



State Solutions. National Impact.

FALL 2022

2022 Policy Highlights

Leaders in the 50-state Network have secured policy victories that are changing American lives.



Tracie

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OUR VISION

State Policy Network is pursuing a vision of an America where personal freedom, innovation, opportunity, and a more peaceful society help all Americans flourish. State Policy Network was founded to support the growth of a collaborative and entrepreneurial network of state think tanks, including 64 independent state think tank affiliates, over 66 state partners in key capacities, and more than 90 associate partners.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

State Policy Network's mission is to work side by side with these leaders to catalyze thriving, durable freedom movements in every state, anchored with high-performing, independent think tanks.

OUR STRATEGY

- Incubating organizations and accelerating their development through strategic planning, training, and coaching;
- Connecting talented state leaders so they can learn, challenge, and grow together, with the aim of cultivating state solutions that yield national impact; and,
- Defending the 50-state think tank network by disseminating best practices, critical resources when members are attacked, and fighting assaults on free speech and citizen privacy.

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visit spn.org/staff.

Dear Friends,

Public policy impacts real people, and it matters to get it right. Inflation and rising prices are crushing American families. The situation is made worse for many by the costly legislation pushed through in Washington, DC, like the Inflation Reduction Act (which does not live up to its name) and cancelling student loan debt. Everywhere we turn, Americans are feeling the pressure of bad policies made by politicians who govern from on high and largely do not feel the consequences of their decisions at the ground level.

I don't blame you for getting discouraged by what's going on in federal public policy. But I can tell you this: **The states are the best way to fight back.** That's why our Founders respected the states—because they serve as a critical check when the federal government has gone too far, which we all know, it has. We cannot disregard the enormous opportunity before us when we look at the work of our Network partners in all 50 states.

Thanks to your partnership, this Network had many victories this legislative session. We have worked together to advance historic tax reforms, give students more education opportunities, protect the privacy of anyone who wants to support a charity, and push back against the federal government through successful litigation. In this issue of *SPN News*, we'll highlight the Network's biggest policy victories you have made possible and share how these wins provide long-term solutions that promote freedom and prosperity.

You will read about SPN's collaboration with Alaska Policy Forum and how after a decade of calling on state lawmakers to address Alaska's literacy crisis, they achieved historic education reform with the support of our government affairs project. We partner with select state groups each year to provide coaching, targeted investments, hands-on training, and connect them with government affairs talent so they can more effectively influence policy in their states. And SPN does this year after year.

As part of our ongoing 30th Anniversary series, we are also honoring the memory of Jack and Nancy Weiss, who were fierce defenders of freedom for decades. We sat down with the Weiss family, Dick, Mary Beth, and Steve, who all shared why their family supports SPN and believes that the states are the best chance we have of stopping harmful policies coming from the Biden administration. We are so grateful to the Weiss family for their continued support over the years.

Your investment in SPN and this Network fuels the work in the states that provides better opportunities and outcomes for all Americans. Thank you for all that you continue to do to support freedom in the states.

Take care,



President and CEO
State Policy Network



Legislative Session Highlights: Celebrating the Network's Biggest Policy Victories

When you focus on what's happening at the federal level, there isn't much to celebrate. The Biden administration continues to push for top-down programs that expand the government's role in our everyday lives and add additional costs to taxpayers. Meanwhile, there are examples all over the country of policy changes this year that are helping people fight inflation, access greater job opportunities, and protect their rights. These solutions are not coming from Washington—they are coming from you, our generous supporters, and from leaders in our 50-state Network.

From education reforms that prioritize students over systems, to pushing back against the federal government in the courts, the Network secured significant policy wins this year that are having national impact.

Below are select highlights of victories you made possible. For more wins and stories of impact, please visit SPN.org.

Education Reforms Expand Choices for Families

Support for education freedom has been growing in the states, as families continue to advocate for increased access to education options. 2021 ushered in a wave of unprecedented education reforms in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. That demand continued in 2022.

After an injunction stalled the implementation of West Virginia's Hope Scholarship, the state's Education Savings Account (ESA) program, families had to quickly change their plans just as the new school year started. The Cardinal Institute and key coalition partners, including litigators from the Institute for Justice, sprang into action and challenged the injunction in West Virginia's Supreme Court. **Thanks to their relentless efforts, the injunction was lifted and West Virginia families can now access new education opportunities.** SPN donors have long supported Cardinal's education reform efforts and made this victory possible.

CEO of the Cardinal Institute Garrett Ballengee said: "It's very simple: landmark ideas and bold reforms require partners who can help craft vision, plan, test ideas and assumptions,



and provide leveraged support. When Cardinal started seven or eight years ago, we had little idea how to do any of those things. SPN has come alongside Cardinal in myriad ways to help us build these critical capacities for change. From strategic development sessions and communications planning to mentorship and intensive brainstorming, **SPN has helped Cardinal help West Virginia become a freer place. This victory doesn't happen without this partnership.**"

Arizona passed the largest ESA program in the country, inspired by policy reforms from the Goldwater Institute. Over 1 million students will be eligible to use these scholarships to attend the school of their choice, as well as cover education-related expenses like tutoring and additional resources. SPN partnered with the Goldwater Institute on polling in three key legislative districts to demonstrate to lawmakers that voters supported expanded education alternatives.

While ESAs have been one of the most popular reforms passed by state lawmakers this year, the Network has supported education funding reform for several years. Reforming education financing creates more transparency in how education dollars are spent and opens the door for dollars to follow the child. **The Beacon Center of Tennessee, along with a coalition of national education reform leaders, overhauled the state's decades-old, complex education funding formula to invest in students.** Thanks to our generous donors, SPN has been sending Network leaders to the prestigious McCort School of Public Policy at Georgetown University to develop a deeper understanding of education finance and how to address educa-

tion funding in their state. A Beacon representative joined the cohort this year to better understand the implementation side of the new funding formula and become a trusted resource for education funding in the state.

Fighting Inflation through State Economic Reforms

While the federal government's attempts to curb rising inflation rates fall short, states have passed critical tax reforms that put money back into the pockets of Americans and remove burdensome regulations to increase access to jobs. SPN's Economic Recovery Working Group has helped usher in these reforms by sharing ideas and best practices to improve the lives of people in their communities.

In both Mississippi and Iowa, state legislators passed historic income tax reforms. Thanks to your support, SPN has engaged for years with both Empower Mississippi and Mississippi Center for Public Policy to strengthen their policy efforts. Both organizations launched rigorous messaging campaigns to educate lawmakers and the public about the enormous benefits of tax reform and inspire policymakers to act. Mississippi passed the largest tax cut in the state's history, with the total package representing over \$500 million dollars in tax cuts. "Our tax reform campaign delivered historic tax cuts that will make Mississippi more competitive. It gives over a million Mississippians a tax break and means they will have more money to spend on their families and their priorities," said Douglas Carswell, CEO of the Mississippi Center for Public Policy. "This win shows that our small team can deliver big wins for freedom in Mississippi, but we simply could not have done it if

it wasn't for the State Policy Network. Being part of team SPN enables us to amplify what we do, and pack a much greater policy-shaping punch."

Iowans for Tax Relief (ITR) is an active member of SPN's Economic Recovery Working Group and received strategic training, policy advisement, and support from SPN to strengthen their tax reform efforts. ITR worked closely with the governor's office on tax policy and published several op-eds that the governor shared on her Twitter account. Iowa's tax reform eliminates the state tax on retirement income, reforms the corporate income tax, and establishes a 3.9% flat tax for individuals.

Kansas achieved bipartisan tax reform this session when the governor signed into law a bill increasing standard deductions, freezing property taxes for elderly citizens, and making changes to prevent double taxation of resident owners of multi-state pass-through entities. Kansas Policy Institute (KPI) has been leading tax reform in the state for years and has been a core member of SPN's Economic Recovery Working Group. KPI has worked with SPN's senior advisor, Michael Lucchi, to develop policy solutions and received strategic grants for its 2022 reform efforts.

States have also removed barriers to jobs to attract skilled workers and entrepreneurs to boost local economies. **Louisiana passed two bills this legislative session to reform the state's occupational licensing requirements**, after thousands of workers were unable to access job opportunities. The Pelican Institute used powerful messaging to tell the stories of everyday Louisianans whose small businesses suffered as a result of burdensome state licensing laws. Thanks to your support, SPN partnered with Pelican through our government affairs program to provide coaching and government affairs assistance to help gain lawmaker support.



THIS WIN SHOWS THAT OUR SMALL TEAM CAN DELIVER BIG WINS FOR FREEDOM IN MISSISSIPPI, BUT WE SIMPLY COULD NOT HAVE DONE IT IF IT WASN'T FOR THE STATE POLICY NETWORK. BEING PART OF TEAM SPN ENABLES US TO AMPLIFY WHAT WE DO, AND PACK A MUCH GREATER POLICY-SHAPING PUNCH."

Douglas Carswell
President and CEO, Mississippi Center for Public Policy

Holding Government Unions Accountable to Workers

Network leaders have remained vigilant to ensure that unions respect the constitutional rights of American workers. This year marks the fourth anniversary of the historic *Janus vs. AFSCME* case brought by this Network, in which the Supreme Court ruled that public employees did not have to pay union dues as a condition of employment.

Since the *Janus* ruling, Network organizations have helped educate workers on their rights. **For example, the Freedom Foundation has helped over 117,000 workers exercise their right to leave their union when it did not serve their interests.** The Network has also litigated at least 132 court cases to defend workers' rights and enforce the *Janus* decision. SPN continues to build up labor leaders in the states, bring together experts to accelerate multi-state reforms, and make targeted investments where we see a strategic opportunity to move the needle on a reform.

This year, the Mackinac Center for Public Policy worked tirelessly with the Indiana legislature and governor to pass union opt-in in the state. Indiana teachers now have the opportunity to understand and acknowledge their constitutional right to leave or refuse to join their teacher's union without losing their benefits. SPN has invested in Mackinac's multi-state and opt-in work through strategic grants, and Mackinac has been an active partner in SPN's Workplace Freedom Working Group.

The Goldwater Institute has been sounding the alarm on the corrupt practice of "release time," which allows unions to use taxpayer dollars to fund political activities. Through an investigative report made possible by SPN donors, Goldwater found that release time in the city of Phoenix cost taxpayers over \$3 million in 2020. They also developed a state tracker to show how much taxpayer dollars were being spent by the union representatives during release time. As a result, **Arizona passed a first-in-the-nation law preventing unions from using taxpayer dollars to fund union political activities.** To accelerate this reform, SPN is hosting an immersion clinic with Goldwater to teach other organizations how they did it and how they might bring this solution to their states.

Expanding Greater Healthcare Access

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Network successfully removed red tape and created innovative policy solutions so patients could receive the care they needed. SPN's Healthcare Working Group continues to push for greater healthcare access and deregulation.



Mark Janus and Network leaders speak to the media at the Supreme Court.

Arizona passed Right to Try 2.0 legislation that was crafted by the Goldwater Institute. This law allows patients with rare diseases to access cutting-edge, individualized treatments, even if they have not been approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). This legislation is an expansion of Right to Try, which was signed into federal law by President Trump for terminally ill patients seeking to access clinical trial treatments. Goldwater brought Right to Try 2.0 to SPN's LaunchPad program, which brings together entrepreneurs, policy leaders, and industry experts to spur innovation and solve some of the biggest challenges facing the nation.

Telehealth access increased rapidly during the COVID pandemic, as 22 states changed telehealth laws that enabled healthcare practitioners to treat patients. **In 2022, state legislators in Florida eased telehealth restrictions** to allow patients to be treated over the phone, and more prescriptions can now be renewed remotely. The James Madison Institute has long advocated for healthcare reform in the state and raised awareness regarding its benefits.

The Network's Strategic Litigation Efforts Check the Federal Government

When the federal government undermines the authority of the states, the Network stands ready to protect and defend the rights of citizens through strategic litigation.



The Carson Family, courtesy of the Institute for Justice

When the Biden administration announced an unconstitutional mandate that required businesses that employed 100 or more workers to receive the COVID-19 vaccine or submit to rigorous testing, the Network fought to defend Americans' liberties. It wasn't a debate about vaccines, but rather, one about forcing employees to make private healthcare decisions at the risk losing their jobs.

SPN convened a "call for plaintiffs" and connected Network leaders who filed lawsuits against the Biden administration in circuit courts. **Through the litigation efforts of the Network, particularly the Mississippi Center for Public Policy, Liberty Justice Center, Pelican Institute, The Buckeye Institute, Texas Public Policy Foundation, and Wisconsin Institute for Law and Liberty, several lawsuits made their way to the Supreme Court where the mandate was eventually struck down.**

Another Network case found its way to the Supreme Court to protect education freedom. The Institute for Justice and First Liberty Institute filed a case on behalf of a Maine family that was denied state tuition assistance to attend a religious school. Network organizations filed amicus briefs in support of the family, including The Buckeye Institute (the High Court adopted a position argued by them in their amicus brief), the Liberty Justice Center, Maine Policy Institute, Pioneer Institute, Americans for Prosperity, EdChoice, and American Federation for Children. The Court ruled that once a state makes the decision to subsidize tuition assistance, it cannot deny funds based on a school's religious affiliation.

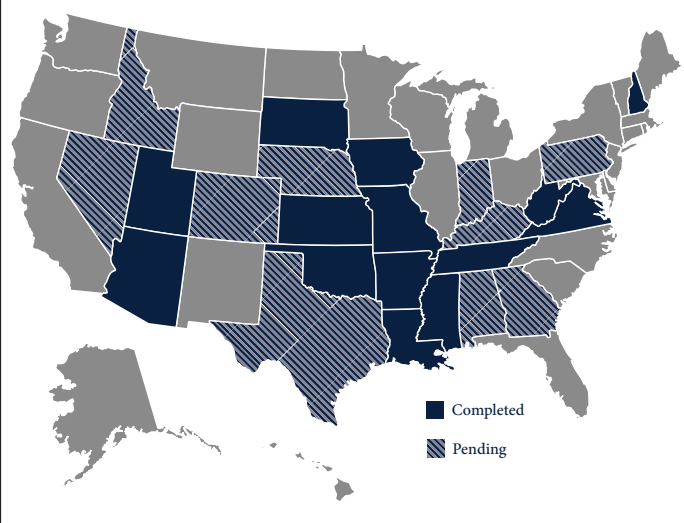
The Network has also pushed back on federal overreach when it comes to preserving election integrity. The Foundation for Government Accountability (FGA) won the first round of its lawsuit against the Department of Justice after the agency failed to respond to their Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests to get public documents on Biden's executive order that aimed to expand voting through federal agencies. FGA has created 35 solutions for election integrity reform, further securing elections in the country while increasing access to voting and preventing bad actors from falsifying votes.

Through policy change in the states, your support has helped improve the lives of over **50 million Americans.** These victories would not be possible without the generosity of SPN's supporters and the leadership of our Network partners.

Protecting the Privacy of Philanthropists

In Kansas, New Hampshire, Missouri, and Virginia, citizens are now protected from intimidation and retribution based on their philanthropic giving. These states have passed bills that prevent the public disclosure of individuals' personal information when supporting nonprofit or charity organizations.

States that Have Passed Donor Privacy Protections



In recent years, political activists have leaked this information to harass individuals and negatively impact their reputation or business. People United for Privacy, an organization SPN helped incubate back in 2018, was instrumental in these efforts and has helped pass donor privacy protections in at least 14 states.

Hope for Kids in Alaska

Alaska Policy Forum partnered with SPN through our government affairs program to help improve the state's dismal reading scores and put students on a path to success.

2022 has continued to see education reforms sweep across the nation thanks to the generosity of supporters who care deeply about fixing our country's broken education system. Earlier this year, we saw Arizona pass the largest Education Savings Account program to date, opening the door for families to choose the best school for their children. Tennessee passed once-in-a-generation legislation to overhaul a decades-old funding formula to invest education funds in students, not systems. And now, after a decade of failing reading scores, the tide is turning in Alaska.

Reading is one of the most important skills children learn in school that sets them up for success later in life. Studies show that timing matters—if students are not proficient readers by the end of third grade, they fall further behind their other classmates. By fourth grade, if students are still struggling to read, half of the curriculum at higher grade levels will be incomprehensible.

Research also shows that literacy rates correlate with high school dropout rates. If a student does not graduate high school, they are unlikely to have the necessary skills to secure gainful employment. This trajectory leads to an uneducated workforce and increased poverty rates. It's a domino-effect with consequences that impact far more than just a child's reading ability, but his or her overall success. This is a particular problem in the state of Alaska.

In Alaska, literacy rates have been below the national average for an entire decade. Despite the state ranking among the top five states on education spending per student, only 25 percent of Alaska fourth graders are scoring proficient in reading.

SPN affiliate Alaska Policy Forum (APF) has called on state legislators to address the literacy crisis for over nine years, creating and publishing policy drafts, research, and reports. In 2022, they succeeded in helping the state pass "Read by 9" with the support of SPN's government affairs program.

APF championed solutions that included early literacy and reading intervention programs, early screening to identify and provide support for struggling readers, and literacy resources for teachers and parents. APF also created the PEAKS Data



Map, an online database and map which annually reports Alaska's public school reading assessment performance. This tool helps increase government transparency and school accountability, while pushing state lawmakers to pass serious education reform.

Alaska Policy Forum Participates in SPN's Government Affairs Program to Spur "Read by 9" Reform

In 2021, SPN launched the "Maximizing Advocacy Project" to empower the Network to take their government affairs to the next level. SPN affiliates know how to engage with policymakers, but together we knew we could raise the bar to accelerate these efforts and win more victories. Effective government affairs talent makes all the difference in an organization's ability to effectively advance policy solutions.

"We noticed a need across the Network of organizations who wanted to build up their advocacy capacities and advance policy victories that would lead to long-term solutions for Americans," said Chantal Lovell, SPN's director of policy advancement. SPN saw remarkable success with this program in both Georgia and West Virginia, when Georgia passed first-in-the-nation legislation that protected learning pods, and West Virginia passed the Hope Scholarship, the state's expansive school choice program. When the opportunity presented itself to advance substantial education reform in Alaska, APF and SPN sprang into action.

Education reform had been a key issue in Alaska that drew support from both state Democrats and Republicans. With targeted investments from SPN, Alaska Policy Forum hired experienced government affairs talent who was able to help APF connect and build critical relationships with key state lawmakers on both sides of the aisle, as well as national education reform leaders.



THIS REFORM WOULDN'T HAVE HAPPENED WITHOUT APF BEING PART OF SPN'S MAXIMIZING ADVOCACY PROJECT.

"It's very easy for a bill to get lost in the shuffle during legislative sessions. But, when you have a skilled and experienced government affairs individual, they are able to stay the course and build relationships that will be beneficial beyond one legislative session," Lovell said.

Through your support, SPN also provided government affairs coaching and strategic grants for APF to effectively message their education policy solutions to state legislators and coalition partners on the ground.

"Read by 9" is not a massive federal program. Rather, it came from the states. Florida and Mississippi passed similar reforms and saw success. Alaska took those solutions and tailored them for people in their state.

"Read by 9" identifies students who are struggling to read in early grades and provides those students with tailored, individualized reading instruction and monitoring. It also increas-

es the responsibility and accountability of teachers and school leaders to ensure that students are equipped to advance to the next grade level. Parents are vital partners in this process and can participate in meetings with educators to discuss their child's reading progress. They also have the final say when it comes to their child repeating or advancing a grade level. "This legislation provides resources that equip teachers with the knowledge and training to effectively teach reading and comprehension skills. Through "Read by 9," Alaskans hope to address the literacy crisis in the state and provide all students with critical foundational skills to achieve success," said Lovell.

APF CEO Bethany Marcum credits SPN for its support in helping advance this important legislation: "This reform wouldn't have happened without APF being part of SPN's Maximizing Advocacy Project. On behalf of Alaska's students and families who will benefit from this for decades, please accept our deep appreciation."

A Pathway for More Education Reform

While creating more education options is an important way to improve education outcomes, there is still much to be done for students who choose to remain in public schools. A student's ability to read is one of the most critical predictors of success later in life. That's why APF pursued an early literacy program. Not only does it improve student performance, it also saves state dollars that would otherwise go to remedial instruction and dropout prevention in later grades.

By building out their government affairs and advocacy capacities, APF has not only helped increase the literacy rates of Alaskan students, but also opened the door for additional education reforms in the state that provide better opportunities for overall student success.

This summer, SPN hosted a strategic development session in Alaska with Alaska Policy Forum to help them create a game plan for future reforms. SPN regularly hosts these strategic development workshops to help organizations hone their strategies, find alignment, and build partnerships to advance successful reforms. The session not only included SPN and APF staff, but APF brought in the most influential stakeholders to help build support and gain invaluable feedback. This included state policymakers, members of school boards, educators, education experts, and members of the Dunleavy administration. This strong coalition is dedicated and well-positioned to improving education in Alaska.

Donor Spotlight: The Weiss Family

For SPN's 30th Anniversary, we are highlighting stories of our generous supporters who make our work in the states possible.

Chances are, if you are in the liberty movement, you have heard of, or even shared a cocktail with, a member of the Weiss family. It is hard to come by another family who is engaged so widely and deeply with organizations that fight to preserve American freedoms. The Weiss family supports conservative and libertarian causes not only through their giving, but also through their direct involvement in organizations and with their peers in the donor community. They are a family who really enjoys frequenting conferences, being among the people making things happen. They have been loyal supporters of the State Policy Network for over 13 years.

It all started with the late Jack and Nancy Weiss, who first got involved in free-market organizations dating back to the Barry Goldwater years. Their legacy has continued through their two sons, Dick and Steve, and Dick's wife, Mary Beth, who came to the family with the same passion for freedom and generosity towards policy organizations.

Growing up, Dick and Steve recalled having lively conversations over the dinner table with their parents about politics and current events. How could you not? The 60s and 70s saw monumental shifts for the country. Jack and Nancy didn't get their politics from their families. Rather, they came to their values after a lot of reflection and study about the direction of the country. They came from difficult childhoods and had to overcome significant obstacles to create a better upbringing for their children. Jack worked hard in banking and manufacturing, and Nancy dedicated her time to raising the kids. Together, they built a better life for themselves and achieved their American Dream.

They also encouraged their children to achieve their own dreams. Dick has a successful career in equity portfolio management, and Steve has spent his career traveling the world working in the foreign service and international finance. Mary Beth's family wasn't particularly political, but she was



The late Jack and Nancy Weiss

always "fascinated" with politics growing up near Chicago. She now manages their avocado farm in sunny California with rolling hills of avocado trees in her backyard. When they are not fighting for freedom, Dick and Mary Beth enjoy spending their time with their six grandchildren, traveling all over the globe, and raising their inherited 2-year-old golden doodle, Fiona.

Even in Nancy's later years (she lived to be 91 years old), she was the life of the party. She was the type of person who could talk to anyone and enjoyed getting to know new people and hearing their stories. People were so moved by their interactions with Nancy that they could recall conversations with her 20 to 30 years later.

"She took an interest in everyone, and that's what was so special about her," said Dick.

Dick and Steve describe their father, Jack, as a thoughtful, fair man who was incredibly generous and did whatever he could to help his community. At one time, he was supposed to be the president of the St. Louis chapter of the Young President's Organization, a highly prestigious leadership organization for chief executives. Instead, he thought it would be a better use of time to become an advisor to the neighborhood association where his manufacturing plant was located, in a poor part of town. He wanted to help improve conditions for the people who worked at his company so they could feel safe and provide a quality life for their families.

WASHINGTON IS BROKEN. I THANK GOD THOMAS ROE HAD THE FORESIGHT TO BUILD SPN, PUTTING A SOLID BASE IN PLACE FOR STATES TO FIGHT BACK.”

“That’s just the kind of guy dad was,” Steve said.

Dick and Steve came of age at a time when the culture was changing, and government was getting more and more involved in people’s lives. The family saw a fundamental shift in the belief that government should be diffused to one where the default is to centralize. That’s when they saw the importance of getting involved in policy organizations that uphold the principles that have enabled this country to become one of the greatest sources of opportunity for the rest of the world.

The Weiss family started supporting the Network by getting involved in the Goldwater Institute in their home state of Arizona. They saw that even in a red state with relatively conservative politics, there was still a lot of work needed to hold politicians accountable to their principles.

“That’s where SPN is so good. Having somebody on the ground looking at policy and developing relationships with legislators, holding their feet to the fire. That’s what will help keep the state from becoming a pale facsimile of what it should be,” said Steve.

The family not only invests through their giving, but they also actively engage in causes they support. For example, Dick serves on the Illinois Policy Institute board and was a founding member of Club for Growth. Mary Beth is on the board of FreedomWorks and is involved in other freedom-focused nonprofits like The Policy Circle, Conservative Partnership Institute, and Ballotpedia.

In recent years, they have become increasingly concerned about policies from Washington, DC, and the growth of the unchecked administrative state. Everything points to more government control—from increased spending, government-imposed ideology in schools, and the many examples of government overreach during the COVID-19 pandemic.

They’ve also been disappointed with DC politics and the constant battles in Congress. They see progressives overreaching repeatedly, but those who supposedly stand for freedom fail-

ing to do anything about it. They are constantly approached by politicians asking for money and wanting to work in DC. The first thing Mary Beth asks them is if they know of their state think tank.

“If they don’t know about their state think tank, I wonder what their motivations are for wanting to go to Washington and if they are solid on policy,” she said.

Meanwhile, they see signs of hope from the states. They say governors like Ron DeSantis in Florida and Greg Abbott in Texas are standing up to harmful federal policies and making reforms that meet the needs of people in their states. Mary Beth, Dick, and Steve are also inspired by the work of SPN members and believe the country needs more courage like what we’re seeing from leaders in the states.

“Mary Beth was the one who got me focused on SPN because she pointed out how much good work the Network could do. If you have a good think tank in a state, they can make a big difference,” said Dick. “SPN bringing best practices and talent to the local think tanks is important.”

The Weiss family’s steadfast partnership with SPN has fueled our work in the states for over a decade and helped build that critical resistance to top-down policies from Washington, DC. With Americans facing significant struggles today with the economy, education, and personal freedom, the stakes have never been higher. The investment of our partners in the 50-state Network makes all the difference.

“Clearly, federalism is the only thing that’s going to save this country,” said Mary Beth. “Washington is broken. I thank God Thomas Roe had the foresight to build SPN, putting a solid base in place for states to fight back.”

STATE THINK TANK AFFILIATE UPDATES

*The updates provided reflect activities by the time of submission for publication.
For real-time updates from the Network, please visit SPN.org.*



ALABAMA

ALABAMA POLICY INSTITUTE • alabamapolicy.org

Alabama policymakers have repeatedly discounted the need for fiscal reform, tax cuts, and meaningful school choice options, while taxes are falling and more students are having opportunities to attend the school of their choice in neighboring states. Through the use of 1819, a statewide news organization wholly owned by the **Alabama Policy Institute** (API), API has published story after story, revealing to the Alabama public all the good that government leaders elsewhere are doing—in stark contrast to what is occurring in Alabama. Thankfully, legislators and the public have taken notice and many representatives are going into the 2023 legislative session with more energy to make Alabama as competitive as neighboring states.



ALASKA

ALASKA POLICY FORUM • alaskapolicyforum.org

Alaska Policy Forum is proud to announce the launch of its first annual leadership academy. This program will connect experienced and emerging leaders in Alaska with the founding principles of America and equip them to apply those principles to the challenges Alaska and the nation face today. Graduates will be positioned to grow as visionary thought leaders who can guide Alaska's freedom and future. Outstanding instructors from around the country will facilitate the monthly sessions and present on topics such as the free market, ethical leadership, on-camera media training, Alaska's constitution, crisis management, and much more. Applications are now being accepted, with the first cohort convening in October.



ARIZONA

GOLDWATER INSTITUTE • goldwaterinstitute.org

The **Goldwater Institute** continues to advocate nationwide for the right of patients to access essential care, most recently by extending the original Right to Try model's protections to include individualized treatments. Goldwater's Right to Try 2.0 model builds on legislation Arizona enacted in 2022 to ensure that vulnerable patients may access cutting-edge, personalized treatments without having to travel abroad or seek government permission. To achieve this reform in Arizona, and lay the groundwork for numerous states in 2023, the Institute worked alongside a diverse coalition to tell the stories of patient advocates and highlight the need for reform. The Goldwater team looks forward to working with colleagues across the Network to advance this reform in multiple states in 2023–2024.

ARKANSAS

ARKANSAS POLICY FOUNDATION • arkansaspolicyfoundation.org

Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson announced a legislative special session to consider accelerating reductions in the state income tax, an economic recommendation of the **Arkansas Policy Foundation** since its founding in 1995. The plan under consideration would hasten an already approved reduction in the individual income tax rate from 5.5 to 4.9 percent, retroactive to Jan. 1, 2022. The package would also align Arkansas with a federal law that allows businesses to deduct the entire purchase price of equipment up to \$1 million. Arkansas reported a record \$1.6 billion budget surplus for the fiscal year that ended June 30. Arkansas Policy Foundation research has noted that states in the region without an income tax—Florida, Tennessee, and Texas—have higher growth in payroll employment, the broadest state-level economic indicator.



CALIFORNIA

CALIFORNIA POLICY CENTER • californiapolicycenter.org

All eyes are on local school board races this November. Parents throughout California are fed up with the state's government-run schools that perform at the very bottom of national rankings on reading and math, despite being at the top of the list when it comes to per pupil spending. The state's teachers' unions wield unprecedented power over legislators and local education leaders, and are advancing Critical Race Theory and radical gender politics in K-12 schools. In response, concerned parents are running for their local school boards throughout the state. That's why **California Policy Center** launched a new online Candidate Academy this summer through California Local Elected Officials (CLEO). The 8-part virtual series examines key issues such as what a potential candidate should consider when deciding to run for office, how to manage campaign regulations, and effective strategies for communicating your message to voters. The response from parent groups and aspiring candidates has been exceptional. From "It's just what I needed" to "We're organizing, recruiting and utilizing it to train up candidates," the enthusiasm for the nonpartisan training has been non-stop since its release. The Candidate Academy is available at calelecteds.org.



PACIFIC RESEARCH INSTITUTE • pacificresearch.org

Pacific Research Institute's top priority this year has been educating state lawmakers, policy insiders, and the general public about the dangers of enacting AB 1400, which would implement a single-payer healthcare system in California and outlaw private insurance. PRI President, CEO, and Thomas W. Smith Fellow in Health Care Policy Sally Pipes led an aggressive education and outreach campaign to educate Californians and policymakers about what AB 1400's enactment would mean for them: budget-busting state spending increases (the nonpartisan Legislative Analyst's Office estimated the bill's cost at double the state budget), enormous new tax burdens, lower quality care, reduced access to care, additional employer costs, less innovation, and fewer specialists available. Pipes gave media interviews, published op-eds in prominent California and national publications, gave speeches and presentations, met with and advised lawmakers, and debated prominent national supporters of single-payer healthcare. In the end—legislators listened! In January, AB 1400 supporters were forced to pull the bill because it lacked public support. University of Massachusetts professor Dr. Gerald Friedman—one of the nation's leading single payer proponents and one of Pipes' frequent debate sparring partners—said of her work in fighting the California single-payer bill: "Brilliantly done, as usual. Damn: I wish that I wrote so clearly and argued so well!" The defeat of AB 1400 is important not only for Californians, but the rest of the country. If progressives had been successful in passing AB 1400 in California, it would have likely energized "Medicare for All" efforts across the country.





COLORADO

INDEPENDENCE INSTITUTE • i2i.org

The **Independence Institute's** Energy and Environmental Policy Center has raised public awareness over the downstream effects of state and local green energy building codes. Before Independence Institute's involvement, statewide legislation proposing costly green building codes received scant media attention. In part due to Independence Institute's effort, the bill's onerous requirements were softened and an opportunity for public input over final code language—in the form of an advisory board—was included in the bill's final passage. The Center has also reached out directly to various stakeholder groups and individuals to demonstrate how green codes would affect their businesses and raise costs, and to encourage them to get involved in the advisory board process for statewide code adoption. The Energy and Environmental Policy Center continues to engage with and inform the general public through op-eds and analysis articles in local publications.

DELAWARE

CAESAR RODNEY INSTITUTE • caesarrodney.org

The **Caesar Rodney Institute's** biggest success this year was in the energy sector with offshore wind. In Delaware, CRI educated the public about the real economic and environmental concerns of offshore wind projects and organized opposition that has led directly to public action. Beach towns and community homeowner associations are actively holding public forums to oppose offshore wind projects, passing resolutions that the state deny permits for bringing power ashore, and encouraging the federal government to allow swapping of existing lease areas for ones farther offshore. To ensure consistent messaging and data, CRI formed a regional opposition group called the American Coalition for Ocean Protection (ACOP). Members of ACOP consist of beach communities and nonpartisan think tanks along the Atlantic Coast. They are united in their conviction that these offshore wind turbines will cause severe problems. ACOP members have also been actively raising funds to help their members with legal cases. Six lawsuits have been filed against more advanced regional offshore wind projects, with more planned. Successful lawsuits could end all the planned offshore wind projects. ACOP's website is oceanlegaldefense.org.



FLORIDA

FOUNDATION FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY • thefga.org

The **Foundation for Government Accountability** developed Students' Right to Know in 2019 as a proactive way to address student loan debt, increase transparency, and highlight multiple career options for young adults. FGA's solution requires state education departments to provide pertinent data on education and career paths—information the state already has—so parents and students can make the best decisions for their personal goals and financial situations. To date, 12 states have signed the Students' Right to Know solution into law, with two states—West Virginia and Ohio—passing it in the 2022 legislative session and seven states passing it in 2021. Because of FGA's work, nearly 3.5 million high school students—roughly one in five high school students nationally—can make informed career decisions. There is increasing interest in Students' Right to Know among federal lawmakers, including members of the House Education and Labor Committee and the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee. FGA is also working with Florida's Senator Rick Scott—who has introduced a federal version of this reform—and his office to encourage him to include recommended improvements in a new version. The bipartisan nature of this reform is a positive sign for students.



GEORGIA

GEORGIA CENTER FOR OPPORTUNITY • georgiaopportunity.org

The **Georgia Center for Opportunity** has made huge strides in its Better Work initiative, which helps reduce the need for government services and interventions by reaching and meeting the needs of the un- and underemployed in various communities in Georgia. This is done through civil society solutions that engage businesses and nonprofits to collaborate on finding and addressing problems that lead to unemployment. Over the past 24 months, the Center's efforts have grown to new communities, led to hundreds of job placements, and engaged dozens of local partners. The project has been such a success that communities outside Georgia are looking to adopt the initiative. Better Work is an example of what the Center strives for every day: to better the lives of those in the community and to empower the private sector to answer problems.



GEORGIA PUBLIC POLICY FOUNDATION • georgiapolicy.org

Georgia students are heading back to school, and the **Georgia Public Policy Foundation** is continuing the fight for education freedom. Georgia Policy broke the story of two Cobb County learning pods cited for code violations. In 2021, Georgia Policy provided the Legislature with testimony and research about the Learning Pods Protection Act, which safeguards educators and families from this burdensome regulation. This story is still evolving, as colleagues from the Institute of Justice are working with the affected schools and families. Georgia Policy is also continuing its work on housing affordability, hitting the road with a statewide housing tour. By the end of 2022, Georgia Policy will have presented its housing research at more than a dozen events, in every corner of the state. This fall, Georgia Policy's investigative journalism initiative will take an in-depth look at some of the local regulations that contribute to rising housing prices in the state, starting with Oconee County, where homes regularly sell for more than 50 percent higher than the state average.



HAWAII

GRASSROOT INSTITUTE OF HAWAII • grassrootinstitute.org

Hawaii is experiencing a housing crisis in which the median price of a home is more than \$1 million, mainly due to government regulations that limit the ability of homebuilders to meet demand. During the 2022 state legislative session, research by the **Grassroot Institute of Hawaii** was instrumental in legislators approving the Yes in My Backyard Act, which encourages Hawaii's four counties to reduce or remove regulatory barriers to housing. More recently, the Institute was invited to testify before the Maui County Council on a misguided bill that would require lower prices for affordable housing units. The bill was recommitted. Additionally, the Institute has been sponsoring well-attended seminars throughout the islands on how to liberalize Hawaii's land-use and zoning laws. These events, featuring local and national experts, have generated much publicity, both in the media and the Institute's own communication channels. The Institute also has been reaching out to millennials. Many are realizing they cannot afford to live in Hawaii, and the Institute has captured their frustration in TikTok videos, one of which has registered more than a million views. Looking ahead, every seat in the Legislature and executive branch is up for election this year, and most candidates have made housing their top issue. Due to its work on the Yes in My Backyard Act, many candidates have asked the Institute for research and model legislation on the topic.





IDAHO

IDAHO FREEDOM FOUNDATION • idahofreedom.org

The Idaho Freedom Foundation's Center for American Education (CAE) released the Idaho K-12 LEAD Map, a first-of-its-kind interactive map designed to address the education system's transparency problem and provide greater clarity about the quality of government schools. LEAD, which stands for Liberty in Education and Academic Development, encapsulates the IFF's aspirations for school districts. IFF hopes that districts return to a traditional education model wherein they impart truth to students, respect parental rights, and teach kids about their American liberties. The LEAD map evaluates Idaho's school districts based on two variables: academic performance and critical social justice (CSJ) incidents. Performance is based on students' attainment on the standardized tests. CSJ incidents include cases in which the tenets of critical race theory, queer theory, and other critical theories are implemented at the school or district level. Each district is color coded based on these factors. Districts with high academic performance and few CSJ incidents are green, and districts with low academic performance and several CSJ incidents are red. Districts in between these two extremes are yellow, and those that do not have sufficient information to be evaluated are gray. The map also records district spending per student; superintendents' salaries; diversity, equity, and inclusion personnel; and nearby alternative educational providers. CAE will update data periodically, and users are invited to submit CSJ incidents from their district through an incident submission form. CAE staff will review all submissions for possible inclusion in the map. Visit idahofreedom.org to review the LEAD map.

ILLINOIS

ILLINOIS POLICY INSTITUTE • illinoispolicy.org

Uncontested House of Representatives races and gerrymandering have translated to 1.7 million "missing votes" in Illinois since 2012, an average of 334,000 votes each election cycle. **Illinois Policy Institute** launched an effort to educate and train people interested in running for state office in districts where incumbents faced no opponent in the past three election cycles. Following the primary election on June 28, roughly 41 candidates are running in historically uncontested races. Illinois Policy's research projects that 82 statehouse races will be contested this year—the most in 24 years. An Institute investigation into Chicago's predatory automated speed cameras found that a policy change in March 2021 lowering tolerance to 6 miles per hour over the limit led to more tickets issued than Chicago has residents. The \$59 million windfall to the city came at the expense of its poorest residents. Their neighborhoods harbored the most lucrative cameras, with one issuing nearly \$4 million in tickets, but without the safety improvements Mayor Lori Lightfoot claimed were the aim. City leaders took notice, and now aldermen are set to repeal the lower speed camera limits. The Institute worked to make Illinois' Invest in Kids tax credit scholarship program permanent, supporting the legislative effort with a series of videos, articles, and profiles featuring 10 families and school leaders who benefited from the program. After defeating Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker's push to cut scholarship funds in 2021, the Institute helped gain additional ground in 2022 and is working to ensure more progress after the Nov. 8 election nullifies the school choice effort as a potential campaign issue.



IOWA

IOWANS FOR TAX RELIEF FOUNDATION • itrfoundation.org

At the close of the 2022 legislative session, **Iowans for Tax Relief Foundation** celebrated the largest income tax cut in Iowa history. Governor Kim Reynolds signed into law a tax reform measure that creates a low, flat individual income tax rate of 3.9 percent by 2026, while the corporate tax rate will be gradually lowered to 5.5 percent, and the tax on retirement income will be eliminated. The Foundation also applauded Governor Reynolds and the Legislature's commitment to continue a conservative budget. The fiscal year 2023 budget keeps spending limited. As a result of pro-growth tax reforms and prudent budgeting, Iowa should see another significant budget surplus. The Foundation is now focusing on property tax reform and reckless federal policies that have led to historic levels of inflation and a shrinking economy. The Foundation's work has reached local, state, and national audiences this summer through polling, op-ed placements, and earned media hits. This fall, the Foundation will be releasing a property tax reform primer to provide a menu of options for Iowa policymakers to consider, with the goal of delivering relief to property taxpayers. ITR Local is a website that provides tax, spending, and debt information on local governments across the state. Iowans can see the growth of property taxes on the site, as well as contact local government officials directly.



KANSAS

KANSAS POLICY INSTITUTE • kansaspolicy.org

Kansas Policy Institute's K-12 education project, Giving Kids a Fighting Chance, launched a high-visibility campaign this year with one goal in mind: build a large audience of individuals who are not only exposed to, but support core solutions for Kansas public schools, including choice, transparency, and accountability. KPI ran custom ads in more than 25 newspapers, showing parents the ugly reality of low achievement in their districts and encouraging them to connect with the Giving Kids a Fighting Chance website. The campaign both raised awareness and pressured legislators to change the paradigm in Kansas. KPI helped pass the open enrollment law, giving parents the freedom to enroll their child in the public school of their choice, and made progress on the Every Child Can Read Act, which requires every school district in the state to implement a literacy program to ensure all students learn to read by third grade. KPI also helped promote greater transparency in public schools by supporting HB 2567, which requires school boards to annually review state academic assessments and assess building needs in all schools, before approving the district's annual budget. KPI continues to engage with communities through in-person and online events. The annual Candidate Policy Briefings will provide nonpartisan analysis and research on the biggest policy questions facing Kansas. This fall, KPI will launch the A-F Grading of Kansas Schools website, on which a map-driven tool will grade nearly 1,500 public and private schools based on state assessment scores. It will also identify schools where KPI found documentation of race and gender indoctrination. A recent KPI event featured a panel of education experts, preeminent thinkers, and community leaders that discussed local and national problems facing students, including children being exposed to gender and race issues that some parents find objectionable. KPI continues to interact with concerned citizens in Kansas through email campaigns, social media campaigns, and events to encourage choice, transparency, and accountability in every public school and community in Kansas.





KENTUCKY

BLUEGRASS INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC POLICY SOLUTIONS • bipps.org

The Bluegrass Institute for Public Policy Solutions continues to build coalitions with inner-city pastors and grassroots parents' groups to advance educational opportunity for all Kentuckians. On July 26, CEO Jim Waters served as emcee for the eighth annual Education Freedom Prayer Breakfast at Midwest Church in inner-city Louisville, where Pastor Jerry Stephenson ministers and leads the Kentucky Pastors in Action Coalition, which is instrumental in encouraging policymakers to support more educational opportunities for children from low-income homes. The breakfast, which included an encouraging video message from US Sen. Rand Paul, has raised more than \$150,000 to help children who would otherwise fall through the cracks of Kentucky's public education system, where only 14 percent of black fourth-grade students demonstrated reading proficiency on the most recent National Assessment of Educational Progress, the "Nation's Report Card." BIPPS is also working with Jefferson County Kids Matter, which formed largely in response to school shutdowns in the wake of COVID-19. Hundreds of parents are now engaging in their children's education by attending school board meetings and working with legislators to advance their priorities. BIPPS is supporting their efforts by educating, advising, and strategizing with the group's leaders. A slate of school board candidates who support choice and will work with, rather than against, parents is running in the 2022 election. Finally, thanks to lawmakers' decision—at the urging of BIPPS—to greatly strengthen the state's Budget Reserve Trust Fund, there will be sufficient funds to help provide immediate relief after deadly flooding in eastern Kentucky. Lawmakers were also able, upon convening for the 2022 legislative session, to appropriate around \$200 million for relief from the devastating tornadoes that struck western Kentucky in December. These resources were available because many one-time budget surpluses and federal COVID-19 relief dollars had been tucked away in the reserve fund.

LOUISIANA

PELICAN INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC POLICY • pelicanpolicy.org

In 2022, the **Pelican Institute for Public Policy** worked to bring much-needed reforms to Louisiana's occupational licensure regime. The Pelican State has long been one of the most onerously licensed states in the country. During the legislative session, the Pelican Institute told the stories of multiple people affected by Louisiana's licensing requirements. Pelican used these stories to prompt its earned audience and others in the community to contact their legislators and demand change. While the Pelican Institute was successful in passing the legislation, they are now working in the community to find other stories to challenge the boards through the newly passed Right to Earn a Living Act.



MAINE

MAINE POLICY INSTITUTE • mainepolicy.org

Maine Policy Institute has been working on school choice for many years and was thrilled to see the Supreme Court's recent decision in *Carson v. Makin*, which gives families more school choice options by ruling the state could not explicitly exclude religious schools from the "town tuitioning" program. Maine Policy and EdChoice had submitted a brief in support of the petitioners in this case. Now, the team has shifted focus to ways to build on this decision. In July, Maine Policy published a brief on ways to reform the charter school program in Maine, including lifting the cap on the total number of schools allowed to operate in Maine, lifting the cap on the number of students allowed to enroll in virtual charters, and allowing more entities—like nonprofits and higher education institutions—to authorize new charters. After publication of the brief, the policy team presented its findings and recommendations to the Maine Charter School Commission, which invited Maine Policy to share ideas on improving the system. The 131st Legislature begins in January and the next step will be supporting bills that will relax rules on charter schools and give Maine parents more educational options.



MASSACHUSETTS

PIONEER INSTITUTE • pioneerinstitute.org

Pioneer Institute has been engaging with audiences in Massachusetts and across the country on its education initiatives. Pioneer published a study on the federal 340B drug discount program and was invited to brief congressional staff in both the House and Senate. On education, Pioneer filed an amicus brief in support of the US Supreme Court's ruling in *Carson v. Makin*, affirming families' right to participate in state-funded educational choice programs at religiously affiliated schools. Inside Massachusetts, Pioneer ran a campaign, including reports, widespread media appearances, and public statements, to drive change in the Boston Public Schools. This work paid off. In July, the state education commissioner and Boston mayor signed an agreement that includes many of Pioneer's recommendations. Pioneer has also been a leading voice in opposition to a proposed graduated income tax amendment facing Massachusetts voters in November. The Institute's new book, *Back to Taxachusetts?*, presents the research from 24 studies and demonstrates how a graduated tax would harm both individuals and state competitiveness.



PIONEER INSTITUTE
PUBLIC POLICY RESEARCH



MICHIGAN

MACKINAC CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY • mackinac.org

Michiganders deserve clean, reliable, and affordable energy, a goal the **Mackinac Center for Public Policy** has been working to achieve. Michigan is home to two monopoly utility companies that have almost complete control of the energy market. One utility, Consumers Energy, introduced an integrated resource plan to the Michigan Public Service Commission that would close down more of the state's reliable sources of energy. To take a stand for the people of Michigan, the Mackinac Center filed a brief in opposition to the plan. Unfortunately, the plan passed through the commission, but the Mackinac Center will keep fighting for affordable and reliable energy. The Mackinac Center also continues to bring state and national attention to the important issue of energy reliability. In a *Wall Street Journal* op-ed titled "Why Electricity Blackouts Are Coming to Michigan," Jason Hayes, the Center's director of environmental policy, wrote about the negative impacts of closing an 811-megawatt nuclear plant almost a decade before its operating permit expired. He was also quoted discussing this topic in several Michigan outlets. Hayes has spoken about Michigan's energy crisis at events across the state, bringing greater awareness to the issue at a local level.

MINNESOTA

FREEDOM FOUNDATION OF MINNESOTA • freedomfoundationofminnesota.org

For almost three years, the **Freedom Foundation of Minnesota** has been working to stop the corrupt practice of allowing private philanthropy to "pay" for staff members to work in any level of state government in Minnesota. The most egregious example is the current Minnesota attorney general who employs two "special assistant attorneys general" funded by New York University School of Law's State Energy and Environmental Impact Center. Former New York City mayor and failed presidential candidate Michael Bloomberg donated \$5.6 million to this law school which, in turn, has "hired" 12 left-wing attorneys who work in various state attorney general offices, providing experienced help enacting the progressive climate change agenda. Rather than win at the ballot box, Bloomberg and other progressive billionaires have discovered that they can bypass the electoral process and hire their own government workers when elected officials will allow them to work in their government offices. FFM President Annette Meeks testified repeatedly in favor of a ban on this practice, saying, "Private philanthropy should not be anonymously supporting state government employees to do their personal or political bidding. Our state government isn't for sale or rent." During the 2022 legislative session, the Minnesota state Senate passed this law as part of a larger state government spending package that did not become law this year. FFM will continue efforts to enact a ban on private philanthropy funding for state and local government during the 2023 legislative session.



MISSISSIPPI

EMPOWER MISSISSIPPI • empowerms.org

Empower Mississippi has continued building its owned audience as a key element of legislative strategy. Over the past 18 months, Empower Mississippi's email audience has grown by more than 1500 percent. But simply having a large audience won't drive change. People need to take action. That is why this audience is now a tool to help bring policy to the forefront or push it across the finish line. During the debate on income tax relief last session, this audience sent 9,000 emails to senators at a time when the Mississippi Senate was wavering on its interest in meaningful reform. Empower sent out more than 700 "Repeal the Income Tax" decals, allowing people to share them organically on social media. Audience segmentation has grown beyond those interested in tax relief and now reaches across all Empower's issue areas. Now, every piece of content is designed to identify interest areas and then encourage that audience to take action.



MISSISSIPPI CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY • mcpolicy.org

Mississippi Center for Public Policy's campaign to cut Mississippi's state income tax culminated in the Mississippi Tax Freedom Act earlier this year. This gave Mississippi residents the largest tax cut in recent history. MCPP is working to achieve similar results with education through a pilot program that creates a parent-led campaign for reform, in addition to a major piece of quantitative research to reform education funding, which will use Mississippi tax dollars to fund students, not systems. MCPP will also be undertaking a review of higher education and will produce a series of proposals for reform. MCPP's 2022 Mississippi Fat Cat report put the spotlight on the highest paid public officials in our state. It generated enormous public debate throughout Mississippi and has helped shift the narrative in favor of increased tax cuts and reducing government waste. MCPP's litigation division, the Mississippi Justice Institute, is proceeding with a strong legal case against certificate-of-need law and is working side-by-side with Mississippi's Secretary of State to review regulations and remove red tape. To improve the state's poor health outcomes, MCPP is working on a package of policies to remove restrictive practices and make healthcare more affordable. MCPP has been able to achieve success by reaching a large new audience. Each month, over 90,000 individuals open and read (as opposed to merely receive) MCPP's weekly newsletter, and many thousands watch and listen to audio visual output.



MISSOURI

SHOW-ME INSTITUTE • showmeinstitute.org

The **Show-Me Institute** has made significant progress in enacting a parents' bill of rights in Missouri. Earlier this year, the Institute created its version of a Missouri Parents' Bill of Rights (MPBR). Legislators took the cue and several versions of an MPBR were introduced in the Missouri Legislature. None of those bills ended up ultimately passing in the 2022 legislative session, but there's no reason to think the issue has diminished in importance. The Institute has heard from parents across Missouri how angry they are at the lack of accountability and transparency from schools. There's never been a better time to enshrine into law the rights that parents have when it comes to the education of their children. An MPBR will likely be re-introduced when the Legislature returns in January—and hopefully signed into law by next year.





MONTANA

FRONTIER INSTITUTE • frontierinstitute.org

Frontier Institute President and CEO Kendall Cotton was appointed by Montana Governor Greg Gianforte to serve on the governor's newly created Housing Task Force. Composed of state and local officials, economists, researchers, and advocates, the task force has been charged with providing recommendations for the Legislature to consider that would make housing more affordable and attainable. After the announcement, Kendall Cotton released this statement: "Governor Gianforte's new Housing Task Force marks the beginning of Montana's united effort to address the regulatory barriers standing in the way of affordable housing. We are honored to be included in this new task force, and we look forward to working alongside others to give Montana landowners more freedom to build affordable homes where they are needed most." The Frontier Institute released the Free-Market Healthcare Hub, a new resource to help patients find verified direct patient care (DPC) providers operating in Montana. The Hub also links to resources Montanans can use to shop for healthcare from providers that embrace price transparency and free-market principles. The Hub highlights that the number of DPC providers in Montana has doubled since last year and there are at least 16 providers—including physicians, nurse practitioners, naturopaths, and pharmacists—in Montana operating primarily on a DPC model. The average DPC membership fee for comprehensive primary care is \$77 per month in Montana, and the industry is now providing an estimated 5,000 Montana patients with affordable, high-quality healthcare.



NEBRASKA

PLATTE INSTITUTE • platteinstitute.org

Property taxes on homes, businesses, and agricultural land are easily the most hated taxes in Nebraska. And yet, the Cornhusker State has struggled to keep a lid on property taxes as real estate values have soared in this inflationary economy. Thanks to Nebraska's new Truth in Taxation law, taxpayers will have one way to engage their locally elected officials to keep the problem from getting even worse. **The Platte Institute** played an instrumental role in the law's adoption and is now working to educate Nebraskans on how to make the most of the law by getting involved in advocating for responsible property tax policies. The Platte Institute is providing free assistance to taxpayers through a Truth in Taxation Alerts campaign. This project invites citizens to sign up for tips on attending Truth in Taxation public hearings, updates about taxpayer events in their area, and exclusive interviews from experts on the new law through the Platte Institute's Nebraskanomics podcast. Find the Truth in Taxation resource page at platteinstitute.org/truth.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

JOSIAH BARLETT CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY • jbartlett.org

The **Josiah Bartlett Center for Public Policy** made significant progress on occupational licensing reform (the conversion of emergency healthcare licenses to permanent status), sound tax policy (a failed gas tax holiday and a successful business rate cut), business regulations (slightly relaxed brewery regulations and failed proposals for new financial regulations), and the need to relax local land use rules. To engage new audiences, Bartlett Center President Drew Cline launched a weekday morning talk radio show on WFEA, an FM and AM station in Manchester.



NEW JERSEY

GARDEN STATE INITIATIVE • gardenstateinitiative.org

With a recognition that economic prosperity begins with public safety, last October the **Garden State Initiative** sponsored, in partnership with the New Jersey Urban Mayors' and Sheriffs' associations, a forum with former New York Police Department Commissioner and Los Angeles Police Department Chief Bill Bratton to address violence in our cities and to adjust New Jersey's 2017 bail reform in order to increase the authority of prosecutors and judges to keep illegal gun defendants remanded while awaiting trial. That forum led to bipartisan legislation that was introduced in the Legislature in early February and ultimately passed both houses and was signed into law by Governor Phil Murphy on June 30. This amendment will reduce the incidence of defendants being released only to be re-arrested for violent crimes.



NEW MEXICO

RIO GRANDE FOUNDATION • [Rio Grande Foundation.org](https://RioGrandeFoundation.org)

New Mexico is awash in revenue from its booming oil and gas industry. The Rio Grande Foundation is committed to reforming New Mexico's tax structure, specifically its broken Gross Receipts Tax, in ways that make it less harmful to businesses, especially small ones. As New Mexico heads to a gubernatorial election this fall, the Foundation has convinced one candidate to commit to reforming New Mexico's anti-business, regressive Gross Receipts Tax and its "pyramiding" effects.



NEW YORK

EMPIRE CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY • empirecenter.org

It took more than a year, several lawsuits, and the work of a court-appointed special master for New York to complete its decennial redistricting process and produce acceptable electoral districts. This oversimplifies the story—and glosses over how close to political disaster New York came. Without the work of the Empire Center for Public Policy, its partners at the Government Justice Center, a coalition of like-minded groups, and some outstanding New York residents, New York would have been stuck with the most politically gerrymandered maps in the nation—and the least democratic representation. The effort took every tool in the toolbox to push back against bigger, better-funded adversaries determined to increase their own political power with little regard for the citizens they represent. In this case, New Yorkers—not the political machine—won, the promise of federalism was restored, and heroes from across the political spectrum came together to defend it.





NORTH CAROLINA

JOHN LOCKE FOUNDATION • johnlocke.org

North Carolina's population is growing by leaps and bounds. In fact, so many newcomers are choosing to call North Carolina home that the state added an additional congressional district, and received recognition as the Top State for Business from CNBC. Engaging with all these new voters, particularly the Foundation's burgeoning Spanish-speaking audience, is a top priority for the **John Locke Foundation**. Noticias Carolina, a sub-brand of the Foundation's Carolina Journal, will reach Hispanic voters, and a comprehensive Spanish voter guide will give them access to important information, such as where each congressional, judicial, and state-level candidate stands on freedom-centric issues. In addition, the Foundation has soft-launched Locke en Espanol, a sister project of Noticias Carolina. Locke en Espanol increases the in-person grassroots presence across the state, especially aimed toward expats from Venezuela, Cuba, and other Latin American countries, by hosting events and providing essential resources, like information on affordable energy and parental rights.

OHIO

THE BUCKEYE INSTITUTE • buckeyeinstitute.org

In three landmark cases dealing with school choice, reining in the power of unelected government officials, and protecting Second Amendment rights, the US Supreme Court agreed with arguments presented by **The Buckeye Institute**. In *Carson v. Makin*, the Court ruled that the state of Maine cannot deny students and their families financial aid available to all other students just because a family chooses to use their aid to send their children to a religious or "sectarian" school. As Buckeye argued in its brief, Maine's discrimination against religious schools and parents violated the First Amendment. In *West Virginia v. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)*, the Court ruled that the Obama administration overstepped its authority when it imposed vast new regulations under the Clean Power Plan. Buckeye argued that the EPA's attempt to impose sweeping rules to regulate virtually any industry in the country violated the major questions doctrine and that such vast power required an explicit designation from Congress. In *New York State Rifle and Pistol Association v. Bruen*, the high court ruled that New York's requirement for citizens to demonstrate a "special need" to obtain a license to carry a gun for self-defense violates the US Constitution. Buckeye argued in its brief that New York's onerous requirements unacceptably prevented law-abiding Americans from carrying firearms for the purposes of self-defense in clear violation of the Second Amendment.



THE BUCKEYE INSTITUTE

OKLAHOMA

OKLAHOMA COUNCIL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS • ocpathink.org

Oklahoma Council of Public Affairs' top legislative priority is universal school choice. Over the last 25 years, OCPA has been instrumental in forming and expanding educational opportunities across Oklahoma through the Lindsey Nicole Henry Scholarship Program for Children with Disabilities, as well as the Oklahoma Equal Opportunity Education Scholarship. Through persistent work from OCPA, universal school choice is now the key legislative issue in Oklahoma. Support from Governor Kevin Stitt and Senate President Pro Tempore Greg Treat, as well as increased pressure on legislators from communities across the state, have helped get to this point. While it was not passed by the Legislature this year, support for universal school choice will continue to grow through community engagement and other efforts. OCPA has launched a full-scale grassroots effort to engage communities across the state, educating the public on key policy issues like school choice and aiding them in building relationships with their representatives. The campaign entails speaking with various groups, finding key members of specific communities who are involved and passionate about OCPA's policy goals, and giving them resources to actively engage with lawmakers.



OREGON

CASCADE POLICY INSTITUTE • cascadepolicy.org

This summer, Cascade Policy Institute's team of three interns researched and wrote about wasteful "clean energy" programs in Oregon. The Portland Clean Energy Fund is handing out nearly \$120 million this year to local nonprofits for clean energy and job training programs, with priority given to organizations serving minority populations. One-third of the proposed spending is dedicated to projects that have no quantifiable metrics to measure success or failure. That's \$36 million in projects with virtually no accountability to the Clean Energy Fund Committee, Portland City Council, taxpayers, or voters. The Green Energy Technology Program (established when the Oregon Legislature passed House Bill 2620 in 2007) mandates that 1.5 percent of the budgets for government building and renovation projects must be spent on green energy technology. Almost none of the projects had a payback period of less than 30 years, and one had a payback period of almost 500 years. Cascade's findings have prompted more intense scrutiny from the press, the public, and even government. Cascade's interns have had an op-ed published in a Portland-area newspaper and been interviewed twice by a national talk show host based in Portland.





PENNSYLVANIA

COMMONWEALTH FOUNDATION • commonwealthfoundation.org

This summer, the Commonwealth Foundation helped secure a \$110 million increase to the Education Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) scholarship program with the passage of the 2022 Pennsylvania budget—tripling the size of the program. In addition, Commonwealth achieved another historic victory for school choice in Pennsylvania with the passage of the Lifeline Scholarship Program in the House—an achievement so notable, especially with the country’s most progressive governor in office—that former Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos recognized it. These victories—and the momentum they bring for increased educational opportunities in 2022–2023 and beyond—have only been possible because of Commonwealth’s increased engagement with new school choice supporters. The Foundation has implemented a strategy of coordinating with scholarship programs across the state and the nation to build a coalition of school choice allies demanding change, and then compiling the stories from the people lawmakers need to hear from most: parents and students whose lives have been changed because of school choice. Efforts on this front yielded big returns in Philadelphia, where a Democrat supported the school choice legislation, despite no previous support for the issue. These outreach efforts continue to bring more people together—regardless of political affiliation—to advocate for increased choice in education and better outcomes for kids.

SOUTH CAROLINA

PALMETTO PROMISE INSTITUTE • palmettopromise.org

Palmetto Promise Institute used research and relationships to achieve passage of the top election law in the country. After comprehensive analysis of all state election laws, particularly those of neighboring states (Georgia, Florida) whose reforms were rated highly, the Palmetto team consulted with national and state election law experts and organizations who were committed to work together as a coalition. The research culminated in the report, “Election Reform 2022: Twenty Election Reforms South Carolina Needs Now.” Then there were challenges. Among conservatives, there were differences about what constituted reform. Late in the process, Senate versus House rivalry derailed the effort until a member of the Palmetto coalition developed an acceptable compromise. After passage, the Heritage Foundation and the Foundation for Government Accountability rated South Carolina’s new law #1. The bill passed the Senate and House without a dissenting vote due to the bargain it represented: Republicans received election integrity and Democrats achieved limited early voting. The win brought conservative efforts in South Carolina together more tightly than in the past, and key players in this coalition are already planning policy initiatives for 2023 in other areas. The experience has proved that controversial legislation can achieve bipartisan support if supported by strong research and close relationships.



TENNESSEE

BEACON CENTER OF TENNESSEE • beacontn.org

Right-to-work is under attack, with national politicians like President Biden calling for bans on state right-to-work protections. But Tennessee legislators understand that Tennesseans, not DC politicians, should get to decide whether the state remains a right-to-work state. There is a lot of misinformation surrounding what right-to-work actually is. Right-to-work is a longstanding Tennessee tradition that became the policy of the Volunteer State 75 years ago. As a result, those who choose not to join a union and pay dues can't be fired for exercising their freedom of association. But the union spokespeople won't tell Tennesseans that. They have allowed employment-at-will to be confused with right-to-work to turn voters against worker freedom. That's wrong, and **Beacon Center of Tennessee** is doing everything in its power to set the record straight. Beacon's efforts have included telling stories of people who have been in unions and have had—and made—the choice to leave a union. Beacon's animated explainer video makes right-to-work easy to understand, and statewide ads explain the facts versus the myths around the policy. The efforts to engage people directly and respectfully are working. A large majority of Tennesseans support right-to-work and want it protected. Beacon is committed to continuing education and community engagement on the issue to make sure all Tennessee voters are clear on what right-to-work is—and what it's not.



TEXAS

TEXAS PUBLIC POLICY FOUNDATION • texaspolicy.com

Texas Public Policy Foundation's priority legislative issue for the 88th Texas Legislature is securing education freedom through K-12 parental empowerment reform. To realize this goal, TPPF has launched a multifaceted public outreach campaign. TPPF has identified 60 House districts where citizens are represented by legislators who have leaned against education freedom in the past but seem likely to support reforms if they can be swayed by constituent input. TPPF's strategy is to reach those citizens to build an activist community in each district that can be empowered to demand reform. As of August 6, 2022, TPPF has recruited over 153,000 activists. This monumental number of passionate, engaged individuals will be a force to be reckoned with during the legislative session. TPPF utilizes online communications, traditional media commentary, social media outreach, livestreams, a state-wide radio campaign, and podcasts to engage Texans in the fight for education freedom. TPPF also launched the Parental Empowerment Tour which hit 14 pivotal cities and districts and attracted over 600 attendees, including parents, politicians, and community leaders. These efforts have earned powerful allies for parental empowerment, the most visible of which is Texas governor Greg Abbott. At TPPF's Policy Orientation in January 2022, Governor Abbott embraced TPPF's messaging on a Parental Bill of Rights. In August 2022, at a press conference that TPPF helped organize, Governor Abbott echoed TPPF's research and messaging once more. This press conference resulted in an outstanding Dallas Morning News hit, "Governor Abbott Touts School Choice Agenda at Dallas Private School."





UTAH

LIBERTAS INSTITUTE • libertas.org

After hearing how children's lemonade stands were being shut down across the country for not having a business license, the **Libertas Institute** took action. Libertas worked with the Utah Legislature to pass SB 81 in 2017, which allows minors to operate certain home-based businesses, like a lemonade stand, without a business permit. To celebrate this victory for entrepreneurship, Libertas created the Children's Entrepreneur Market. Modeled after a farmer's market, the Children's Entrepreneur Market takes place annually in several regions of the state. The event is run entirely by kids (with some setup help from parents) who get a real-world, practical opportunity to see the free market in action. Libertas also provides participants with a business plan, videos for business tips, and a curriculum to help kids understand the basic principles of a free market system. Next year, the Children's Entrepreneur Market will head to Texas, Colorado, Arizona, Tennessee, and Pennsylvania, each of which have passed laws protecting youth entrepreneurship, like the one in Utah. There are also plans to expand this program to include scholarships to support kids who want to turn their products into a legitimate small business, and a mentorship program that will connect young entrepreneurs with prominent Utah business owners to learn how to run a successful business.

VERMONT

ETHAN ALLEN INSTITUTE • ethanallen.org



Vermont ranks 47th in the nation on the Heritage Foundation's Election Integrity Scorecard. In addition to "dirty" voter rolls, the state does not require voter ID or US citizenship verification and allows ballots to be returned to the town clerk's office "by any means." Furthermore, universal mail-in voting is now the law for the general election—but not for the primary, which is where the real competition takes place on the Democratic Party ballot in deep blue Vermont. Mail-in ballots do not need to be notarized or witnessed (with identifying information such as name, address, social security number), and there is no signature verification requirement. Consequently, voter confidence on the center-right has plummeted. This year, the **Ethan Allen Institute** conducted a small-scale sample investigation of the state's voter rolls. The research showed that a percentage of graduates of Middlebury College, who left the state years ago, were recorded as having voted by absentee ballot in the 2020 election. The Vermont media covered the story extensively, which sparked a telling overreaction from the secretary of state's office, Middlebury town clerk, the Middlebury College student newspaper, and various Democratic Party politicians. Ethan Allen has been raising public awareness about Vermont's election laws through multimedia channels, consulting with and sharing data from the Honest Elections Project, and plans to expand investigative journalism with the ultimate objective of finding solutions to boost voter confidence.

VIRGINIA

THOMAS JEFFERSON INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC POLICY • thomasjeffersoninst.org

With the support of Virginia's Lt. Governor, the **Thomas Jefferson Institute for Public Policy** is gearing up to build new grassroots networks for education choice in the Commonwealth's underserved schools. A new project, the Virginia Alliance for Student Opportunity, will work with Lt. Governor Winsome Earle-Sears to organize community and church meetings in Richmond, Petersburg, and the Hampton Roads area featuring Virginia's top elected black officials speaking out in favor of providing parents with choices. The issue campaign includes new staff dedicated to community organization, supplemented by social media video ads explaining how the state's current tax credit scholarship program and a proposed Education Savings Account provide opportunity. The campaign aims to engage choice supporters in those educationally at-risk communities. "School shutdowns hurt everyone, but it hurt children in our urban corridors worst of all," said Chris Braunlich, President & CEO of the Thomas Jefferson Institute. "More than half of low-income 4th and 8th graders in these cities cannot read on grade level, and we are losing the opportunity to save these children and provide them a future. For the Lt. Governor, this has been a moral and personal imperative since before she and I served on the State Board of Education together. It is long overdue that the children of these cities got the same opportunity as others. Education justice only comes from education choice, and we are proud that Lt. Governor Earle-Sears will be working with us on this issue campaign in the months ahead."



WASHINGTON

FREEDOM FOUNDATION • FREEDOMFOUNDATION.COM

The **Freedom Foundation** celebrated the fourth anniversary of the Supreme Court's ruling in *Janus v. AFSCME* by marking 118,000 public employees it has directly helped leave their union and stop paying dues. These employees will keep more than \$217 million per year in their own pockets as a result. The Freedom Foundation has enjoyed particular success with outreach in Illinois, having obtained a list of unionized home care providers earlier this year. The home care campaign has featured nine mailers and an ongoing door-to-door canvassing operation reaching nearly 600 doors so far. About one-quarter of the people canvassed completed a dues cancellation form on the spot. The Freedom Foundation also assisted the roughly 120 teachers and school employees in the Le Roy School District, also in Illinois, in replacing their National Education Association (NEA)-affiliated union with an independent union they created as an alternative. In an election administered by the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Board, employees voted 57-8 to ditch the NEA. Teachers across the country are expressing their displeasure with the national teachers' unions, and the Freedom Foundation has begun hosting educational webinars in several new states, resulting in many teachers leaving their unions.





WASHINGTON POLICY CENTER • washingtonpolicy.org

Affordability is a key issue and theme for **Washington Policy Center** moving into the fall. Despite the lingering effects of the state's unusually long COVID-19 lockdowns; inflationary pressures; and high food, fuel, and housing prices, the Legislature passed new taxes that will add to the state's high cost of living. Income tax advocates passed a stealth income tax on capital gains that the Washington Supreme Court has agreed to hear. A public records request from WPC revealed the intent of the law was to trigger a lawsuit that would allow the courts to abandon almost a century of precedent and allow for graduated income taxes to be implemented with a simple majority vote (rather than a constitutional amendment). The question for the court boils down to, "Do you own your income?" Every plaintiff in the case is a WPC member. WPC used state Department of Ecology data to show the impact the governor's new carbon emissions law will have on gas and diesel prices. WPC showed state drivers can expect a 46-cent increase in the price of gas and a 56-cent increase in the price of diesel by the end of next year. By 2030, those increases rise to 80 and 97 cents, respectively. Additionally, WPC revealed the state's new low carbon fuel standard would also increase gas prices well beyond what advocates had promised, with more substantial increases in the long term. WPC has received significant media attention on these issues and will conduct fall follow-up campaigns.

WEST VIRGINIA



CARDINAL INSTITUTE FOR WEST VIRGINIA POLICY • cardinalinstitute.com

The **Cardinal Institute** for West Virginia Policy has primarily focused on the implementation of the Hope Scholarship this year. The Institute is working on gathering stories from families affected by the injunction to work on a project called Hope in the Hills. On June 20, the Institute released a new paper with the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression and the James G. Martin Center for Academic Renewal examining the speech codes at West Virginia's colleges and universities.

WISCONSIN

BADGER INSTITUTE • badgerinstitute.org

The **Badger Institute** continues to publish elements of its Mandate for Madison, a book-length policy blueprint for Wisconsin's next governor and legislature. The latest chapter, "Tax Reform Options to Improve Wisconsin's Competitiveness," was a joint venture between the Institute and the Tax Foundation. While several states have adopted significant tax reform, Wisconsin still has one of the highest top marginal individual income tax rates among the non-coastal states. In the 2023 session, lawmakers will have a sizeable budget surplus to work with, as well as five comprehensive tax reform options from the report to consider. Another Mandate report, "Ensuring Opportunity: Altering Wisconsin's Safety Net to Encourage Upward Mobility," by Angela Rachidi, American Enterprise Institute senior fellow and Badger Institute visiting fellow, offered several recommendations, including the consolidation of funding streams for help with food, housing, family support, and other programs into a Unified Family Assistance Program. This program would phase out in a coordinated way to minimize benefit cliffs that discourage work. Other Mandate material includes chapters on improving healthcare delivery in Wisconsin by professors Dan Sem and Scott Niederjohn, two Ph.D.s at Concordia University Wisconsin; the backlog in state courts by Jeremiah Mosteller, senior policy analyst for criminal justice at Americans for Prosperity; and ways to improve the unemployment compensation system by Ike Brannon, president of Capital Policy Analytics and a Badger Institute visiting fellow. More Mandate content, including chapters on K-12 education reform, infrastructure, licensing, direct primary care, and much more, will be released in the coming months.



INSTITUTE FOR REFORMING GOVERNMENT • reforminggovernment.org

The **Institute for Reforming Government** continued its impressive growth this summer, adding a new Environmental Policy Director, a State Budget and Government Reform Policy Director, and a Senior Policy and Operations Advisor. With the new team members, IRG's policy team, now one of the largest and most experienced in Wisconsin, is bringing its aggressive policy development projects to the finish line this year, including proposals to reform the top 20 state agencies. To kick start this effort, they launched a series of State Agency 101's, short briefs being released weekly to inform policy makers and readers about state agencies leading up to the unveiling of the larger project this November. On the education front, IRG's education reform team continues building comprehensive K12 and higher education reform packages for release later this year. At the start of the school year, they issued a report on the state of education in Wisconsin called Facing Reality: How Wisconsin Schools Have Fallen Behind. The report is a factual data-driven review of where Wisconsin schools stand. IRG also announced a partnership with University of Chicago Professor Tomas Philipson, former chairman of the Whitehouse Council of Economic Advisors, to develop an unprecedented playbook for conservative, free-market healthcare reforms ahead of the 2023-25 state budget discussion.





WISCONSIN INSTITUTE FOR LAW & LIBERTY • WILL-LAW.ORG

The Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty is a national leader with its Equality Under the Law Project (EUL), a legal project to push back against race-based programs and initiatives and work to ensure that all people, regardless of race, are treated with equal protection under the law. WILL has represented 42 clients from 17 states who are standing up for equality under the law. Some of the EUL successes include ending the Biden administration's race-based programs for pandemic relief funds and helping parents push back against local school district policies. In addition to this legal initiative, WILL started the Restoring American Education initiative, an effort to empower public school board members, teachers, and parents to embrace policies that are pro-parent, pro-transparency, pro-equality, and based on American legal values. To further this project, WILL released model school board policies, original research on how teachers are indoctrinated from higher-education institutions, and is creating a database of resources for teachers and parents. Restoring American Education has reached audiences both in Wisconsin and across the country, thanks to collaboration with SPN partners and local and national grassroots organizations. As of the end of July, WILL had 2,494 pageviews on the model school board policies, 1,549 new users to the WILL audience, and 2,208 views on PDFs. WILL's efforts to achieve equality under the law—both through the courts and by empowering local school board members, teachers, and parents—are ongoing.

T.W. LEWIS FOUNDATION

The T.W. Lewis Foundation was founded by Tom and Jan Lewis in 2000 and has provided college scholarships to over 200 future leaders, made gifts to dozens of nonprofits that help children and families in need, and supported youth education organizations that build character and encourage civic engagement.

SPN is excited to share a new T.W. Lewis Foundation Matching Grant program. Donors who increase their gifts to \$5,000 or more, and those who make new gifts of \$5,000 or more, will be matched by the Foundation. We thank the T.W. Lewis Foundation for this opportunity to accelerate the efforts of the Network to build influence and achieve policy wins that improve the lives of Americans across the nation.

Visit spn.org/donate to make a special gift today or contact Cindy Kilduff, SPN's Senior Director of Institutional Giving via email at kilduff@spn.org.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATES

Thank you to our national partners who work with us to advance freedom across the country in key areas including education, law, free speech, energy and the environment, and tax reform.

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SPOTLIGHT PARTNERSHIP: Young Voices



Today's media landscape has created new opportunities for aspiring writers to cover important issues of the day and gain exposure like never before. At the same time, new threats have emerged as the idea of "objective journalism" has gone by the wayside, and social media giants regulate their platforms.

Young Voices was created to support writers early in their careers so they can not only succeed in getting placements, but do so with the right ethics, best practices, and guidance from seasoned professionals. Through their Contributors Program, they've built a roster of pro-liberty writers and offer them copy editing support, help finding writing jobs, and connections with other successful writers in the movement.



A group of SPN donors have made it possible for SPN to provide Young Voices with targeted grants so they can recruit more writers who focus on state policy – something sorely needed as local media withers. These generous donors, who have a desire to help nurture talented young writers, partnered with SPN to help Young Voices recruit over 140 applicants to their fall programs from 25 states. Their reporting covers a range of issues including housing policy, school choice, tax reform, and free speech. They also hold regional events to bring together young writers and promote their work, including a recent book by author Nolan Gray on local zoning policy, *Arbitrary Lines*.

Thanks to these donors, Young Voices launched their Regional Leaders Program—a project that trains representatives from the Northeast, South, Midwest, Northwest, and Southwest to represent Young Voices in their areas, expand Young Voices' outreach, and open more opportunities for contributors. These Regional Leaders build relationships with regional, state, and local media and connect Young Voices contributors to media opportunities.

Since launching the program in March 2022, Young Voices has seen a 55 percent increase in state policy coverage, including op-ed placements in *The Washington Post*, *Newsweek*, *The Tennessean*, and *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*.



SPN MADE ONE OF YOUNG VOICES' LARGEST EXPANSIONS TO DATE POSSIBLE, IDENTIFYING AND EMPOWERING RISING LEADERS IN STATE POLICY ACROSS THE COUNTRY. I AM THANKFUL FOR THEIR SUPPORT AND EXCITED FOR WHAT'S TO COME, FORGING NEW THINK TANK PARTNERSHIPS AND PLACING YOUNG TALENT IN TOP STATE MEDIA OUTLETS."

—Casey Given, Executive Director, Young Voices

Safeguard the Future with Your Legacy



■ **Thomas Roe**, a successful businessman and advisor to President Reagan, created the State Policy Network so there would be a champion for freedom and opportunity in every state. With your partnership, we can preserve the power of state solutions and the profound impact they have on the lives of Americans now and into the future.

Joining the Thomas Roe Legacy Society

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We would love to speak with you and help you clarify the legacy you'd like to leave. To begin this conversation, please contact Cindy Kilduff at 703-243-1655 or kilduff@spn.org.

Learn More: [SPN.org/Legacy](https://spn.org/Legacy)


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