’re counting on you to stand with us.

Adam Brandon, President of FreedomWorks, sits down with Stewart Varney to discuss the rise of socialism.

Adam Brandon interviews Donald Trump, Jr. and Kimberly Guilfoyle to discuss why conservatism is growing among young Americans and how Donald Trump will win in 2020.
THE CENTER FOR ECONOMIC FREEDOM
EDUCATING LEGISLATORS AND ADVANCING FREE-MARKETS WITH STORYTELLING

By Parissa Sedghi Fornwalt

Historically, policy battles have boiled down to simple principles. People either believe decision-making should rest with the individual, or the collective. They view government as the solution, or the problem. That’s how policy debates used to work, until new polling data showed us the battle for popular opinion is no longer so simple.

A recent Monmouth University poll found that 57% of voters believe socialism is incompatible with American values. In the same poll, 58% of Americans support socialist policies like universal healthcare. How could that be?

While Americans intuitively dislike socialism, the Left successfully uses social media to make these policies look attractive and positive. They know people no longer distinguish between news sources and advocacy organizations online, and they use it to their advantage to influence public opinion.

That’s why FreedomWorks Foundation is taking back the conversation online. The primary mission of the Center for Economic Freedom (CEF) is to discredit the empty promises of socialism and educate citizens, activists, and legislators on the simplicity of free market economics using events and social media storytelling.

On the internet, sharing the facts is not enough. The CEF uses engaging content to showcase the incredible feats of innovation and progress that take place when government allows individuals to act freely.

In 2018, the CEF rolled out a multiplatform campaign centered around targeted messaging that uses contemporary cultural illustrations from TV shows, pop music stars, and athletes to capture the attention of a broader audience.


Tamny recently explained the importance of federalism through an op-ed about Burger King's decision to test market the “Impossible Whopper” solely in St. Louis, MO. He used Jennifer Aniston’s romantic troubles to help readers understand how to interpret the unemployment rate.

When Ben Affleck returned to Hollywood stardom, Tamny used the story to help readers understand why government attempts to end recessions only make them worse.

His writing has resulted in weekly appearances on Fox News, the Fox Business Channel, and C-SPAN, along with global television stations including China Global Television Network.

When Tamny isn’t acting as the interviewee on network television, he is hosting a show of his own. His weekly “Not Fake News” livestream explains the government’s role in slowing our economy and sabotaging American entrepreneurship. The production contains a mixture of news, interviews with legislators, and questions from activists.

Almost immediately, the video series grew a large and loyal following. To date, “Not Fake News” has earned a total of 125,000 views, reaching over 15,000 activists with each new episode.

The old ways of debating policy don’t work anymore. When small-government activists focus on the intellectual argument, they give Democrats a monopoly on emotion. When free-market economists only address other fellow economists, the Left fills the silence with stories to rally Main Street America and grow the size of government. Not anymore.

The CEF is making sure good ideas are not left to collect dust on a shelf, understood in only select academic circles. We are bringing the free market discussion to grassroots activists, legislators, and the media in a way that everyone can understand, and in a way that inspires people to take the fight to Washington, D.C.

At our March and April FreedomWorks fly-ins, that’s exactly what happened. More than 250 activists gathered at the FreedomWorks office to bridge the gap between research and action. John Tamny and our policy staff led issue briefings on the topics of economic freedom, sound money, and socialism. The weekend culminated with our activists educating members of Congress on the importance of these issues on Capitol Hill, with national press and legislators in attendance.

When citizens feel confident enough to articulate and defend their beliefs, they step out of the shadows and make their voices heard. The same can be said for lawmakers, which is why the
CEF also targets and teaches free-market fundamentals to elected officials.

To influence policy, you must first influence the policymakers. It sounds like common sense, but it really isn’t. The CEF is one of the first programs to directly educate federal lawmakers in limited government and the magic of the free market.

As John Tamny explained in a recent letter:

“For background on why I’m at FreedomWorks to begin with, in 2017 I was invited to present on monetary policy at the Restore Liberty weekend in Phoenix, AZ. What I saw had a profound impact on me.”

“Indeed, while giving my presentation I looked out in the audience only to see various U.S. Senators and Congressmen taking notes and/or listening intently as I spoke. I’d never experienced anything like this. I saw that at FreedomWorks they don’t just talk about policy; rather they actively aim to educate the individuals who make policy.”

“We understand that no progress is achieved by those who aren’t sitting anywhere close to the policy table. Thankfully FreedomWorks has a seat at the proverbial table, and the freedom movement benefits from its proximity to policymakers. I’m thrilled to be at an organization that is truly making a difference.”

The CEF focuses on three key issue areas: sound money, income inequality, and government spending. Our close ties to the Trump administration have provided us with an unprecedented opportunity to influence policy at the national level.

A recent CEF-driven event on the issue of entitlement reform gained the attention of Rep. Kevin Brady (R-TX), the top Republican on the House Ways and Means Committee. He began and ended his remarks by thanking FreedomWorks:

“Thanks to FreedomWorks – Adam Brandon, Jason Pye, and Sarah Anderson – conservative thought leaders on the panel and in attendance today, and the Conservative Partnership Institute, led by Senator DeMint, for refocusing America on our leading fiscal challenge: our government’s unsustainable finances.

“Despite the national media’s portrayal, the concern about the national debt and persistent budget deficits has not faded for conservatives or for many Americans. It can’t. The impacts are too real and too severe. And no, it’s not too late to alter the course.

“I applaud the work, the leadership, and the innovative ideas that are part of this conversation today. The time for entitlement reform is now. And I intend to work with you to achieve it.”

The Center for Economic Freedom is still a relatively new program, but its influence is already felt by federal lawmakers, state and national press, and the activist community.

There is a proven – and growing – demand for content that explains and celebrates the concept of capitalism without getting buried in numbers and charts. With this program, FreedomWorks Foundation is using stories that employ empathy, human connection, and cultural illustration to connect issue education with action, and drive real policy change in Washington.

And we are just getting started.

Parissa Sedghi Fornwalt,
Vice President of Development

---

CEF DELIVERABLES IN 2019

61 Op-Eds Placed
18 TV Interviews
30 Radio Interviews
125,000+ Facebook Live Views
50 College Campus Lectures Scheduled With John Tamny
5,000 Activist Trainings
With the race for 2020 already heating up, all eyes are on the race for the White House – and for good reason.

But conservatives can’t forget about the U.S. House where a new crop of Democrat radicals, including U.S. Reps. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY), Ilhan Omar (D-MN), and Rashida Tlaib (D-MI), and Old Guard liberals like Maxine Waters (D-CA), and Adam Schiff (D-CA), continue to push the entire Democrat party further and further left.

That gives conservatives an opening to take back the U.S. House in 2020, but only if we start focusing now on the “Dirty Thirty” – the 30 freshmen Democrat U.S. Representatives who won in districts President Trump won in 2016.

A flip of just 19 seats would strip House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) of her majority in 2020. Even in a heated presidential year, this is doable. And if conservatives can take back the House in 2020, much of the Left’s radical agenda goes up in smoke – even if they are able to defeat President Trump.

Because many of these districts are located in battleground states, it will also boost the President’s reelection efforts.

Since the moment the smoke cleared from the 2018 elections, FreedomWorks has been working hard to ramp up our “Dirty Thirty” program.

That may seem excessive, but year-round “campaigning” is the new reality in modern-day national politics.

In 2018, Democrats placed a big bet on women to seize the majority in the U.S. House. Ultimately, women made up 52% of the overall electorate. And according to exit polls, they went for Democrats by a 20% margin.

Undecided female voters aren’t glued to Fox News, CNN, or MSNBC. Neither are young people – a growing and increasingly important slice of the electorate.

They’re online. They’re on social media. They’re listening to what their friends and family have to say – not the so-called “political experts” or talking heads on cable TV news networks.

So if we want to influence them, we have to reach them with the voices they trust the most – their friends, family, peers, and local voices within their communities.

Does that sound like a tough job? It is.

Gone are the days when conservatives could hold their fire until a few weeks before Election Day, and then pummel an opponent with a barrage of TV ads and U.S. Mail.

Social media is the new battlefield. Today, 81% of Americans have a social media profile. 68% of all U.S. adults are on Facebook. 62% get their news from social media.

That means we have to be more active online than ever before. So continuing to ramp up our Activism Modernization Plan (AMP) to train new activists on how to reach others online continues to be so critical.

And building a grassroots army takes time and resources. It can’t be done overnight.

So with the help of supporters like you, FreedomWorks has developed a four-part plan to:

1. Recruit principled conservatives in each of our “Dirty Thirty” target districts, focusing on candidates with compelling personal stories who can blaze the trail forward for the Republican Party’s next generation;
2. Build a grassroots army of 5,000 activists in each of our 30 targeted U.S. House Districts. Our goal is to have a large enough activist base to ensure primary victory and drive turnout in the 2020 elections;
3. Show voters in each district the economic disaster looming for our country if Democrats – and their “Dirty Thirty” U.S. Representatives – get away with imposing the Left’s vision for America; and
4. Take back the U.S. House in 2020, help the President and allied U.S. Senators in the process, and ensure the agenda the radical Left is cooking up for America right now never becomes reality.

Throughout 2019, FreedomWorks will continue the hard work of recruiting, training, and laying the groundwork to compete head-to-head with the Left online in 2020.

With your help, we will do all we can to take back the 30 U.S. House districts that Democrats won in 2018, but President Trump won in 2016.

On the following pages is our list of the “Dirty Thirty” Democrat incumbents and each of the districts FreedomWorks is targeting.
The “Dirty Thirty”

Tom O’Halleran
AZ-01

Lauren Underwood
IL-14

Lucy McBath
GA-06

Cheri Bustos
IL-17

Abby Finkenauer
IA-01

Jared Golden
ME-02

Dave Loebsack
IA-02

Elissa Slotkin
MI-08

Cindy Axne
IA-03

Haley Stevens
MI-11
The “Dirty Thirty”

Angie Craig
MN-02

Collin Peterson
MN-07

Chris Pappas
NH-01

Jeff Van Drew
NJ-02

Andy Kim
NJ-03

Josh Gottheimer
NJ-05

Mikie Sherrill
NJ-11

Xochitl Torres Small
NM-02

Susie Lee
NV-03

Max Rose
NY-11
The “Dirty Thirty”

- Sean Patrick Maloney
  NY-18
- Antonio Delgado
  NY-19
- Kendra Horn
  OK-05
- Matt Cartwright
  PA-08
- Conor Lamb
  PA-17
- Joe Cunningham
  SC-01
- Ben McAdams
  UT-04
- Elaine Luria
  VA-02
- Abigail Spanberger
  VA-07
- Ron Kind
  WI-03
With an abundance of rare earth minerals, timber, gold, silver, cobalt, fertile agricultural ground, and luscious grazing land, Idaho’s beautiful landscape contains vast natural resources.

The problem with this, as Representative Russ Fulcher sees it: “We don’t own it. We’re tenants, not the landlords.” When you consider that 63 percent of the state of Idaho is run by the federal government, it’s hard to argue. Those rich resources are locked up on federal land, away from the hands of Idaho citizens.

For the 40th episode of Freedom Files, FreedomWorks President Adam Brandon sat down with freshman Congressman, Russ Fulcher. They dove into topics ranging from the federal monopoly on Idaho’s land, to his experience as a freshman in Congress, to how his career in the private sector yielded strong advantages.

Fulcher is a fourth generation Idahoan. Growing up on a dairy farm, Rep. Fulcher knows the landscape intimately. What sparked his initial run for Congress was the federal government’s invasive control over this land.

He first fought battles with bureaucrats in the Idaho Senate on issues relating to water access and controlled burns that threatened private property. But there was little they could do. Frustrated – and wanting a louder voice for Idaho – he eventually pursued higher office.

As liberty-lovers know, the federal government is not an efficient or effective manager. Nor does it have all the necessary information to make informed decisions for individuals. So when it comes to effectively managing land over 2,000 miles away in Idaho, federal bureaucrats fail miserably.

As Rep. Fulcher stated, “The situation with our lands is really a lose-lose. The federal government doesn’t have the resources to manage it. Timber, undergrowth builds up. All this burning releases so much carbon, kills elk herds, hurts the economy. Taxpayers are having to pay for it.”

As you might guess, Rep. Fulcher’s solution is to bring the power back to Idaho where representatives in the state legislature can manage resources more effectively. As Rep. Fulcher states, “The best stewards of the land are usually the people that are on it all the time.”

Rep. Fulcher then discussed how those in eastern states are often subsidizing Idaho, which only exacerbates the problem. “For every dollar we get, there are strings attached. All we want is to be able to control our own destiny and have access to what God gave us.”

In their discussion on Freedom Files, Adam asked Rep. Fulcher about his experience as a freshman in Congress and his dealings with the Left. Rep. Fulcher was quick to thank FreedomWorks for their assistance with relationship building, saying: “Thanks to – among others – FreedomWorks, for introductions. We morphed in pretty well.”

He stated that remaining humble, showing a willingness to learn, and avoiding cameras and the limelight were his goals early on.
Now, he’s committed to a strong plan: “I’m willing to get in the trenches, show up at the committees, do the work, hopefully build some rapport one-on-one, and try to convince people that there’s some degree of confidence, willingness to work with people. I am here to attempt to do the right thing and I need to earn my stripes.”

This attitude was paramount for him in navigating Congress as he started working with those on the other side of the aisle.

While there are numerous challenges to working with Democrats, Fulcher is adamant that there are common denominators that both parties can work together on. It just starts with a conversation built on trust and honesty.

Rep. Fulcher thinks that “if you want to talk about a certain tax policy or healthcare policy, those are open for debate. I have the principles that I believe in and I’m going to champion those. But, we need to have some conversations about that. That’s where I think it’s important to have the relationship and have the confidence in who you’re dealing with and that they trust you enough to know that you think about things enough and that your motives are genuine when you go into those debates.”

From there, Adam went through Rep. Fulcher’s impressive resume that began in the private sector. Fulcher spent 24 years at Micron Technology working in international sales. Over those 24 years, he did business in 47 countries and all 50 states. It was during this time that Rep. Fulcher gained extensive knowledge of the tax systems, labor laws, and social programs of various countries.

His experience in business travel taught him: “Social programs don’t work. Socialist governments don’t work. Socialist education systems don’t work.” His business experiences across the globe helped lay the foundation for the conservative principles he champions today.

FreedomWorks is thankful to have a liberty warrior such as Russ Fulcher in Congress. We need more Republicans to stand for personal freedom, limited government, and free markets – the core principles of FreedomWorks.

Those who’ve had those views instilled by the private sector are even more invaluable. FreedomWorks stands behind U.S. Rep. Russ Fulcher and other free market champions who care about standing up to the Left in a civil and humble way.

Andrew Hill,
Senior Grant Relations Coordinator

For the 40th episode of Freedom Files, FreedomWorks President Adam Brandon, sat down with freshman Congressman, Russ Fulcher (R-ID-1).
If you were to visit U.S. Rep. Jody Hice’s office in the Cannon House Office Building, you’d immediately notice University of Georgia paraphernalia all over the office. It’s a sign of pride for both his home state and his district, which is home to the first state-chartered university in the United States.

Rep. Hice’s passion for college football is only one example of a personality that exudes 21st century Southern culture. He is quick to tell you that his commitment to his Christian faith and conservative principles guides him through his work in Congress. And as a former talk radio host, Rep. Hice has an uncanny ability to talk to just about anyone who he encounters – a useful skill for an elected official.

Since entering the U.S. House of Representatives in 2015, Rep. Hice has demonstrated a commitment to the Constitution and free market principles in almost every vote he’s cast. That’s why he has a 98 percent lifetime score with FreedomWorks and has won the FreedomFighter Award each year he has served.

Currently, Rep. Hice is a member of the Republican Study Committee and the Communications Chairman for the House Freedom Caucus. He serves on the Oversight and Reform and Natural Resources committees and is also the ranking member of the Oversight Subcommittee on National Security.

Over the past few years, Rep. Hice has introduced a few signature bills, including the Presidential Allowance Modernization Act. The bill would reduce the annual pension that a former president receives and limits the allowance given to a former president for staff and office space. The bill passed the House in November 2017 but wasn’t considered in the Senate. Rep. Hice has reintroduced the Presidential Allowance Modernization Act, H.R.
1496, in the current Congress. The bill has been reported out of committee and is awaiting floor consideration.

Rep. Hice has also made Official Time Reform a priority. Under current law, a federal employee who belongs to a labor union is able to use official work time for political activity, such as lobbying, rather than the job the employee is actually paid by taxpayers to perform.

In 2017, Rep. Hice introduced the Official Time Reform Act to ban the use of official time for political activities. Although the bill wasn’t considered by the House, language similar to the Official Time Reform Act has been included in the Republican Study Committee’s FY 2020 budget proposal, entitled *Preserving American Freedom*.

“In many cases, people are hired to do a job and yet 100 percent of their time is spent doing Federal union activities, and so the taxpayer is paying these people to do a job which they are not doing. It ends up these agencies have to hire someone else to do a job while the first individual is doing union activities rather than that for which they were hired,” Rep. Hice recently said.

“Make no mistake, the opposition is real, it is strong, it is entrenched in this place. And yet we have got to continue to move forward. We have got to try to address these issues.”

In partnership with FreedomWorks and Open the Government, Rep. Hice introduced the Federal Employee Disclosure (FED) Transparency Act, H.R. 2612, in May. The Bill would require the disclosure of federal pension records under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and a report from agency heads on performance bonuses given to employees.

Since taking office, Rep. Hice has worked hard to stay true to his principles, and has the battle scars to prove it.

At the beginning of the new Congress in January, he voted for Rep. Jim Jordan (R-OH) for Speaker of the House. In retaliation, House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) stripped Rep. Hice of his assignment on the House Armed Services Committee. As Rep. Mark Meadows (R-NC) said, this is “the kind of punishment politics that [the] American people hate.”

Rep. Hice handled the pettiness with grace, saying “I’m going to continue fighting for the principles the people of the 10th district of Georgia sent me here to fight for,” he continued, “regardless of what committee I’m on and will continue working with leadership on the things that we’re in agreement on.”

Not long after this episode, FreedomWorks' activists from Georgia’s 10th Congressional District visited Rep. Hice to show support and thank him for voting his conscience. FreedomWorks is proud to call Rep. Jody Hice an ally.

CREATE YOUR LEGACY OF LIBERTY

We would like to invite you to leave a permanent legacy for liberty by including FreedomWorks in your will or trust. Joining our Restore Liberty Legacy Society will ensure that whatever new challenges we face in the fight for liberty, FreedomWorks Foundation will be prepared to meet them.

For more information contact Parissa Sedghi Fornwalt at (202) 942-7645 or PSedghi@freedomworks.org
Split control of our federal government typically means not much major legislation will get done.

After the results of the 2018 elections, that's where we find ourselves today.

But the new year always brings the opportunity to affect policy at the state level – not only passing good bills but also stopping bad ones wherever possible.

Although federal policy often impacts individuals and businesses, state governments are the closest to the people. States serve a unique role. Policies implemented at the state level may, as more states adopt a particular policy, gain momentum at the federal level. We've certainly seen this in recent years with Right to Try and Criminal Justice Reform.

Since the beginning of 2019, FreedomWorks has taken on over 20 policy battles at the state level, driving more than 57,000 actions – like emails and phone calls – to state lawmakers.

Through our activist community, FreedomWorks drove actions to lawmakers in 13 states, supporting occupational licensing reform in Oklahoma, Criminal Justice Reform in Florida, and Civil Asset Forfeiture Reform in Michigan. We also drove actions against Minimum Wage hikes in Virginia and Pennsylvania, stopped Medicaid expansion in Kansas, and the return of Civil Asset Forfeiture – which would have allowed government agencies to seize assets without judicial involvement – in Mississippi.

In all, FreedomWorks helped pass six bills and stopped four bad bills.

Several policy battles remain unresolved and likely won’t be concluded until later this year or when state legislatures return for their 2020 sessions. With so much happening at the state level this year, the following is a recap of FreedomWorks’ policy battles in the states.

By Jason Pye

2019’S POLICY VICTORIES (SO FAR)
Reforming Occupational Licensing in Oklahoma

Continuing our partnership with Justice Action Network, FreedomWorks focused our efforts on an important bill, H.B. 1373, that reforms Oklahoma’s broken occupational licensing rules. Prior to H.B. 1373, Oklahoma, which has the highest incarceration rate in the nation, kept former offenders out of certain professions even if they weren’t a danger to anyone.

Essentially, state licensing boards could deny an individual an occupational license on the grounds that he or she lacked “good moral character.” Needless to say, this was a major barrier to many who were reentering society and looking to put their lives on the right track.

With the passage of H.B. 1373, the “good moral character” language in state occupational licensing laws is removed and replaced with a narrower approach. Under H.B. 1373, the chief consideration is whether an offender’s past behavior poses a problem for the license for which he or she has applied or whether the offender poses a threat to public safety.

One way to reduce recidivism is to help those reentering society find employment, as well as remove barriers to employment. H.B. 1373 helps those seeking to get a job or start a business and become productive members of their community, rather than returning to a life of addiction and crime.

During this battle, FreedomWorks drove nearly 3,000 messages to target legislators in support of this important rollback in state regulations. Gov. Kevin Stitt, a Republican who has expressed a desire to do more on criminal justice reform, signed H.B. 1373 into law in May.

Kansas Avoids Medicaid Expansion

Part of the so-called “Affordable Care Act,” usually known as Obamacare, was the expansion of Medicaid. Through the beginning of the year, only 14 states haven’t expanded the program.

Supporters of Medicaid expansion claim that the program increases access to health insurance, but increased access to health insurance doesn’t necessarily mean increased access to healthcare. There’s no better example of this than Medicaid, which faces doctor shortages and questionable effectiveness.

Blinded by the lure of federal dollars, the Kansas State Legislature considered Medicaid expansion this year. H.B. 2066 passed the State House in March. After passage in the State House, FreedomWorks teamed up with the Foundation for Government Accountability, their team on the ground, and their researchers to stop H.B. 2066 in the State Senate. FreedomWorks drove dozens of calls directly to leadership in the state to kill this bad legislation.

There are other state policy battles that FreedomWorks will be working on during the remainder of 2019, including legislative initiatives in Ohio and Pennsylvania.

In addition to our work at the federal level, where we’re working hard to stop House Democrats’ radical agenda, we’ll be looking for opportunities ahead of 2020 state legislative sessions to engage our activists and state lawmakers to stop bad legislation and advance good public policy.

Stopping a Minimum Wage Hike in Virginia

Several states and cities around the country have been pursuing minimum wage increases to $15 per hour. A study of the impact of the incremental minimum wage increase in Seattle, which would eventually bring the hourly minimum wage to $15, found that there are approximately 5,000 fewer jobs than there would have been without the minimum wage increase. The minimum wage increase also ends up costing many lower-wage workers about $125 each month since business owners must pay less productive workers more. For a lower-wage worker, $125 is a lot of money.

Despite the overwhelming evidence that minimum wage increases to $15 per hour reduces employment opportunities and hurts the very people proponents claim it’s intended to help, Virginia Democrats tried to move a Seattle-style $15 minimum wage increase, S.B. 1200, out of the General Assembly in early 2019.

Virginia Democrats had a lot of outside help. The leftist groups supporting S.B. 1200 included the Virginia AFL-CIO, Virginia Interfaith Center, Virginia Progressive Legislative Alert Network, SEIU Virginia 512, Progressive VA, and the New Virginia Majority.

Thanks to the help of our generous supporters, FreedomWorks was able to drive 2,800 messages in opposition to S.B. 1200. Although S.B. 1200 cleared committee and was brought to the floor of the Virginia Senate, the bill was defeated by a narrow margin.

There’s still a lot more work to be done to ensure similar legislation and ballot measures are defeated in other states, but this misguided and counterproductive legislative initiative in Virginia has been stopped for now.
Mississippi Goes Big on Criminal Justice Reform

As states continue to follow each others’ lead and now also the lead of the federal government on smart-on-crime Criminal Justice Reforms, reform advocates turned attention to Mississippi, and for good reason.

Mississippi has the third-highest incarceration rate in the country, meaning that it incarcerates more people proportionally to its population than 94 percent of other states.

It also spends more than $300 million each year on corrections, a significant burden on taxpayers. Unfortunately, this means that the state is spending money unwisely on incarceration – typically by focusing resources in the wrong places that result in more, (not fewer) criminals.

The good news is, Mississippi Governor Phil Bryant has been a strong supporter of Criminal Justice Reform, hosting a roundtable discussion with President Trump and other state and federal leaders in Gulfport just weeks prior to the successful passage and enactment of the First Step Act last December.

This year, he was able to sign a bill into law in his state, H.B. 1352, that reflected many of the priorities of the First Step Act. Titled the Criminal Justice Reform Act, H.B. 1352 expanded the use of drug courts, reduced barriers to employment following incarceration, and prevented senseless automatic suspensions of drivers’ licenses for things such as nonpayment of fines or simple drug possession. On April 16, Governor Bryant signed the bill into law, following efforts in the state legislature which resulted in the bill being passed through both chambers with few “no” votes.

During the heat of this legislative fight, FreedomWorks drove more than 1,700 messages in support of improving H.B. 1352 throughout its negotiations, which spurred its ultimately overwhelming final passage.

As a result, Mississippi will be able to reap the benefits that come with focusing corrections resources on the most dangerous offenders and easing reentry into society, which include lowered crime rates, increased economic growth, and reduced spending on prisons.

Taking Another Step on Civil Asset Forfeiture Reform in Michigan

Civil Asset Forfeiture Reform has been sweeping through state legislatures over the past five years. This is an area of particular concern, especially for advocates of due process and private property rights. The notion that the government can seize property and subject it to forfeiture in civil court on the mere accusation that the property is connected to illicit activity is contrary to the principles of limited government.

Fed up with the reports of abuse of forfeiture laws, in which the property of innocent individuals is seized, lawmakers began taking the initiative to pass reforms some years ago.

Since 2014, more than 30 states have passed some version of Civil Asset Forfeiture Reform laws. Some states passed legislation to require greater reporting requirements and transparency while others went further, enacting laws that increased evidentiary standards or prevented circumvention of state laws in federal forfeiture laws.

In 2015, the Michigan Legislature passed a package of seven bills to reform the state’s Civil Asset Forfeiture laws. The reforms, which FreedomWorks supported, increased the evidentiary standard in civil court to “clear and convincing” and promoted transparency throughout the process.

At a time when several states were considering reforms that required a criminal conviction before allowing the permanent seizure of property or money, Michigan’s reforms were relatively mild. Nevertheless, this package was what advocates were able to get accomplished at the time.

This year, lawmakers in the Republican-controlled Michigan Legislature decided to strengthen the reforms passed in 2015. Lawmakers passed H.B. 4001, H.B. 4002, and S.B. 2. Together, this package of reforms would stay forfeiture proceedings in civil court pending the outcome of a criminal case, require that the government obtain a criminal conviction before permanently seizing any property or money not exceeding $50,000, and protect individuals by mandating that the government return property or money to an owner if a warrant isn’t issued within 90 days.

FreedomWorks drove almost 2,600 actions in support of H.B. 4001, H.B. 4002, and S.B. 2. In May, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer – a Democrat – signed the bills into law, continuing the momentum for Civil Asset Forfeiture Reform at the state level.

Hopefully, this will spur Congress to act as more states pass Civil Asset Forfeiture Laws.

Jason Pye,
Vice President
of Legislative Affairs
## Top 3
### First Quarter Campaigns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campaign</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Messages</th>
<th>Calls</th>
<th>Tweets</th>
<th>Signatures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Defeat the Green New Deal</td>
<td>600,060</td>
<td>545,967</td>
<td>8,980</td>
<td>45,113</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect Donor Privacy (Stop HR1)</td>
<td>49,178</td>
<td>34,330</td>
<td>2,727</td>
<td>12,121</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirm Neomi Rao</td>
<td>567,992</td>
<td>567,992</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Top 4
### Second Quarter Campaigns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campaign</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Messages</th>
<th>Calls</th>
<th>Tweets</th>
<th>Signatures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confirm Steve Moore to the Federal Reserve Board of Governors</td>
<td>272,077</td>
<td>271,659</td>
<td>418</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price Controls</td>
<td>238,477</td>
<td>214,742</td>
<td>23,307</td>
<td>428</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oppose Earmarks</td>
<td>13,567</td>
<td>13,567</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oppose a Pay Raise for Congress (petition-based campaign)</td>
<td>17,173</td>
<td>17,173</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Total
### First Quarter and Second Quarter Campaigns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Quarter Total Actions</th>
<th>Second Quarter Total Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Messages: 1,266,785</td>
<td>Messages: 541,727</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calls: 2,753</td>
<td>Calls: 25,384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tweets: 21,876</td>
<td>Tweets: 471</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signatures: 165,815</td>
<td>Signatures: 95,341</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FROM THE FIELD**

First Quarter Total Actions: 1,457,229

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Messages: 1,266,785</th>
<th>Calls: 2,753</th>
<th>Tweets: 21,876</th>
<th>Signatures: 165,815</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Second Quarter Total Actions: 662,923

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Messages: 541,727</th>
<th>Calls: 25,384</th>
<th>Tweets: 471</th>
<th>Signatures: 95,341</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, New York Democrat, has released her Green New Deal plan to the nation — and to great applause from the Democratic Party.

This multitrillion-dollar manifesto isn’t just about saving the planet from climate change — though that is the centerpiece. It also includes a whole social justice agenda that includes everything from “Medicare-for-all,” to a guaranteed job for all Americans, a $15-an-hour minimum wage, and even regulations on how often you will be able to drive your car and fly in an airplane.

The centerpiece of the plan is to move to 100% renewable energy (wind and solar power) within 10 years. No one with any knowledge of energy use and production believes this is remotely possible given that we are today at about 8% renewable — even after $150 billion of taxpayer handouts to green energy producers.

To get anywhere close to 100% renewable energy over the next 10 or 30 years would be economically crippling; taxpayer costs would exceed $2 trillion and some 10 million Americans in high-paying oil and gas industries would be displaced. Energy costs for home heating and electric power would likely double or triple, as a Heritage Foundation study shows — and that’s simply to get to 50 percent renewable. Without U.S. mass production of shale oil, gas prices at the pump could easily reach $5 a gallon. Price hikes like these are what incited the riots in Paris last month.

Initially, the Green New Deal planned to abolish nuclear and natural gas from the energy mix — which is absurd given that shale gas has contributed to a major reduction in carbon emissions and nuclear plants emit no greenhouse gases. Along with hydropower, these are the cleanest forms of energy today. A recent GND fact sheet published by Ocasio-Cortez’s offices has been disavowed by Democratic Senate backer Ed Markey over the dogmatic anti-nuclear stance.

This is why the GND frothy rhetoric about this “national, industrial, economic mobilization” being a “historic opportunity to eliminate poverty and make prosperity, wealth and economic security available to everyone participating in the transformation,” is disoriented from reality.

How does eliminating the fossil fuel industry, which has produced the fastest growth of new jobs over the past decade, eliminate poverty? Are we really going to convert oil workers into wind farmers?

There are other utopian ideas to advance this green agenda, including a job-guarantee program, universal health care and tens of billions of dollars for new mass transit and electric cars. In one of the original versions of the Green New Deal, the plan requires “replacing nonessential individual means of transport with high-quality and modern mass transit.” No more driving the kids to soccer practice. Everybody on the bus.

Ocasio-Cortez says that to replace the millions of jobs the GND would destroy, the new guaranteed-jobs program would work like the original New Deal. But despite the fake history of the Great Depression, FDR’s make-work programs, such as the Works Progress Administration, failed miserably in their quest to end joblessness and poverty. During the eight years of the WPA, the unemployment rate averaged above 12 percent, some three times higher than today.

The architects of the GND are to be commended for acknowledging that this “transformation” of the U.S. economy won’t come cheap. They place the price tag at roughly $1 trillion a year.
These costs will be absorbed by Federal Reserve Bank borrowing (i.e., running up the budget deficit), and “various taxation tools including taxes on carbon and other emissions and progressive wealth taxes.” Say hello to those 70 percent tax rates liberals have been touting.

We will need these to pay for this deindustrialization of America.

Conservatives have tended to laugh and sneer at the GND (me included), but these frontal assaults on free market capitalism are quickly becoming Democratic orthodoxy.

Green is the new red, as the saying goes, and unless conservatives defeat and discredit these dingbat ideas, Donald Trump will be proven wrong. America will be on its way to becoming a socialist nation.

By Andrew Hill


In his new book, Senator Lee argues that the Declaration of Independence should be known by all Americans and used as a reference for years to come. Even though it was written well over two centuries ago, the Declaration still serves as a powerful manifesto against the administrative state and for American freedom.

Yet, despite the significance of this revolutionary document, many Americans have lost sight of its meaning and have taken the Declaration of Independence for granted – something Senator Lee believes is a grave mistake. As a result, he argues, our governmental system has drifted far away from its original design.

In explaining the Declaration’s significance, Senator Lee takes great pains to relate the Founders’ efforts to disassociate themselves from the tyranny of the British and establish a new government whose role would be severely limited – primarily toward protecting life, liberty, and property.

Make sure you pick up your own copy via Amazon to get the inside view of the Founders’ sacrifices and the significance the Declaration of Independence still holds for us today.
The sweltering sun beat down on two thousand activists as they gathered on Capitol Hill last September in support of Rep. Jim Jordan's campaign for Speaker of the House of Representatives. One man among them, in his wide-brimmed hat and tall, pointed cowboy boots, traveled over 1,000 miles to be a part of the action.

Meet Chris Hopkins, a longtime Tea Partier and member of FreedomWorks new Activist Advisory. A dedicated FreedomWorks activist, Chris resides with Vivian, his wife of thirty-three years, in the central Florida city of Clermont.

The 2009 Taxpayer March on Washington was Chris' first introduction to FreedomWorks. He quickly became one of the pillars of our activist community, hosting events for other activists. Over the years, this has included Activist Modernization Plan (AMP) training sessions and speakers like Rev. C.L. Bryant.

Beyond FreedomWorks, Chris founded the South Lake Tea Party, which became well-known for its intense focus on local government. That group's bi-monthly meetings have included discussions with elected officials ranging from sheriffs and county commissioners, to members of the U.S. Senate.

In this vein, Chris and members of the South Lake Tea Party attended county commission meetings where they wrote their own meeting minutes, which were sent to the commissioners. This served as a unique way of comparing campaign promises to what the commission was actually doing.

Despite the local focus, the South Lake Tea Party's efforts didn't stop at the county line. When it came to the federal government, Chris and his group were not satisfied with electing and reelecting a Republican member of Congress who continually disappointed.

Years of broken promises by members of both parties show that voter vigilance is critical to maintaining freedom and liberty. So Chris and his group looked to FreedomWorks again, this time using our Congressional scorecards to track the key votes taken by their member of Congress and informing voters of the results. As a result, their Congressman has seen steadily improving ratings on the FreedomWorks scorecard during the past few years.

Following FreedomWorks’ lead, Chris and his Tea Party organization have partnered with other local groups to host events that highlight the loss of freedom and liberty that comes when Big Government constrains the free market. In addition to holding events within his district, he has also taken groups on the road to support FreedomWorks' efforts. During the campaign season, Chris and his freedom-loving friends have worked to generate awareness of pro-freedom candidates and help get out the vote.

Now, more than ever, advocacy activity is moving online. Chris has been a leader in helping activists in his community become proactive in getting other activists engaged on social media.

That includes organizing several Activist Modernization Plan training sessions in Florida along with being an avid Twitter user himself.

Like many activists, Chris has an issue that is close to his heart. That issue is criminal justice reform. A big believer in justice for all

By Emily Stack

CHRIS HOPKINS
and second chances, he has been a part of a prison ministry for five years.

Together with several others, Chris meets once a week with groups of incarcerated individuals for a comparative Bible study in the morning followed by mass in the afternoon. Through this program, they are able to guide these individuals toward a successful path away from the cycle of crime and recidivism.

Through his use of different activism tactics, Chris has played a huge role in altering how government at all levels looks at those it governs.

These efforts have included rallying for Jim Jordan as Speaker of the House and Judge Kavanaugh’s confirmation to the U.S. Supreme Court.

During these battles, Chris traveled all the way from Florida with several others to show support and visit their representatives’ offices.

He served as one of 50 activists flooding Capitol Hill in support of Judge Kavanaugh’s confirmation. This was only a week after Chris traveled to Washington, D.C. for our Rally for the Republic. Yet, Chris dropped everything to book a flight for himself and other FreedomWorks activists to come to Washington, D.C. He and several other activists went from office to office while constantly running into hoards from the opposition.

Chris is one of the many activists helping to organize office visits to tell representatives that we should be fixing patients not prices and helping FreedomWorks fight socialized medicine.

In his spare time, Chris continues his education on The rule of law, the Declaration of Independence, and the Magna Carta. Chris’ dedication is an example to all of us at FreedomWorks as we fight for more freedom and individual liberty, and we are proud to call him part of our team.

For more information contact Parissa Sedghi Fornwalt at psedghi@freedomworks.org or 202-942-7645
Dallas, TX - “I have a plan for that.” That’s the stock answer given by Democratic presidential hopeful Elizabeth Warren whenever she’s asked a question about how to address any presumed societal ill. Supposedly the “thinking Democrat’s” candidate since the allegedly “wonky” Warren’s mind is full of policy solutions, the joke is on the former Harvard law professor along with her flock of emotional puddles who naively equate solutions with brains.

Who needs politicians and their solutions when the profit-motivated are relentlessly toiling to meet our needs? What could Warren offer us other than the inefficient delivery of what already exists? Better to leave the provision of goods and services to private actors eager to get us what doesn’t already exist. But that’s a digression.

For now, Peppa Pig mocks the Massachusett’s senator’s conceit that she can plan outcomes that result in people having more.

But first, who is Peppa Pig? She’s a charming British cartoon character, and star of her eponymous show, Peppa Pig. While Peppa’s audience largely consists of children under 5, parents of kids who can’t get enough of Peppa Pig enjoy her too.

The Peppa Pig cartoon series began in England in 2004, and is in the midst of its sixth season. So popular is the anthropomorphic Peppa that her shows are broadcast around the world, including in the U.S. on Nick Jr. There’s a Peppa Pig amusement park outside of London, plus Grapevine, TX is the location of the first stateside Peppa Pig World of Play, an indoor amusement park. Its existence calls into question the need for politicians like Warren who regularly promise voters the world.

You see, no one was demanding Peppa before 2004, and no politician was promising this most entertaining of cartoon series. The lack of demand didn’t matter. In the profit-motivated world, creative individuals backed by intrepid investors are constantly coming up with new ideas to remove unease from our lives, make us more efficient, improve our health, and in the case of Peppa, entertain us. That Peppa exists, that those associated with her continue to divine new ways to entertain us through her, is a sign that Warren is the picture definition of superfluous. Why do we need Warren when we have Peppa, along with all sorts of other living enhancements that no politician could have ever dreamed up? Politicians offer yesterday, and once again do so very inefficiently.

To which Warren partisans, and Warren herself, might respond that Warren’s surely deep mind is focused on much bigger things than cartoons and indoor amusement parks. Warren aims to make college free, erase federal student loan debt, and make affordable access to healthcare universal. She’s “got a plan” for the delivery of things much greater and weightier than a cartoon most popular with the diaper clad, and her solutions will largely help the common man. Ok, but such a response would be a non sequitur.

You see, the parents who brought their excited children to Peppa Pig World of Play in no way came off as 1 percenters. While it’s possible there were some in attendance, most gave the impression of being “middle class.” Call them fairly typical or “common” men and women.

The above designation matters in consideration of the product that was ubiquitous within “Peppa World.” Specifically, every single parent in attendance had his or her smartphone out and in constant use. Parents were taking pictures with it, videoing their perfect kids with it, sending the pictures and videos around the country and around the world, plus some were plainly conducting their own business on their smartphones while their kids played. Think about that for a second, and maybe longer.

Smartphones that take pictures, send e-mail, enable cheap calling, texting and e-mailing around the world, smartphones that would make multi-million dollar computers 40 and 50 years ago appear staggeringly primitive by comparison, and smartphones that ten years ago would have costs millions (if only the technology existed), were ubiquitous inside a shopping mall that was more “food court” than Saks Fifth Avenue.

Continued on Page 27
‘EXPERT OPINION’ IS WRONG AGAIN

By Adam Brandon

Remember a few months back, when the so-called experts in the room warned us that the partial government shutdown would ruin the economy? Boy, were they wrong.

The markets were supposed to falter and economic growth was bound to slow, with President Trump’s “Libertarian Experiment” resulting in a recession. Fast forward a few months later, and we find that the only “problem” with these predictions was that U.S. GDP instead grew 3.2 percent.

This is not the first time that the talking heads and respected economists have totally missed the mark when trying to make predictions about the Trump economy. How many times will it take before the likes of Paul Krugman admit that they have been wrong all along? I’m not holding my breath.

Friday’s report from the Bureau of Economic Analysis indicates that U.S. GDP grew 3.2 percent in quarter one of 2019, compared to the forecasted 2.1 percent. To put it in the president’s vernacular, this is “[h]uge,” especially when you take into account that the partial government shutdown was supposed to be a massive drag on economic growth.

The superb quarter one GDP numbers tell us that a few things are at play. For starters, the Keynesian system of government transfers and dabbling in the economy isn’t the real driver of economic growth. But because most talking heads do not subscribe to supply-side theory, we see how they could be so concerned with how a partially functioning government would negatively impact the economy. Contrary to their assertions, government spending isn’t necessary for economic growth, as proven by quarter one’s GDP growth.

Instead, free market policies that involve cutting taxes and red tape are shown to work much better. A “hands-off” approach to economic policy means that even when Washington can’t get its act together, everyday Americans continue to prosper. This should be a no-brainer. American workers and small business owners seem to understand it, so why can’t the Beltway insiders? This is the sort of perilous hubris that contributed to President Trump’s election in the first place, and will likely tee-up his reelection in 2020.

Apparently, the U.S. economy will grow at a robust pace even in the midst of a government shutdown, which if you live within the Beltway bubble was supposedly akin to living in a dystopian parallel universe. Obviously the rest of America, especially those pesky fly-over states, paid no heed to the doom and gloom predictions. Main Street America continues to thrive, unemployment remains low and consumer confidence remains at an all time high.

Thanks to Mr. Trump and the GOP’s pro-growth agenda, and despite the partial government shutdown, Americans from every demographic are finding success in today’s economy. With more than 2.6 million African-American-owned businesses in the United States today, the past two years have been a boon for African-American entrepreneurship like never before. This is the result of free market approaches, initiatives and platforms that come not from government, but from individuals.

At the same time, the past two years have been extremely good for women in the workforce and the economy. More than half of the jobs created since January 2018 have gone to women, and women’s unemployment is down to 3.8 percent. Pro-growth economic policies have benefited Americans of all stripes more than any government program ever could. The narrative that pro-growth policies only benefit the wealthy and advantaged is collapsing, fast.

Democrats and their friends in the media would do well to recognize that hands-off, pro-growth policies, rather than big government and identity politics, are the keys to enabling all Americans to prosper. The dire predictions made by pundits during the government shutdown have not come to pass and we have instead continued to see robust economic growth. Friday’s report should serve as a reminder not to trust everything that’s been written or said, especially if it’s “expert opinion.”

Adam Brandon, President of FreedomWorks
BOOMING VS. BUST
RETIREMENTS AHEAD:
THE CHOICE IS OURS

By Clara Del Villar

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, seniors are living longer and are the fastest growing demographic in history.

Seniors in the U.S. will likely total almost 75 million within a decade. That translates into 20 percent of our population. But age doesn’t determine success and we must make sure our seniors can seize the new opportunities available to them. Businesses will have to creatively plan ahead to meet their needs.

Our nation was designed for growth and individual freedom. It has proven against all odds that it adapts well to change, innovation and free markets.

Bank of America recently estimated the longevity market could exceed $600 billion by 2025 due to related advances in transportation, housing, food, personalized medicine, Big Data and other technologies such as health tracking devices people will wear as seamlessly as clothing accessories. But at the same time, many in Middle America are showing significant gaps in their retirement savings.

Recently commissioned polls found 30 percent of Boomers (those aged 55-73) have less than $100,000 in retirement savings. Almost half of Generation X (aged 42-54) have less than $100,000 in retirement accounts.

How did this happen? Low lifetime wages, sudden job loss, children’s college tuitions and caring for their own aging parents, as well as student debt, often drain the resources of would-be retirees. Additionally, unexpected health costs and longer life spans only aggravate a precarious financial condition.

The Trump administration and Congress are right to focus on middle-class job creation—that is where the heat of global economic competition has been centered and many Americans have suffered. As such, the current economic growth we enjoy is essential to maintain.

Liberal opinion often thinks Wall Street is the exclusive beneficiary of robust economic times but jobs, countless pensions, IRAs, 401(k)s, and retirement and private savings accounts prosper during these important cycles.

Unfortunately, politics gets in the way of reasoned discourse in most instances, in particular during prosperous economic times. These strong economic cycles are not random. They are a function of pro-growth, free-market policies and do not last forever.

If the economy slows down or slips into a recession, it would likely cause a serious decline in the size of retirement nest eggs. It is also likely that fewer people would be able to stay employed or find supplemental retirement jobs.

We remain a politically divided country, but we must unite on the looming issue of retirement security for Americans. There is no crisis now as long as we maintain our powerful economy.

This senior Boomer generation is going to remain engaged, productive and interested in meaningful pursuits. But it will require income generating activity due to the happy fact we are living longer.

There is a real fear of future Social Security benefit cuts, and there are no simple solutions to address this concern. In the years ahead, Americans need not only be concerned with their share of the national debt, currently exceeding $16.2 trillion on national debt, but also the crushing weight of unfunded liabilities that Medicare and Social Security represent. The latest report from the trustees of these programs shows $59 trillion in long-term unfunded liabilities.

Now is the time to fast track enhanced 401(k) legislation in order to broaden and accelerate savings. Such legislation, the Setting Every Community Up for Retirement Enhancement (SECURE) Act, H.R. 1994, was passed last week by the full House of Representatives in a 417-3 vote.

We need to move aggressively to encourage private sector options such as better senior-oriented job seeking technology and advancements in home care networks. Boomers have a long history of independence and enjoy embracing new challenges. As Jeri Sedler, the co-author of “Don’t Retire, Rewire” reminds us: “Finding your second wind only takes a little planning.”

Let’s not cheat ourselves out of an important opportunity to improve our future.

Clara Del Villar,
Director of Senior Initiatives,
FreedomWorks

Published at
Fox Business on 5/29/19
All of this is important as a reminder that a free market that can put computers in our pockets at prices that continue to fall can surely create for us abundant access to healthcare. Going forward, more of us should simply say “but I have a smartphone” in response to all the policy solutions presented to us by liberals and conservatives. Such a response would be a way of reminding those who think deep thoughts about policy plans meant to help us that we don’t need them. If free markets can result in us having smartphones, why do we need politicians to get us other things?

Indeed, just once it would be nice to hear someone ask Warren, along with the other candidates (and to be fair, White House occupants), why we need them when we have smartphones? Surely near universal access to a supercomputer at prices that shrink daily is much more of a miracle than access to a doctor.

Some will doubtless respond that healthcare is a bigger challenge than is the creation of Peppa Pig or a smartphone, and while some will debate the previous assertion, the simple truth is that the bigger the challenge, the greater the reward for the entrepreneur who mass produces former luxuries.

Lest readers forget, computers, smartphones, and cars were viewed as wildly impossible to own before entrepreneurs like Michael Dell, Steve Jobs and Henry Ford succeeded in mass producing them. After that, few can say they were routinely demanding drivers at the touch of a button (Uber) and the world’s plenty at the click of a mouse (Amazon) before Travis Kalanick and Jeff Bezos began working feverishly to deliver their amazing innovations to us. Yet Warren wants to get us healthcare? Why? What could she possibly deliver other than incredibly expensive inefficiency?

In promising so much to so many, Elizabeth Warren insults the intelligence of voters while at the same time insulting the nation that houses the most entrepreneurial minds on earth. She plans to get us cheap healthcare? Sorry Senator, we have smartphones.
CUTTING RED TAPE:
THE REGULATORY ACTION CENTER IN ACTION

By Daniel Savickas

With the legislative stalemate in Congress due to split control on Capitol Hill between Republicans and Democrats, some Americans lament that little is “getting done” in Washington D.C., right now.

They’re partially right – at least when it comes to the nation’s legislative business.

But that doesn’t mean the landscape is devoid of opportunities to enact free market reforms at the federal level.

While past presidents have paid lip service to regulatory reform, we’ve not seen another president more committed to unwinding the Regulatory State in recent history.

We’ve also never had an effort like FreedomWorks Foundation’s Regulatory Action Center, arming a president who is committed to getting things done with the grassroots muscle he needs.

The public comment period is the one time where the American people can have their voices heard during the regulatory process.

Friends within the Trump administration have told us that one thoughtful, unique public comment outweighs 1,000 form letters. That is why the Regulatory Action Center has been able to make such an incredible impact in such a short time.

As part of FreedomWorks Foundation, educating activists on freedom, how their government works, and how they can make a difference are some of the Regulatory Action Center’s specialties.

Unlike the Left, we believe government is too important to be left up to the self-proclaimed “experts.” We want to put the American people back in charge of their government.

So we don’t just want our activists to sign forms they barely understand and turn them in. We want our activists to understand the regulatory process so they can continually make a difference for freedom.

Our track record of impressive victories shows our approach is working, including:

- Stopping President Obama’s federal land seizure, which would have put millions of acres off limits for commercial use and energy exploration. During the heat of this battle, the RAC generated over 2,000 public comments in support of stopping this land seizure. As a result, President Trump signed the Department of the Interior’s rollback plan in December 2017.

- Stopping California’s attempted takeover of the federal corporate average fuel economy (CAFE) standards which would have put the entire nation under California’s fuel efficiency standards and cost $500 billion in economic damages on top of driving the price of vehicles to astronomical heights. During this battle, the RAC drove over 6,300 public comments.

- Repealing Title II regulations, more commonly known as “net neutrality.” As a result of our massive impact, we have been able to influence rulemakings regarding the T-Mobile/Sprint merger, broadcast caps, and other issues important to spurring the economy forward. All in all, the RAC drove over 28,000 comments in support of repealing burdensome Title II regulations.

Today, the Federal Register has fewer pages than at any time in the past 25 years and the rule changes have translated to more than $30 billion in economic activity previously handcuffed by regulations.

That’s great news but it doesn’t mean we can afford to lose sight of what can still be accomplished. Conservatives have to do more while we can to take advantage of this unique moment in American history.

Americans who believe in the principles of personal liberty, limited government, and free markets, should be encouraged by recent comments by Mick Mulvaney — President Trump’s acting Chief of Staff and Office of Management and Budget Director — that the Trump administration’s “highest priority will be deregulation.”

With an administration firmly on the side of regulatory reform — and a growing army of citizen activists engaged in the regulatory process — this unique opportunity to deeply slash at the regulatory Leviathan could further free up the American economy and ensure incredible economic conditions for years to come.
FreedomWorks has long believed that conservative organizations should work together whenever possible to conserve donor resources and become more effective. With the success we’ve seen over the years, it’s a wonder why more organizations don’t often team up.

One recent example is our work with the Foundation for Government Accountability (FGA) to put a stop to the Kansas State Legislature’s efforts to expand ObamaCare in the state.

Since the implementation of ObamaCare, over 30 states have passed some form of Medicaid expansion. These plans set new eligibility caps and have flooded the Medicaid rolls, leading to rapidly increasing costs and restricted access to doctors for many.

In Kansas specifically, the expansion would take the program’s current 400,000 enrollees and pile on 30 percent more Medicaid recipients.

According to the Governor’s budget office — which took a conservative view of exploding costs — the expansion of Medicaid would cost the state approximately $34 million in just its first year.

Even liberal think tanks in the state estimated the state’s net cost for expansion would average around $500 million over the next 10 years if the expansion passed.

And neither of these estimates include the burden this kind of legislation puts on our federal spending rates. Through ObamaCare, the federal government covers 90 percent of the cost of expansion.

This is why FreedomWorks stepped in to help stop this legislation. In partnership with other organizations, we drove thousands of activists’ messages to legislators to help stop ObamaCare expansion. One of these groups was the Foundation for Government Accountability (FGA), a non-profit, multi-state think tank, which specializes in healthcare, welfare, and work reform.

In April, they produced a report showing staggering statistics on the “crowd-out” phenomenon. The “crowd-out” effect refers to the movement of individuals from private insurance options to government-run programs.

FGA’s researchers showed that if proposals such as those in Kansas pass nationwide, more than one million children with private insurance could be shifted into the Medicaid program. It could also push many adults out of private insurance options.

According to their report, nearly two-thirds of potential adult Medicaid expansion enrollees already have private insurance coverage or access to the ObamaCare exchange.

“In total, millions of the potential Medicaid expansion enrollees in the remaining non-expansion states already have private coverage — all of whom could potentially move over from their current plans and into taxpayer-funded Medicaid, blowing the lid off state budgets,” said FGA researchers.

States such as Arizona had growth of their Medicaid programs by six percent after passing a similar policy, with an equal decrease in private insurance coverage rates. Similar transfer rates for insurance have occurred in other states, such as Maine, after implementing expansion policy.

This “crowd-out” effect is not a new phenomenon either. According to the FGA, economists including the “architect” of ObamaCare, Jonathan Gruber, concluded that previous Medicaid expansions in the late 1990s and early 2000s caused a “crowd-out” effect of about 60 percent.

This rate translates to six individuals leaving private healthcare plans for every 10 that enroll in Medicaid.

Unfortunately, this legislation managed to pass through the Kansas State House despite the disastrous implications for the state. So, we turned our focus to Senate leadership in a last-chance effort to stop this disastrous legislation.

Using FGA’s research, FreedomWorks put together an aggressive messaging campaign to educate our activists of the dangers of this legislation, and mobilized them to contact their legislators and the Senate leadership.

After driving calls from all over the state directly to Senate leadership, we were able to stop this ObamaCare expansion by only one vote in the State Senate.

This is a fight that FreedomWorks will continue across the country in individual states until Congress fully repeals ObamaCare. We look forward to working with FGA and other partner groups to keep fighting against bad legislation, both on this issue and others.
The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is trying to convince the White House to lower prescription drug prices using a price control system called the “International Pricing Index.”

This index would set drug prices under Medicare Part B based on their costs in other countries, many of which have nationalized health-care systems in place. Socialist Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) has introduced a legislative version of the proposal that would apply to the entire health-care system.

There are 10 big reasons that price controls on prescription drugs would hurt families and destroy our health-care system further.

Nobody is smarter than the marketplace. Governments cannot set prices effectively, and efforts to do so ignore the purpose of prices in the first place. Prices convey critical information about supply and demand. The problem with America’s health-care system is that government has already obscured the pricing system.

Trying to fix price distortion with more price controls is like dumping buckets of water in your canoe to keep it from sinking. Price controls aren't the solution, they are the problem.

The International Pricing Index is likely illegal. The International Pricing Index is a product of the Center for Medicaid and Medicare Innovation (CMMI). The CMMI is only authorized to conduct limited experiments to improve care in the United States.

HHS readily admits the International Pricing Index would affect roughly half the country and many Medicare Part B drugs. This is hardly a limited experiment. This proposal amounts to an importation of foreign price controls to America.

In the past, Congress has also prohibited using Medicare as a price-fixing tool. We can expect several legal challenges to this massive overreach.

Price controls discourage medical innovation. The U.S. leads the world in medical research and innovation. Drug makers set prices that cover the costs of inventing, testing, and recouping financial losses due to artificial price controls overseas.

Is it fair for the U.S. to pay more because other countries are not paying enough? Of course not. But if pharmaceutical innovators cannot afford to create new lifesaving drugs in the U.S., nobody will. There are better ways to attack this problem.

The revenues generated by U.S. drug prices are currently the engine of medical progress around the world. According to the Brookings Institution, drug discovery is directly linked to expected revenues in the market for those drugs. It takes about $2.5 billion of additional drug revenue to achieve one new drug approval.

The U.S. was responsible for 42 percent of global drug revenues in 2016. Enacting price controls would have a profound and devastating impact on medical discovery, and it would happen at the expense of American families who need these future treatments.

Price controls lead to drug shortages. The U.S. accounted for nearly 65 percent of sales for all new medicines introduced between 2011 and 2016, compared to 17.5 percent combined in the U.K, Italy, France, Spain, and Germany.

It is currently affordable for drug companies to make and sell drugs in the U.S. If the White House artificially lowered prices, companies would have fewer resources to produce drugs. In other words, the supply of drugs would go down.

American consumers, on the other hand, would be able to purchase more drugs at those artificially low prices. As a result,
Demand would go up. When supply is down and demand is up, you have yourself a drug shortage.

**Price controls increase wait times for treatment.**

Ninety-five percent of new cancer treatments are available in the U.S. compared to only 74 percent in the United Kingdom, 49 percent in Japan, and 8 percent in Greece (all countries in the proposed index).

Drug shortages mean longer wait times for critical treatments. In Canada, the wait for surgery can be up to 20 weeks. In some cases that 20-week window can be the difference between life and death.

**Price controls have failed in other markets.**

In several other sectors of the economy, we’ve seen the unintended damages that follow well-meaning price controls. Rent control led to apartment shortages. Minimum wages resulted in fewer job opportunities. Artificially low food prices led to bread lines. Fuel price ceilings led to gas lines.

Across-the-board, price manipulation results in market distortion. The pharmaceutical industry will be no different.

**Price controls could lead to “death panels.”**

When government determines the value of drugs and treatments, they control patients’ access to those drugs and treatments. In some cases, price controls in other countries have resulted in “death panels.” In the U.K., treatment isn’t covered if it costs more than $50,000 per year of life added to the patient’s life span. What if you disagree with the government’s price tag value on a year of life? Tough luck.

**Price controls will lower our quality of care.**

According to a 2009 study, the U.S. has higher rates of cancer screenings than any of the 10 countries with socialized medicine. Higher rates of care, better quality of care, and more expedient care are all features of the U.S. system that contribute to higher costs. But you get what you pay for.

**Price controls would be enforced by Obamacare, which may not exist soon.**

The HHS-proposed price controls would be enforced by the Center for Medicaid and Medicare Innovation, which was created by the Affordable Care Act, more commonly known as Obamacare. However, there is a case working its way through the courts called Texas v. United States that could strike down Obamacare in its entirety.

When the Supreme Court upheld Obamacare’s individual mandate in 2012, it ruled the fine for being uninsured was a tax. However, the 2017 tax cuts reduced the penalty to $0. The Supreme Court’s majority opinion argued the individual mandate “yields the essential feature of any tax: it produces at least some revenue for the government.”

A tax of $0 clearly does no such thing. This argument is shared by the Department of Justice. The writing is on the wall, Obamacare’s days are numbered.

**The American people don’t want price controls.**

The HHS proposal went through a public comment period, which allowed taxpayers to submit positive and negative feedback on the pricing index. The public comments were overwhelmingly negative, yet the agency has yet to rescind the rule.

Make no mistake, our health-care system is broken. But the latest HHS proposal and its legislative equivalents would make the problem worse, not better.

Ken Cuccinelli, Director of the Regulatory Action Center

Ken Cuccinelli’s op-ed was originally published in the Daily Caller on 5/24/19
When most people think of entrepreneurs, they think of Silicon Valley-types working day and night to build the next big thing. Here at FreedomWorks, we consider ourselves entrepreneurs as well. That’s because, despite being around for over 30 years, we have kept our staff small, productivity high, and minds open to learning new ways of promoting economic freedom, individual liberty, and personal responsibility.

Derwood Chase is the walking embodiment of these values. Together with his wife, Johanna, Derwood can be seen at FreedomWorks events where he’s happy to share his insights on our culture and politics. A longtime donor to FreedomWorks, Mr. Chase founded Charlottesville-based Chase Investment Counsel in 1957. Operating in the shadow of Thomas Jefferson and his famous University of Virginia – where Mr. Chase earned his Bachelor of Science degree – he is a second-generation investment counselor, following his father into the industry.

On an early October day after the Dow Jones Industrial Average dropped over 800 points, I interviewed Mr. Chase to get his insight on entrepreneurship, investment management, and freedom.

Tell me about Chase Investment Counsel and what led to its creation?

Way back in the ‘20s, my father was with a stock brokerage firm in Chicago – a fairly well-known one. He had a pretty successful group of clients, but he didn’t like the constant conflict of interest.

Anybody that’s gone to sales meetings at any brokerage firm, which I had the benefit of doing part-time while I was in the Air Force, realizes that they’re in the business of selling securities. So, when he heard that there was a firm in New York and one in Boston doing investment management – representing clients on an annual fee-only basis – he decided that would get him out from under the conflict of interest.

He told all of his individual clients what he was going to do, that he would do it for them free for a year. After that, he would charge them a fee but he wouldn’t be in the brokerage business at all. Every one of them stayed with him, so he had a built-in investment management clientele.

My father never encouraged me to become an investment counselor. He decided to buy a farm and go farming, which is what he wanted to do. He’d been raised on a farm in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. On the other hand, he had a lot of time for me. Any time I was painting my side of the fence, we had all kinds of time to discuss investments, stocks, and so forth.

Tell me about Chase Investment Counsel and what led to its creation?

So, I ended up starting the business and was going to be an investment counselor for sure. I should have had enough sense not to start it as a sole practitioner, which meant over 70 hours a week, every week for 17 years.

So much of what I see in investments revolves around information. How do you cut through all the information out there and determine what is worthwhile from what’s useless?

The most valuable research is frequently negative research. We use several dozen independent organizations that are not in the brokerage or banking business.

It’s those independent sources that I think are particularly helpful. Even on our small staff, we have a certified market technician, an independent chartered financial analyst, a couple of MBAs, and so on. We have fairly decent in-house capability of security analysis and portfolio management, but I think the independent sources are fairly helpful to us.

Lately there has been a lot of conversation about how many companies are now opting to stay private. They don’t want to go public because of all the regulation – what’s happened with Sarbanes-Oxley and the like. How has that impacted your business, and what is the overall outlook?
I don’t think that has particularly affected our business. What’s affected our business is probably more the ascendancy of ETFs, where unlike mutual funds, you’re basically buying an unmanaged index of some type. That has probably hurt the active investment management business more than anything else.

Incidentally, there are thousands of folks who own ETFs that think they aren’t exposed to the market. A lot of people say “I don’t own stocks, I just have a couple of ETFs.” Apparently, those people don’t realize that during our last correction, the S&P 500 was down 50% or thereabouts and some of the more aggressive indexes were down 60% or more. Obviously, if they had an ETF mimicking those indexes they would have been fully-exposed to the stock market. Some may be nicely-diversified, so maybe they’re a little more comfortable that way, but I don’t think many of those ETF holders are going to be very patient, long-term investors when we get into a really difficult period. When we really get into a bear market you may see it be a lot more dangerous, more volatile than the last one.

You share FreedomWorks’ values on limited government and individual freedom. How do those values influence your business?

I grew up with a father who shared those same values that FreedomWorks is furthering. One of the first politically-oriented books or articles he had me read was The Road to Serfdom, when I was maybe 15. Every time I would come home from Andover, Virginia, or the Harvard Business School and someone put some left-wing, typically do-good, welfare state kind of thinking in my head, he was always able to – not emotionally, but factually, rationally – give me examples of why that may sound good but it doesn’t work.

I had a professor of economics at Virginia, David McCord Wright, who wrote a book called Capitalism and another one called Democracy and Progress. Dave Wright was a communist when he was in law school and once he figured out how that was entirely contrary to human nature, freedom, and progress, it made him extremely effective in knocking down all of the arguments. It didn’t matter who was making them – be it books, the best-known communists, or people on the street.

We have a whole bunch of millennials that have been raised on a welfare state philosophy in high school or perhaps even worse in college. I don’t know where we’re going to be in four or eight years when they start voting.

What is your advice to other entrepreneurs out there who are thinking of following your path?

If I had it to do over based on my limited perspective, I would certainly have gone to work for a bank, insurance company, or brokerage firm for a few years while I was building out contacts. Then, I would have gotten some colleagues – maybe one from the bank that had good contacts and definitely one that was good on the golf course. Looking back if I’d have spent 20 of those 70+ hours every week playing golf, we’d be five times larger!

Just the other day, a guy who had three investment managers said to his wife years ago that they should have one of them here, locally. He brought the subject up because one of them had just died or resigned of ill health. What that told me was, if I had been playing golf with that guy once a month – or just had any kind of ongoing relationship with him – he would have been a client.

Of course, recognizing and appreciating the finer points of business is one of the aspects of being a successful business leader. And a continual reevaluation of your own work is a must.

FreedomWorks has always been lucky to learn from supporters like Mr. Chase. We hope you enjoyed his insights and look forward to bringing you the next installment of Freedom At Work.
EVENT HIGHLIGHT

FreedomWorks 2019 May Activist Fly-In

By Emily Stack

In May of this year, FreedomWorks brought in 150 of our top activists from across the country to Washington, D.C. to send a message to Congress and Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar: No socialist price controls on medicine – not now, not ever.

This three-day long event, known as a “Fly-In” consisted of educational workshops, Congressional office visits, and a press conference. Each was designed to highlight FreedomWorks’ opposition to anti-free-market proposals called the International Pricing Index, which claims to lower American drug prices.

With these proposals being offered by both Democrats and Republicans, this was another example of FreedomWorks and our grassroots activists leading the charge against government overreach and toward greater economic freedom.
In the educational workshops, activists heard from FreedomWorks policy experts John Tamny and Dan Savickas about the negative side effects of tying American drug prices to those chosen by socialist governments in other countries. They learned best practices on meeting with members of Congress and their staffers, and gained other enhancements to their top-tier grassroots capabilities.

Of course, the work of supporting freedom will never be done. However, our May Fly-In served notice that the American people are not afraid to visit Washington, D.C. to shake things up and remind our Representatives where their power truly comes from.

With the help of our supporters and activists, FreedomWorks stands ready to mobilize the American people at a moment’s notice.

But FreedomWorks learned long ago that simply meeting with legislators isn’t enough. To succeed, you must keep the pressure on because the anti-freedom voices never quit.

So in addition to flooding Capitol Hill, we took our message to the media with a press conference led by Jason Pye, FreedomWorks Vice President of Legislative Affairs, and Representative Andy Biggs (AZ-5).

During the press conference, both Jason Pye and Rep. Biggs called on Congress to oppose importing socialist drug price controls. The event also had the benefit of giving the media the opportunity to see FreedomWorks and our grassroots activists in action.

After two grueling days full of nonstop training sessions, activists took to Capitol Hill and put their learning to the test. Buses packed with activists and FreedomWorks staffers departed to the U.S. House and Senate office buildings.

Once there, everyone split off into groups, ultimately reaching more than fifty U.S. Representatives and Senators. Ultimately, the message was heard loud and clear in the halls of Congress: Fix Patients, not Prices.