“You must never, ever, ever give up. You must never, ever give in to disillusion. You must never, ever, ever forget that actually good, ordinary folk out there understand just how valuable freedom is and will not surrender their liberty for socialism.”

— Nigel Farage
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“So you’re . . . optimistic about the future?”

I can’t tell you how many times I heard that from people recently as I travelled across the country with Brexit architect Nigel Farage on our recent America’s Comeback Tour.

On these stops, I’d occasionally have people looking at me like I just don’t get it – or they’d roll their eyes like I told them I believed 2021 is finally the year for my beloved Cleveland Indians.

Of course, I do get it. I do understand. As Nigel Farage stated, “I sense out there in America a lot of people are getting scared and worried. Getting downhearted.”

I know it’s easy to feel that way.

Consider the stakes in the ongoing battle over Critical Race Theory – which you’ll read more about in the following pages of Freedom Working, the semi-annual magazine we’ve created for our most important investors.

Among a bunch of other hogwash, Critical Race Theory would teach America’s kids to believe their skin color will determine their future and that America is systemically and irredeemably racist.

The question more people should be asking is “Why?”

The answer is as obvious as it is chilling.

If America is systemically racist, then the systems must be destroyed. Our founding principles must be rooted out – root and branch. The respect for equal treatment under the law and individual liberty – principles that have made us the greatest and freest country in human history – must be eradicated.

The truth is, the battle over Critical Race Theory is a microcosm for many of the other battles going on right now.

With H.R. 1/S. 1, the radical Left went all out to remake our election system.

With their attempt to gut the Senate filibuster, the Left is going all-out to effectively change the very nature of the U.S. Senate – and strip legislative minorities of all rights.

The so-called “Green New Deal” is a brazen attempt to replace our free market economy with an openly socialist one.

The Left’s drive to pack federal courts and grant Washington, D.C. statehood are nothing but power plays to help the Left get there.

These aren’t battles over trade policy, capital gains tax rates, or how best to make a social safety net system work.

They’re battles that will determine who we are as a country – and whether or not we will remain free.

So why am I optimistic?

I’m optimistic because I’m an American, and we’ve won some tough fights before.

I’m optimistic because, as I travelled the country with Nigel Farage, I saw our grassroots movement growing – and people of all races and backgrounds coming together to save freedom from the socialist Left.

I’m optimistic because the grassroots pressure our supporters helped us generate derailed H.R. 1/S. 1 in the Senate – and helped us secure state-level election reforms in states like Georgia and massive support for Voter ID laws.

The truth is, the Left’s never-ending assaults on liberty are stirring up a hornet’s nest.

The American people aren’t going “woke.” They’re waking up.

Our job is to keep fighting, keep standing tall for freedom, and keep building.

As Nigel Farage told our activists:

“You must never, ever, ever give up. You must never, ever give in to disillusion. You must never, ever, ever forget that actually good, ordinary folk out there don’t change their minds on a whim. Don’t change their views because of what some commentator on CNN or the BBC or anywhere else says.”

At the ground level with regular, hardworking Americans – we are winning. 2022 will prove that – if we keep up the fight.

As always, media elites will be the last to know.
Virtually all of the grassroots activists on our 30-day “America’s Comeback Tour” knew Nigel Farage. They knew about Brexit too.

And they certainly knew Britain’s decision to leave the European Union roiled the elites on both sides of the pond.

But one thing few if any knew was just how that battle was won — with what Nigel Farage calls his “people’s army” — which he built with over 2,000 grassroots meetings all over England because he “knew you could only win if you build a grassroots army.”

As Mr. Farage stated, “Momentum isn’t built with one big TV interview. Momentum isn’t built with just an advertising campaign. Momentum is built by hundreds of thousands — or even millions — of simultaneous conversations. It’s families at breakfast. It’s people in the office . . .”

Hearing how Brexit was won gave every one of the attendees — many of whom were still feeling down and out after 2020 — hope we can replicate the same successes here.

The tour itself was a 30-day whirlwind.

Nigel Farage and our grassroots team made stops in 15 different cities, speaking to over 4,000 activists in swing states from Palm Beach, Florida to Phoenix, Arizona.

Through the America’s Comeback Tour we brought a positive message of hope and encouragement to our activist community.

At FreedomWorks we believe and work to empower our activists to become conservative leaders.

Every event on the America’s Comeback Tour was organized by a top FreedomWorks activist organizer, in partnership with our world-class grassroots team helping them along the way.

Everyone left energized and ready for the fights that lay ahead. But you don’t have to take my word for it. You can read for yourself what some of the attendees stated about America’s Comeback Tour.
Peter Linko – Pittsburgh, PA
“The America's Comeback Tour's stop in Pittsburgh was the perfect boost to conservatives in southwestern PA. They were rejuvenated by hearing the parallels Nigel made between pre-Brexit UK and the US today. It gave them hope for a brighter tomorrow and now more than ever we are back on board fighting for America's future!”

Deborah Wall - San Antonio, TX
“Nigel Farage in San Antonio! WOW, What a great uplifting event! We deeply appreciate FreedomWorks. Nigel's presentation about how his small ‘Brexit’ campaign that began in pubs flourished among the people. The desire for freedom from oppressive regulations grew as he kept speaking to ordinary over-taxed British citizens. It’s been a tough year and his positive message was just perfect for the work ahead.”

Merissa Hamilton - Phoenix, AZ
“FreedomWorks' America's Comeback Tour fired up our grassroots base with ongoing momentum as we've never seen in Arizona. Our grassroots meetings are now packed and our members are eager to get to work in promoting more freedom and less bad government!”

The America's Comeback Tour was a massive success. We have received hundreds of positive testimonials from our activist base – especially from our top activist organizers that were struggling with apathetic voters and activists within their own communities. FreedomWorks doesn't exist without our incredible activist community. We made it clear, we are in this fight for freedom together, through the good and bad times.

Our grassroots team is working on a follow up tour, to train and activate the thousands of attendees that attended our tour. We need all hands on deck in the fight against the progressive's agenda. Stay tuned for an event coming to a town near you.

“Conservatives must not give up as Joe Biden advances his radical agenda.”
- Nigel Farage

Newsweek
Brexit Still Offers Hope to the American Right Opinion
BY NIGEL FARAGE
4.27.21

AMERICA'S COMEBACK TOUR
15 EVENTS AND 4,000+ ATTENDEES

4 WEEKS
12 STATES
As we near a year and a half of “15 days to flatten the curve” and the COVID-19 vaccine has been available for approximately six months, power-hungry elected officials across the country continue to look for ways to exploit the pandemic in the interest of expanding their own control over American citizens.

The latest in this string of misuses of an emergency situation is related to tying a return to normal life to disclosure of one’s vaccination status through so-called “vaccine passports.”

In late March, Governor Andrew Cuomo surprised no one by jumping on the idea first, always eager for new schemes to exert more power over New Yorkers.

The idea behind vaccine passports first came to attention on the national stage from the Biden administration’s confusing comments on entertaining the idea of required vaccine documentation for international travel.

Ironically, the Left began pushing for vaccine passports at the same time they continued their constant railing against voter identification laws as “new Jim Crow” and “voter suppression.”

Surely, if simple photo identification requirements to vote are “racist” on the grounds of the supposed difficulty for minority to obtain an ID, then mandating a vaccine passport would presumably be far worse.

However, such hypocrisy is a tangential story for another day. With Governor Cuomo’s announcement, opposition to vaccine passports began building.

It only intensified when President Biden’s Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas stated they were “taking a very close look at” vaccine passports.

The pushback at the grassroots level is understandable and highly necessary.

After more than a year of governments across the country running roughshod all over as many constitutionally-protected rights as one could name, the creation of a system whereby governments mandate citizens to show proof of vaccination — when we know, as Rep. Thomas Massie (R-KY) has continually pointed out is not necessary for so many with natural immunity — in order to live out their daily lives is terrifying.

This is not even to mention the privacy implications of mandatory digital disclosure of private health information, especially in a government-created and maintained database, given the tragic track record of governments in safeguarding Americans’ sensitive information. Just consider the recent IRS “leak.”

As of June 1, sixteen states across the country have banned vaccine passports to varying degrees.

The gold standard in this area is banning governments’ implementation of vaccine passports, as done by Arizona, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, South Carolina, Utah, and Wyoming.

Some states have gone further and banned state and local governments as well as the private sector from requiring vaccine passports, including Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Iowa, Montana, North Dakota, South Carolina, South Dakota, and Texas.

Although these latter states’ bans do encroach on the freedom of private companies to make their own business decisions whether we like them or not, these states’ bans are certainly enacted with the best interest of their residents’ freedom in mind.

To the contrary, only two states — New York and Hawaii — have actually implemented any form of vaccine passports for their residents.

An eight-to-one ratio of freedom to fascism is nothing to scoff at, especially considering the to-date lack of resistance against executive power or government power in general throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

From vaccine passports and critical race theory, to election power grabs like H.R. 1 and “COVID-19 relief” policies that wreck free state economies for the bailout of mismanaged blue states, federalism is — and always should be — the answer.

If there is any silver lining to the past year and a half, it is that state governments have woken up to the need to exercise their authority under the 10th Amendment to the Constitution: “The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.”
Simply put, the integrity of our elections is the number one animating issue for the conservative movement in 2021.

As the foremost grassroots organization, FreedomWorks Foundation is leading the effort to ensure election integrity; and, with millions of activists across America, we are uniquely positioned to fill key gaps.

Thus, we have begun an effort to train our many dedicated activists to become officers of elections.

Working with renowned elections attorney (and conservative activist herself) Cleta Mitchell, we have already hosted three election integrity trainings in North Carolina and will rapidly scale up this program to additional states throughout the summer of 2021.

In crucial states, FreedomWorks Foundation activists are being trained on the ins and outs of their states’ procedures for applying to be an elections officer.

Through our Election Protection Initiative, our activists will be installed as the people who administer every aspect of the voting process – from checking voters into the polling place to the counting of ballots after the polls close.

Too often, especially in heavily blue areas, conservatives have not had the resources to have one of us in every precinct, even though the administration of elections is supposed to be bipartisan.

And when we do, elections officers and poll watchers often do not have the proper training to identify issues and report potential misconduct.

FreedomWorks Foundation activists who become elections officers will have the necessary resources and training to perform their duties effectively and uphold election integrity.

Through the Election Protection Initiative, not only will our activists have a firsthand role in securing election integrity, but they will also restore the confidence of the conservative grassroots that their votes will be counted.

Our efforts to participate in the administration of elections do not start and end at the polling booth itself.

By educating our activist community on the election laws and procedures in their state, we are also empowering them to demand accountability from their officials by ensuring that those laws and procedures – pertaining to things like voter registration, voter list maintenance, and ballot security requirements – are being followed.

It is not unreasonable to demand that those charged with carrying out election administration are doing their job and following the law.

To build up confidence in our elections, we need to register new voters. Thus, over the next year, FreedomWorks Foundation activists will engage in voter registration drives. Too many have lost faith in the process of voting.

We must take action to engage the disaffected, restore their confidence in elections, and ensure that their voices are heard.

By Noah Wall

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED:

- Become an election officer, poll worker, or poll watcher
- Report election misconduct
- Learn more about election integrity by visiting FreedomWorks.org/ElectionProtection

Noah Wall
Executive Vice President
The role of parents is under assault in America. From school closures, to school board members in Loudoun County, Virginia doxing them and having Critical Race Theory (CRT) shoved down their children's throats, many parents are learning the hard way modern educrats don't care one bit what they think. They have their own educational agenda for our children, and they are determined to get their way.

Needless to say, many parents are angry. The largest grassroots movement in the country is working to turn these parents into a political force to take back our schools.

For the first time ever, a local school board meeting was broadcast on national television.

Now, political organizations across the country are starting to realize just how critical local school board races are. Sadly, we've let destructive ideologies slip into our schools for too long and surrendered control for comfort.

If the last year and a half made something clear, it is that the educrats are more concerned with themselves than with our children.

Any time the government or teachers' unions tell parents that it knows best how to raise their children, it's time for reform.

In 2020, there were two viruses released: COVID-19 and Critical Race Theory (CRT).

In the heat of racial tensions in 2020, school boards and administrators across the country decided that the solution was to double down on Critical Race Theory and anti-American, biased curricula in classrooms.

This new curriculum promotes figures such as Ibram X. Kendi who said “The only remedy to past discrimination is present discrimination. The only remedy to present discrimination is future discrimination.”

CRT also pushes the idea that if you're not an aggressive “anti-racist” who sees racism wherever you look then you're a racist.

These new lesson plans teach children to discriminate based on skin color, hate America, and engage only in groupthink.

This curriculum is being pushed by the same bureaucratic system that demands your tax dollars go to their poorly run government schools. If you advocate any other solution, you're taking from poorer students.

It's ironic that if you advocate for minority and low-income students to have choices other than schools that teach them that the nature of their skin oppresses them, you're the one oppressing them.

It's becoming increasingly hard to defend public school education these days.

The only true solution is educational freedom to give parents a choice where they send their children to school. Instead of know-it-all educrats, we need to restore parents as the ultimate authority in their child's education.

Achieving educational freedom means letting tax dollars follow the student, not a system. It involves implementing a curriculum that is transparent, determined at the local level, and is unbiased.

To the parents standing up across the country, never forget that despite the attempts to silence your voice, these are our children to raise. They're not the government's.

Laura Zorc, Director of Educational Reform
TOUR UPDATE!
BUILDING EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS TOGETHER (BEST)

By Josiah Gaiter

It’s hard to remember a time where parents were more up in arms about the state of modern education.

One frustration was school closures and remote instruction at the behest of the teachers’ unions during COVID-19.

Of late, the spread of Critical Race Theory (CRT) indoctrination has only ratcheted up the frustration.

At FreedomWorks, we know that the grassroots is the path to real change.

So in December 2020, we launched the Building Education for Students Together (BEST) to reform our education system through a parent-led coalition.

It’s been an astounding success so far.

In fact, if you’ve seen parents in the news standing up against Critical Race Theory, there’s a good chance BEST is connected with them through this coalition.

That’s not by accident. It’s been through hard work – and almost non-stop travel.

Over the course of our spring tour, Laura Zorc, FreedomWorks’ Director of Education Reform, and our BEST team held events in thirty cities across seven key states – Arizona, Texas, Georgia, Florida, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, and Ohio.

Through these events, we not only inspired parents to get involved but connected them with local, like-minded groups to help build the parent-led coalition.

At each event, Laura informed activists about how we can fight Critical Race Theory (CRT), provide families with school choice, and take back our local school boards one seat at a time.

As the tour progressed, we saw our partners across the states attending school board meetings and fighting to have parents’ voices heard.

In Fort Worth, Texas, parents told the board that Critical Race Theory has no home in their schools.

During our tour in Arizona, BEST and partners held a rally declaring a coalition to train and mobilize parents across the state.

This was after the school board abruptly left a meeting before public comment and decided to make their next meeting virtual to avoid having to hear from parents.

Sadly, this kind of behavior is becoming more and more commonplace as “educrats” continually make clear they want parents to just shut up about what’s being taught to their kids.

This will only intensify as the battle over Critical Race Theory heats up.

The good news is, our movement is growing. And the more freedom-loving Americans we can train to get involved, the better our chances of stopping CRT in its tracks.

For those who’d like to help get involved, we’ve included more information below.

Don’t hesitate to contact us if you’d like to help fight back.

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED:

School Boards: BEST has been able to support groups that are inspired to hold school boards accountable at meetings and train them to elect board members who will uphold parents’ rights.

Our Candidate Academy allows anyone interested in running for school board or supporting good candidates to join our six-week virtual training. This training has reached activists across the country and is the next step to taking back school boards for the parents.

Visit our website at ParentsKnowBest.com where you can obtain more information, sign up to get involved, and connect with others.
On Monday, April 19, President Biden’s Department of Education issued a proposed federal rule to begin awarding millions of dollars in taxpayer funds to school districts across the country. But if the Biden administration gets its way, those taxpayer dollars are going to come with strings attached. Those strings say school districts who prioritize teaching children that America is systemically racist through Critical Race Theory (CRT) are going to get the cash.

Critical Race Theory (CRT) – a doctrine rooted in Marxism – insists that America is irredeemably, “systemically” racist; that one’s race determines whether one is “oppressed” or an “oppressor”; that hard work as the key to success is an aspect of “whiteness;” and that racial identity is more important than our common status as human beings and Americans.

Immediately after the Department of Education’s announcement, FreedomWorks Foundation’s Regulatory Action Center (RAC) and Building Education for Students Together (BEST) joined forces to stop the U.S. Department of Education’s proposed priorities for American history and civics education grants. Our activists understand that the federal government has no constitutional role in determining school curricula, and that CRT is, quite frankly, dangerous. If implemented, our federal government will be incentivizing school districts to poison younger students with CRT, indoctrinating them with divisive racial ideas and teaching them that everything is always about their race.

During the comment period, which ended on May 19, more than 4,000 FreedomWorks activists weighed in with the Department of Education to oppose this proposal.
This is the only time during the regulatory process where the voices of the American grassroots are taken into account. The good news is, there's no doubt our activists' voices were heard.

All in all, the 4,000 comments we generated in opposition represented about 10 percent of the total public input. Now, the ball is in the Department of Education's court as we await a final ruling on imposing CRT in our schools. This could come next month, next year, or it could never come.

But FreedomWorks Foundation's Regulatory Action Center made a strong stand against CRT. And this is a battle we will never stop fighting.

In the 1960's, Martin Luther King's vision was that all people would be judged by the content of their character, not the color of their skin. **CRT diminishes Dr. King's legacy and memory and the harmony that he stood for.**

**CHERYLE B. JACKSONVILLE, FL**

As a former union teacher, I know that the federal government should NOT try to control what’s being taught in your local schools. Kamala Harris and Joe Biden certainly shouldn’t be bribing school administrators to teach children that America is an irredeemably racist country with MY tax dollars.

**PRISCILLIA K., MANASQUAN, NJ**
The Democratic Party has moved from one that at least claimed to represent the interests of the working class to a party that barely hides its pandering to woke, oftentimes white coastal elites. The policies and speech of the DNC are now less focused on lifting people out of poverty and more focused on making sure that no one's feelings get hurt.

But if that's their MO, it's clearly not working. The Democratic Party is angrier than ever, with its women members appearing to be especially enraged. The weirdest part is that anger is a qualifier that Democrats not only accept, but wear like a badge of honor. Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) this past summer called herself “a rage mom,” the most recent iteration of woke adult women claiming to be fed up with politics and veering into activism.

But the problem with the outrage that comes from many Democratic women, that supposedly compels them to get involved with politics, is that it has nothing to do with actually making things better for the country's poorest or most vulnerable. In reality, the squall of the Democrat rage machine is at once the sore loser's referendum on 2016 and the cry of those secretly afraid of real, fundamental policy changes. These are the type of people who feel safer with Biden in office simply because he is perceived to be less uncouth than the sitting president.

For as much as conservatives get criticized for wanting to preserve a certain way of life, it is affluent liberals who are most deserving of this criticism. These voters are “Karen-esque” in their sense of superiority and entitlement. They think that everyone should think like them and that anyone who doesn’t is below them or unenlightened or uneducated. And based on today’s Democratic strongholds, these folks are often the definition of elitists. This year, California donors, including A-list celebrities and Disney executives, spent roughly $38 million in Senate races outside of their state. It's no surprise that most of that money went to Democrats; and, in many cases, these out-of-statedonations surpassed the amount of money shelled out by in-statedonors. But as we’ve ultimately seen, no amount of Hollywood funds could sway South Carolinians to vote for Jaime Harrison over Sen. Graham or Kentuckians to vote for Amy McGrath over Sen. Mitch McConnell.

Virtue signaling is just as important to maintaining a woke way of life for Karen Democrats. That’s why white liberal women have taken to dominating the conversation on race and other cultural issues. In the city of Arlington, Virginia's Dialogues on Race and Equity questionnaire, the biggest pool of respondents has been “middle aged white women who are relatively affluent” the spitting image of diversity. Comedian Bill Burr perhaps put it best when he said that white women have “hijacked” the woke movement.

GOP women on the other hand, having made a conscious decision to put policies ahead of identity, are crushing the game. A record number of them have been elected to the House in 2020; their free-market, pro-liberty message is resonating with voters because it is hopeful yet down to earth and practical. It is a response to life as it is, not life as it exists in a perfect world. It is a message much more accessible than what Dems have to offer, as indicated by the diminishing Democratic House majority.

It seems as though no policy outcome would ever be enough to appease and dissolve the rage of the Democratic Party's woke white women. My gut feeling, however, is that no matter who is in office, leftist women will always find something to gripe about. That’s why I am especially hopeful about the future of the GOP in this country, where reason still trumps anger and good policy is the real star of the show —and women are leading the way.
Congressional majorities don’t reserve the bill number 1 to just any old piece of legislation. They reserve that designation only for their very top priorities. So when House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) designated the so-called “For the People Act” – or as we call it, “The Corrupt Politicians Act” – as H.R. 1 and S.1, it put the entire political universe on notice.

It’s not hard to understand why “The Corrupt Politicians Act” became the Democrats top priority this Congress. It would virtually guarantee them permanent political power in Washington, D.C. by overhauling the entire U.S. election system, eliminating voter ID, forcing states to adopt “Swamp”-controlled congressional redistricting commissions, and forcing organizations like FreedomWorks to publicly disclose our donors, leaving them open to harassment and intimidation by government bureaucrats, Antifa hooligans, and even “woke” corporations.

The good news is, on June 22, Majority Leader Schumer held a procedural vote to bring “The Corrupt Politicians Act” to the Senate floor for debate. The vote failed on a 50-50 party line vote. 60 votes were needed to advance the legislation.

That’s the good news. The bad news is, we’re nowhere near the end of this fight to preserve election integrity for the future.

From here, Democrats will likely seek to force through a “compromise” bill – specifically H.R. 4. Named for the late Rep. John Lewis, this legislation would empower the Justice Department’s Voting Rights Division – which is stacked with the most high-powered liberal lawyers in the country – to determine the voting system of conservative-leaning swing states like Georgia, Arizona, and Florida.

Having failed to take over states’ election systems directly through H.R. 1/S.1, Chuck Schumer and Nancy Pelosi are now attempting to do it indirectly through H.R. 4. The bad news is that Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV) is on record supporting H.R. 4, as is Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK).

Second, calls for the filibuster to be removed have only grown louder since the defeat of the “For the Corrupt Politicians Act.” Second, calls for the filibuster to be removed have only grown louder since the defeat of the “For the Corrupt Politicians Act.”

With the following facts and figures, you can see how our supporters’ generosity made such enormous impact in this battle so far.

FreedomWorks activists helped derail H.R. 1/S.1 by:

- Sending 467,100 messages to Congress opposing H.R. 1/S.1;
- Spending 808.6 hours on the phone urging members to vote “no” on the “For the Corrupt Politicians Act.”

In Arizona, FreedomWorks:

- Knocked on over 2,500 doors and made nearly 20,000 calls targeting a crucial community, members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, to whom Senator Sinema has cultural ties;
- Opposed H.R. 1/S.1 by a margin of 87 percent to 5 percent;
- 44 percent called Senator Sinema in opposition right away;
- 42 percent promised to call Sinema after we left in opposition to S.1.

In West Virginia, FreedomWorks:

- Held seven on-the-ground events and dozens virtually to galvanize opposition to H.R. 1/S.1;
- Launched two Hulu ads targeted towards Independents and Democrats – ads that we subjected to rigorous testing.

Adam Brandon, President
President Biden’s $1.9 trillion Covid-relief package is being sold as an effort to “get America back to work.” It will do the opposite. We estimate that between five million and eight million fewer Americans will be employed over the next six months if the bill passes.

The bill would create one of the largest expansions in government welfare benefits since the birth of the modern welfare state. In combination with December’s $900 billion package, the new bill would expand the safety net to include six months of weekly $400 bonus unemployment benefits on top of the normal weekly benefits, a $3,000-a-child tax credit, an expansion of food stamps and rental assistance, $2,000-a-person checks, and expanded health benefits.

The Biden plan is welfare reform in reverse. It would repeal many of the successful work requirements dating to the Clinton era, and it contains only minimal requirements in exchange for its cash payments and other benefits.

There’s more. Unlike wages and salaries earned from work, many of these benefits are tax-free. So the after-tax equivalent of receiving a paycheck versus government benefits is even more tilted against working. There is no 7.65% payroll tax deducted from an unemployment check, as there would be on a paycheck. Unemployment benefits are subject to income taxes in most of the country, but six states don’t count them as taxable income.

In Kansas, a family of four with two unemployed adults who had earned U.S. median wages could get paid, including the Biden add-on package, the after-tax-equivalent of more than $135,000 on an annual basis without working an hour. In Massachusetts, where state unemployment benefits are the highest in the nation, the figure is $170,000. This doesn’t include any housing or rental assistance the family may also receive. The Biden package of benefits would exceed the wages and salaries of at least 85% of households.

We support a safety net for people who lose their jobs, but benefits this generous are unfair to those who work full-time but get paid less than those on government assistance. Even in the poorest states, such as Mississippi, a family of four with kids could collect benefits of well more than $100,000 on an annual basis.

Supplemental unemployment-insurance benefits in the range of $400 a week would offer roughly 60% of unemployed workers more money for not working than for returning to their jobs. During the last serious recession, in 2009, the supplemental benefits under the Obama stimulus were $25 a week.

We predicted on these pages that when the original Cares Act passed in early 2020, the added benefit would reduce employment by millions when jobs came back. Sure enough, Labor Department statistics verified that millions of jobs went unfilled last summer even as unemployment was historically high.

What will happen this time around? The combination of benefits is likely to reduce employment by five million to seven million jobs. The $15 minimum wage, if it stays in the bill, would bring the total to more than eight million.

Many Americans will always choose the dignity of work over government handouts. But the Biden benefit package makes going back to work a money-losing proposition. If Mr. Biden and the Democrats want to encourage employment, they should suspend payroll taxes for jobs that pay $100,000 a year or less. This would provide all workers an immediate 7.5% raise and would cut the cost to employers of hiring unemployed workers back by the same percentage. This would cost the government less than $1.9 trillion.

President Biden’s bill will make millions more Americans dependent on checks from the government, not an employer. Could that be the point?
People didn’t need government, or entities created by government. They also didn’t require force to protect themselves. Let’s never forget this. Better yet, let’s make this truth clear over and over again.

Ok, what truth? The truth that the American people along with people around the world adjusted to the spreading coronavirus much more quickly than did their self-appointed political minders.

As I point out in my new book *When Politicians Panicked*, New York City mayor de Blasio was encouraging increasingly cautious New Yorkers to go see movies at a time when more and more of them were staying home, plus he was riding the city’s subways to encourage ridership that was on decline as a consequence of fear about the virus.

In the U.S.’s allegedly science-denying red states, as in the states that locked down last, citizens had become more than cautious well before the wholly superfluous and destructive lockdowns reared their ugly heads. They were dining out less, washing their hands more, avoiding crowds more. It’s funny how fear of potential hospitalization or death focuses the mind on avoiding either outcome.

Notable about this very human desire to cheat illness, it wasn’t just an American thing. Holman Jenkins pointed out last summer that masks and hand sanitzer were scarce in Germany at a time when Angela Merkel was still downplaying the virus.

The people are a market. Repeat this truth too, over and over again. While processing limited information, they began to take precautions. Government force in 2020 was wholly unnecessary.

Which raises a basic question about Anthony Fauci, Robert Redfield, USAID and the CDC. What if the two political bureaucrats lacked their well-funded taxpayer-funded perches? Would Americans have dropped dead in high numbers? The question itself insults the American people, along with human nature.

Up front, people respond to incentives. They respond to reality. If the virus had been an indiscriminate killer the lengths Americans would have gone to in order to avoid infection would have well exceeded what any politician or government drone could have ever imagined. At the same time, it’s worth pointing out that if the virus had been a rabid life ender, we would have known it well in advance of it reaching the U.S. Think the internet. Think the smartphone. China is dense with them. If its people had been dying en masse, there’s no way this could have been hidden.

After which, it’s useful to point out the obvious; that Redfield and Fauci didn’t invent communications, the internet or smartphones, so without the two functionaries word about a spreading virus would have just as easily reached the American people. Some will point out how contradictory Fauci has been over the last 14 months about the virus, masks and other things related, but that’s shooting fish in a barrel.

The better answer is that Fauci, Redfield, USAID and the CDC weren’t needed in the first place. No doubt such a statement would cause the heads of lefties like David Brooks to explode, but Brooks’s feelings don’t alter reality. In Brooks’s case, “national plans” excite him endlessly, which means national government organizations excite him, but it perhaps hasn’t occurred to Brooks to consider a world without Fauci et al. Better yet, Brooks might ask himself if dead Americans would be piled up on city streets around the country absent Fauci et al. Probably not. Actually, definitely no.

That’s the case because the same profit motive that continues to bring us closer to cancer cures (along with advances that make it possible to live with cancer) also ensures that capitalism would have produced all manner of virus-mitigating strategies. Ludwig von Mises described profits in *Human Action* as a consequence of the motivated removing “unease” from our lives, so does anyone seriously think the wealth-focused would punt on creating information about and solutions for a situation like the one that was presented to us in 2020 when a globally spreading pathogen had red and blue state Americans alike on edge, along with the rest of the world?
The question answers itself.

What form would a private version of the USIAID or CDC take? There’s no way of knowing, and that’s the point. Government is constrained by a static known, while the desire for profits always and everywhere results in the unexpected. All anyone really need say is that a capitalist system capable of producing Amazon, or Apple and its iPhones, could put together myriad innovative ways to deal with a virus.

Which brings us to the tragedy that was and is Fauci, Redfield, US AID and the CDC. Not constrained by market signals, or profits, Fauci and Redfield quite simply “elt things.” Emotion guided them. So did fear. In possession of swagger that was not their own, they created fear all the while pushing the easily gulled (think politicians) toward panic. In other words, government creates the very crises it aims to avoid by trying to avoid them. Please think about this.

The virus had been in the news for months, and had been spreading for months. During this time American stock markets reached all-time highs as the virus spread. Free people don’t cause crises. Crises are born of panicky politicians “doing something” that always and everywhere involves replacing the marketplace that is the people with the narrow knowledge of the very few. It’s called central planning, and its imposition always creates a crisis.

So it did. Scared of their own shadow politicians let experts like Fauci and Redfield terrify them in a command-and-control stance. The rest is tragic history as jobs and businesses vanished in a climate of fear created by politicians and bureaucrats who would never miss a paycheck or a meal. So what would the world and life have been like sans Fauci et al? Your answer can be found in February of 2020 before expert-reverent politicians panicked.
Democrats by no measure have a clear mandate in Washington. But they sure do act like it.

Senate Democrats know that they don’t have support for many items on their radical agenda, more of which Majority Leader Chuck Schumer plans to force votes on in the coming weeks. That’s why talks are recirculating in the Senate to end the filibuster once and for all.

Democrats are mistaken to say they have a mandate to do away with this parliamentary tool. Like much of their far-left policy agenda, that is not what the American people voted for.

But Democrats know that killing the filibuster is the only way they can ram unpopular legislation through Congress.

For that reason and more, the filibuster should be protected at all costs. As with many things they don’t like, Democrats are quick to label it as a tool of oppression. In reality, it is an institutional safeguard that stands between them and their power-hungry ambitions. In fact, former President Obama defended the filibuster in the past against the nuclear option, but subsequently flipped this past summer and denounced it as a Jim Crow relic.

But this unfair characterization ignores the fundamental purpose of the procedure and the crucial role it plays in giving a voice to the minority.

The United States Constitution is founded on the principles of representative democracy, a system in which the majority is checked from wielding absolute and automatic power. In his first inauguration address, Thomas Jefferson reiterated these principles, saying: “Bear in mind this sacred principle, that though the will of the majority is in all cases to prevail, that will to be rightful must be reasonable; that the minority possess their equal rights, which equal law must protect and to violate would be oppression.”

Ending the filibuster would mean that the minority party is limited in its ability to do anything about a bill before it becomes law. Per our founding principles and representative style of government, major legislation demands input from those in the minority. Without the filibuster and three-fifths majority vote requirement, we move toward a one-party ruling system.

Let us also not forget that Congress has two chambers for a reason: The House and Senate each have distinct roles and are meant to act as checks on each other as well as the other branches of government. If all that was needed in the Senate to pass a bill was a simple majority, then why bother having two distinct legislative bodies? The three-fifths majority vote needed to pass major legislation in the Senate separates it from the House, where a simple majority is the norm. On the Senate floor, debate is supposed to be free from time constraints, and negotiations between parties is encouraged, even expected, to provide the minority party a chance to influence legislation and voice opposition.

Ultimately, killing the filibuster effectively kills debate, brings the required “yes” votes down from a three-fifths majority to a simple majority, and ensures the minority party has no leverage at all.

Liberals like to make a big deal about sticking up for minority voices, but in their quest for absolute power, they seem to have forgotten that rhetoric. For the time being, Democrats don’t have the votes to kill the filibuster. Sens. Joe Manchin and Kyrsten Sinema remain opposed; President Biden isn’t keen on the idea, either. But there’s no reason to expect this sentiment will last.

For the sake of our republic -- and yes, we are a republic -- I hope that their opposition persists. If Senate Democrats succeed in killing the filibuster, our country will be on the path to direct democracy mob rule, which James Madison warned about. Mob rule might be what Democrats want, but it’s not what the Framers of our Constitution intended.

So make no mistake -- the attempt to kill the filibuster is nothing more than a power grab from Senate Democrats so that they can pass sweeping legislation while they have the majority. In removing that long-standing feature of our democracy, they seek to fundamentally change our republican form of government forever. For the sake of minority rights, we cannot let this happen.

Adam Brandon, President

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WE'RE IN THIS TOGETHER
BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

By Spencer Chretien

As the nation’s leading conservative activist organization, FreedomWorks continually develops and maintains strong relationships with like-minded non-profit, private sector, and governmental entities in Washington, D.C., and throughout the county.

With conservatives out of power in Washington, D.C., the need for the movement to stick together has never been greater – especially with the Left pushing to gut the U.S. Senate filibuster and change our entire election system.

FreedomWorks, of course, routinely partners with other organizations and remains a regular part of an election integrity coalition along with the Conservative Partnership Institute (CPI), Heritage Action, and the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC).

With the Left ramping up the pressure on key Democrat Senators like Joe Manchin (D-WV) and Kyrsten Sinema (D-AZ), FreedomWorks – along with all of the other members of our election integrity coalition – knew we had no choice but to start mobilizing.

On March 20, FreedomWorks hosted a rally in West Virginia, calling on Senator Manchin to honor the will of his constituents, oppose S. 1, and protect the filibuster.

The Rev. C.L. Bryant, Senior Fellow at FreedomWorks, fired up the crowd and offered words of encouragement to activists who had come from every corner of West Virginia.

Those efforts bore fruit in June, when Senator Manchin announced his opposition to S. 1 and reaffirmed his support for the filibuster.

This is but one example of how the whole of the conservative movement is greater than the sum of its parts.

With the most dedicated and influential activists, FreedomWorks leads the way in bringing about this magnifying effect.

While we were forced to play defense on H.R. 1/S. 1 in Washington, D.C., we had many offensive successes in state capitals throughout the country.

In the first half of 2021, FreedomWorks joined with other conservative organizations to support commonsense election integrity legislation in states like Georgia, Florida, Texas, and Arizona.

By uniting the movement in support of such legislation, we were able to strengthen the resolve of legislators and governors to press onward in the face of the vicious lies of left-wing politicians, the Biden administration, woke mega-corporations, and professional sports leagues.

In June 2021, we were proud to sponsor the Turning Point USA Young Women’s Leadership Summit in Dallas and participate in the Western Conservative Summit in Denver. In the coming weeks and months, FreedomWorks will continue to enhance our relationships with friends and allies throughout America.

As a hub for the most effective grassroots activists in America, FreedomWorks is proud of the value it brings to a united conservative movement, and – despite the battles ahead – we continue to see our hard work pay off.

Spencer Chretien, Director of Programs
No one knows grassroots better than Adam Brandon. As president of FreedomWorks, the nation’s leading conservative grassroots organization, he leads more than 5 million activists from across the country every single day. He knows that harnessing the power of the grassroots is the best way to hold our elected representatives in Washington accountable to enact pro-growth economic policy that lifts up all Americans.

This book is an essential resource for anyone seeking to understand the state of modern politics, for anyone who wants to use grassroots activism to make a difference in the world, and for anyone who wonders about what the future holds for America and her citizens.

“Adam Brandon . . . is one of the brightest new leaders in Washington, with a clear understanding of how to unite conservatives and libertarians across the nation to drain the DC Swamp.”

—FORMER U.S. SENATOR JIM DEMINT

“Our Founding Fathers knew from personal experience that liberty comes from our God-given rights, not the government. In similar fashion, Adam Brandon articulates why this is still the case through anecdotes from his own past.”

—U.S. SENATOR RAND PAUL (R-KY)

“Adam Brandon understands . . . that free markets equal free people. His book, which illustrates simply how economic growth lifts all boats, should serve as a guide for anyone who truly believes in unlocking America’s potential for all.”

—DR. ARTHUR LAFFER, PRESIDENTIAL MEDAL OF FREEDOM RECIPIENT

**ADAM BRANDON** is the president of FreedomWorks, the largest free-market grassroots advocacy organization in the country, which helps over six million activists. He has been published in and quoted by, among others, Fox News, The Wall Street Journal, The New York Times, The Washington Post, Forbes, and The Hill. He earned a B.A. from George Washington University and master’s degrees from Georgetown University, George Washington University, and Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland.

AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE:
I’m sure your email, voicemail, and mailbox are being inundated by candidates from races across the country. Trust me, I get it. Mine are too!

But for me, it’s more about candidates seeking the endorsement from FreedomWorks for America. We’ve endorsed candidates for years now, and I’d like to think we’ve learned a thing or two along the way. Maybe you’ll find some of them helpful.

That’s why we want to make sure you’re equipped with the right questions to ask candidates and resources to make the best decision on which candidates to support.

First, if they’re an incumbent, take a look at our 2020 House and Senate Scorecards (which you can find easily on FreedomWorks’ website). This will help show you how the candidate has voted in the past. As President Reagan stated, “trust but verify.”

The truth is, there are many politicians out there who claim to be for limited government and free markets. Sadly, it’s far too rare to find candidates who actually mean it. So that’s where everything has to start.

Second, each cycle we meet with fantastic candidates with compelling personal stories that have about as good of a shot at winning their race as my Cleveland Indians do winning the World Series.

And if you do not follow baseball, that translates into no shot at all.

As a movement, we are going to be outspent by the Left, so we need to make sure every dollar is spent well. Of course, you may have additional policy questions you may want to ask. I have some I ask every election cycle.

And I have some that change based upon the changing times. For example, I never felt the need to ask about economic lockdowns during a pandemic before 2020! But you better believe I ask those questions now!

Whatever your questions are, it’s best to write them down to make sure you always remember the ones most important to you. If you have candidates asking for your support, hopefully this helps.

I know 2022 can be a special year for the Freedom Movement. Each and every one of us has an important role to play.

By Adam Brandon

FreedomWorks will help you with research. But in the meantime, here are some questions you can ask when candidates are soliciting your support:

- What's your path to victory?
- How much money do you have in the bank?
- Who else has endorsed you?
- How many volunteers do you have?
- Who do you admire in the Senate/House?
- How are your opponents going to attack you?
- Walk me through your campaign team and structure. (Note: If a campaign is run by family, it's not a good sign).
- Why are you running?

Here are some policy questions:

- What are the top three policy issues that you are running on?
- How would you address the out-of-control spending in Washington, D.C.?
- What reforms would you make to Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid – the main drivers of our ever-growing national debt?
- How would you ideally set up the immigration system in our country?
- What is your vision for healthcare reform?
- How would you ensure faith in American elections is restored?
- How are you going to battle cancel culture?
In January 1981, two milestones were reached, one by Ronald Reagan and one by now-Congressman Burgess Owens. For Ronald Reagan, it was taking the presidential oath of office. For Burgess Owens, it was winning Super Bowl XV with the Oakland Raiders.

Fast-forwarding 40 years to the month, Owens took the oath of office as the United State Representative from Utah’s 4th Congressional District.

Congressman Burgess Owens grew up in a southern Democrat household in Tallahassee, Florida. While growing up a Democrat, Owens and his family held traditional conservative beliefs. Needless to say, the Democrat Party wasn’t nearly as radical or as hostile to conservatives within their ranks as they are today.

Inspired by Reagan’s conservative wave during the 1980’s, though, Burgess Owens began to realize that his beliefs in freedom were more associated with the Republican Party than with his parents’ Democrat Party. Freedom has always been a part of the Burgess family legacy. Silas Burgess, great-great-grandfather of Congressman Owens, was a young boy who came to America on a slave ship and was sold in an auction block upon arrival.

Silas, along with other slaves in search of freedom, found freedom by escaping through the underground railroads and eventually settled in a home in Texas.

Critical Race Theory is the exact opposite of Dr. King’s dream of not being judged by the color of one’s skin but on the content of their character.

- Rep. Burgess Owens
Once in Texas, Silas went on to build his community’s first church and elementary schools and owned more than 100 acres of farmland, becoming an inspiration to his family to this day.

On November 2, 1983, President Reagan signed a bill into law to make Martin Luther King, Jr. Day a national holiday. In a speech that day, Reagan said:

“Traces of bigotry still mar America. So, each year on Martin Luther King Day, let us not only recall Dr. King, but rededicate ourselves to the commandments he believed in and sought to live every day. Thou shalt love thy God with all thy heart. And thy shall love thy neighbor as thyself. And I just have to believe that all of us, if all of us, young and old, Republicans and Democrats, do all we can to live up to those commandments, then we will see the day when Dr. King’s dream comes true.”

President Reagan’s words were true then and remain true today. While our country has made significant progress since the Civil War and Civil Rights eras, many Americans with left-wing political interests are portraying a picture of America as a country that is equally bad or worse off than we were during those turbulent times with regard to race and cultural division.

That could not be further from the truth and is why Congressman Owens’ leadership is needed now more than ever in Congress.

A self-described Ronald Reagan Republican, Congressman Owens is on the front line in Congress pushing back against the narrative that America is a racist country today.

Through his four tenets of Head, Heart, Hands, and Home, Rep. Owens is inspiring millions of Americans to embrace the founding principles and conservative values that have made our country free and prosperous.

Education, service, entrepreneurship, and respect are the main drivers of Owens’ roadmap for a community to win, succeed, and thrive.

Congressman Owens’ leadership goes beyond the policy fights in Congress. They extend towards creating a cultural shift that recognizes the power of individuals over that of government, and the good that comes from uniting as people regardless of, not because of, race.

The FreedomWorks community must rest assured that with leaders like Congressman Burgess Owens, the “shining city upon a hill” that Reagan so often talked about will remain a beacon of hope and freedom for generations to come.

Cesar Ybarra,
Senior Director of Legislative Affairs

CONGRATULATIONS
BURGESS OWENS

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As the COVID-19 pandemic nears its end, it's clear the economy should be returning to normal. But this Friday's jobs report shows that the U.S. economy is still not on the swiftest road to recovery. With the unemployment rate dipping in dozens of states, the financial situation of millions of Americans is improving. But despite the best efforts of businesses around the nation, many of them are struggling to get their employees back. Just go to any hotel, construction or retail company and they'll tell you the reason they cannot provide services at pre-pandemic levels isn't because of COVID-19 itself. It's because of the government's incentive to not return to work.

That's because leftists at every level of government continue to promote policies that have unnecessarily prolonged the economic devastation caused by failed lockdowns. Even as the demand for vaccines is filled and almost every American who wants a COVID-19 shot has received one, President Joe Biden and his allies have foolishly decided to extend the $300 weekly federal unemployment subsidy — even as nearly half of the states have chosen to opt out of it.

And if that's not enough, Democrats on the state level are providing unemployment checks worth hundreds of dollars each week. Residents of California can collect up to $450 in weekly benefits in addition to the $300 subsidy while New Yorkers can receive over $500 in unemployment each week on top of the subsidy. Do the math, and you'll find that some unemployed Americans are raking in the equivalent of $20 an hour, working 40 hours a week.

This is obviously unsustainable. Yet President Biden and the left are in no rush to get people back into the workplace. Rather than scaling back government intervention in favor of letting the free market drive our economy, Democrats and their allies are pushing for a federal takeover. This sadly doesn't come as a surprise to Americans who have paid attention to how the far left has consumed the Democratic Party.

But what's truly unfortunate is the degree to which so many have gone along with this plot by the left. Instead of supporting the businesses which have been crushed for the past year by lockdowns, capacity limits and other restrictions, some Americans have chosen to let them suffer if it means continuing to collect government benefits that match what they'd otherwise be paid at work.

Businesses who are unable to pay employees more than this new wage floor, which the government has artificially set by extending unemployment benefits, have no choice but to close up shop. What was supposedly a program meant to prevent people from spreading COVID-19 while allowing them to pay their bills has morphed into a cudgel with which to hit struggling businesses. The Amazons and Targets of the world, largely unaffected or even benefited by the lockdowns, have already raised their minimum wages. Meanwhile, the little guy suffers.

The businesses in our communities will struggle so long as people abandon the concept of personal responsibility and cheer on the left's insane efforts to grow the role of government in our lives. Free enterprise and limited government have made the American economy the envy of the world. But in an age where too many have adopted the mindset that government, rather than the free market, is a force for good, they're fine with employers suffering if it means they receive a weekly check.

Of course, the government doesn't get money from nowhere — your taxes will be raised to pay for all of this, and you'll pay the hidden tax of inflation as more and more dollars chase a shrinking amount of goods and services. This problem will only intensify as people continue to stay out of the workplace and business owners call it quits due to a lack of employees.

At a time when the American economy should be returning to its pre-pandemic status as a global leader, leftist politicians continue to extend supposedly "temporary" unemployment benefits for no good reason. But the impact of these payments on the recovery is only as significant as the number of people who elect to stay home, rather than assume personal responsibility and return to work. Unfortunately, there are millions who are doing so — and our nation will be paying the price for years to come.
For nearly five decades, Mike and Irene Lavor have embodied a strong sense of service to others. As a physician, Navy corpsman (and later as the commander of a forward surgical base in Afghanistan), entrepreneur, and mentor, Mike has dedicated most of his adult life to caring for people and encouraging others to do the same.

As a teacher, Irene has taught and instilled a sense of service in numerous generations of students over the years. Now, as a parenting instructor, Irene teaches parents how to instill the same values in their own children.

Below is my interview with them, where Mike and Irene explain why they are so focused on preserving America’s guarantees of liberty and freedom for their two children, four grandchildren, and countless other future generations of Americans.

What are the biggest issues facing our country today and what issues are you really passionate about?

Irene – “As a former teacher, I’m extremely passionate about education. First and foremost, critical race theory has to be stopped. It is dividing our country and denigrating our nation’s history. It really reminds me of the Chinese Cultural Revolution. I’m glad parents are standing up to this nonsense. I was really happy to see your BEST initiative in Phoenix recently.”

Mike – “A concern I have is illegal immigration. I think it is criminal what Biden has done to our immigration system. It shouldn’t be woke. It shouldn’t be diverse simply for the sake of diversity. The last thing I will mention is tech companies attacking freedom of expression and freedom of speech. This is the type of thing you see in other countries like Venezuela and Cuba, not the United States.”

How did you first get involved with FreedomWorks and what was your motivation?

Irene – “I was first attracted by the name because freedom does work. It’s common sense. Every time I attend a FreedomWorks event, it just gives me so much courage and energy to stand up and fight because so many other people are willing to do the same thing. It really proves that the grassroots truly can make a difference. You’re for the people, for America, and for the Constitution. You’re regular people who are on the ground working to educate, not indoctrinate.”

Mike – “We want to deal with groups that are conservative. People who are honest and straightforward. We really like grassroots organizations like FreedomWorks who help people and candidates who support our principles.”

Irene – “I’m always impressed because the emails I get from FreedomWorks always say ‘FreedomWorks exists to build, educate, and mobilize the largest network of activists advocating the principles of smaller government, lower taxes, free markets, personal liberty and the rule of law.’ When I see that, I’m all in.”

Mike, you spent over two decades as a surgeon. How has your experience in the field of medicine influenced your view of government involvement in healthcare?

“Government does not belong in healthcare. Period. Government intrusion has limited people’s ability to get healthcare. And government telling you what you can and cannot do – like getting vaccinated – is just wrong.”

Mike, you spent over two decades as a surgeon. How has your experience in the field of medicine influenced your view of government involvement in healthcare?

“What is the most important work that FreedomWorks is doing today?

Mike – “For me, fighting critical race theory and working to preserve freedom of speech and freedom of expression is the most important work you’re doing.”

Irene – “I also liked the work you did with Nigel Farage, going around to different cities encouraging people not to lose hope and keep fighting. I really like what you’re doing to ensure election integrity too.”

Irene, you were a teacher for many years. What is your view on the state of our educational system today and how can it be improved?

“When I talk to teachers today, I don’t see the kind of pride and professionalism that I used to see. So often, it’s not about the
students. That’s why I never joined the teachers’ union when I was a teacher. I crossed two picket lines when I was teaching in Chicago, because I felt why should those students suffer because their teachers weren’t there.”

Both of you have chosen professions dedicated to serving others. How has this influenced your approach to philanthropy? And how do you think we can encourage the next generation of Americans to give back to their country like you have?

Irene – “My parents always encouraged me to be a good American which made me want to help others. A love and pride for my country is what led me to be a teacher. So, I think one of the best ways we can encourage future generations to serve others is by inspiring them to be good Americans. We are the greatest nation in the world and we have to remember that. But freedom isn’t free. You have to make future generations realize that it takes hard work to keep that freedom alive. That’s why it’s so sad what’s happening in our schools. Kids are being taught that America is bad and the kids ask ‘Why should I care what happens to a country like that? And why should I care about helping others?’”

Mike – “One of my favorite sayings is ‘gray hair is not cheap.’ Irene and I came from absolutely zero, or minus, and we have come to where we are based on our own work – hard work pays off. From a philanthropic standpoint, I’m willing to help anyone who also puts in the effort. And I think it’s the responsibility of people as they get older to mentor others who are willing to put in the work.”