



State Solutions. National Impact.

SUMMER 2022

# The Next Generation

The future of our country lies with talented young professionals in SPN's Generation Liberty Fellowship Program



*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 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](http://spn.org/staff).

# Dear Friends,

The first half of 2022 has brought many challenges to the American people. With record inflation rates, increased distrust in our institutions, and the continuous overreach of the federal government, it's difficult not to be discouraged by the gridlock and bureaucracy of Washington.

In the face of these challenges, know that you are making great things happen in the states that are having national impact. At SPN, we know that the best solutions come from state and local leaders who have a deep understanding of the unique needs of their communities, not the one-size-fits-all mandates coming from Washington. Thanks to your partnership, this Network has advanced groundbreaking wins across the states that expand opportunities and provide better outcomes for Americans and their families.

The key to our future rests in the next generation – our children and grandchildren. In this issue of *SPN News*, you will read how you have helped shape the next generation of liberty movement leaders through SPN's Generation Liberty Fellowship program. Through your support, you are equipping our nation's future leaders with the training, connections, and principles needed to take on future challenges. We'll also spotlight how a coalition of policy leaders and philanthropists in Tennessee helped pass a landmark education funding reform that invests dollars in individual students over systems and increases transparency and accountability for school leaders.

We are honored to feature a profile piece on a steadfast donor and friend to SPN, Richard Lee, whose support of SPN has bolstered our media efforts, amplifying our ideas to the public in support of free-market solutions and federalism. You can read more about his support of a unique fellowship and SPN's "State Voices" messaging project.

While there is still more work to be done, our Network remains a beacon of hope for Americans across the nation. Thanks to your support, SPN and our Network are well-positioned to continue to advance and implement policy solutions that help the American people where it matters the most.

Take care,

*Tracie Sharp*







# Generation Liberty Fellowship Cultivates Tomorrow's Freedom Movement Leaders

There is a growing concern among Americans that the next generation has forgotten the opportunities and freedoms afforded to them by our principles of self-governance and individual liberty. According to a 2021 Axios poll, over 50% of Gen Zers look favorably on socialism and have negative perceptions towards free enterprise.

State Policy Network knows the importance of building a pipeline of talented leaders, which is why we created the Generation Liberty Fellowship (GLF) program. Each year at SPN's Annual Meeting, the Generation Liberty Fellowship program convenes young professionals from across the nation for a unique opportunity to connect with Network leaders and

explore curated professional development opportunities. For 2021 Generation Liberty fellow, Tanner Aliff, the GLF program would help him not only connect with policy experts and liberty movement leaders, but would also land him his starter-dream job.

As a young congressional staffer working on Capitol Hill, Tanner was becoming increasingly frustrated with the bureaucracy and gridlock created by Washington politics. During his tenure on the Hill, Tanner noticed that members of Congress would often look to the states for innovative policy solutions. "I started to realize that policy was not being made at the federal level, but rather members would ask what was being done in the states on issues like healthcare, tax reform, and education. They would then identify the ideas that produced

The Generation Liberty Fellowship program features a diverse array of young professionals from multiple states, backgrounds, and specialties.

## 2021 Snapshot

**44** fellows (20% acceptance rate)

**24** states represented

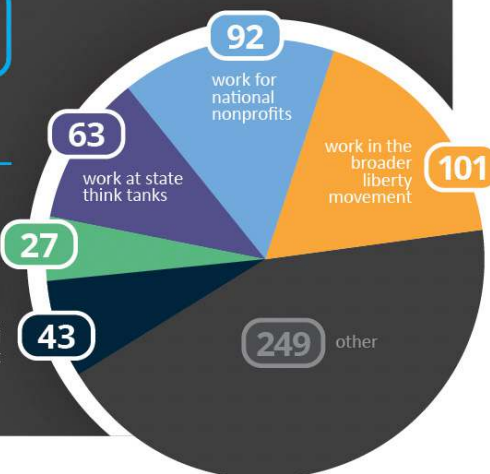
Professions include think tank staff, doctors, lawyers, web developers, local elected officials, congressional staff, and more

## Alumni Snapshot

575 total alumni of the GLF program

work in higher education

work in state, local, or national government





**“IT WAS SO REFRESHING TO SEE SO MANY PEOPLE MOVING THE NEEDLE IN THEIR LOCALITIES AND COMMUNITIES.”**

**Tanner Aliff,**  
Generation Liberty Fellowship Program Alumnus (2021)

the best results and adapt those ideas into federal policy.”

Through a connection at Young Voices, a nonprofit organization that provides training programs for aspiring young writers, and several recommendations from colleagues in liberty movement circles in DC, Tanner applied for the Generation Liberty Fellowship and was accepted in the 2021 cohort. He hoped at Annual Meeting that he would be able to see the country's premier state think tanks in action and learn more about state policy solutions, especially in healthcare, which he knew could have national impact based on his experiences on the Hill.

## **What he would end up finding would lead to much more.**

Tanner's passion for healthcare policy prompted him to write several op-eds, with one of his publications appearing in the *Washington Examiner*. One of his readers was Jared Meyer, director of advocacy and senior fellow with the Cicero Institute, a free market think tank based in Austin, Texas. When Jared recognized Tanner's name on the list of Generation Liberty program participants, he sought him out and connected with him over lunch. Throughout their lively discussion on the liberty movement and healthcare policy, Jared mentioned that Cicero was searching for young talent to fill a junior policy position with a focus on healthcare. The lunch meeting, as well as an opportunity to network with Cicero's executive leadership team, proved to be successful in securing what Tanner calls his “dream job.” A few months after Annual Meeting, he was named Cicero's new healthcare policy manager.

Tanner credits SPN and the Generation Liberty Fellowship for helping him connect with the Cicero Institute and other Network leaders. “Being able to connect with Jared and Cicero's executive leadership team at Annual Meeting was instrumental in facilitating meaningful conversations that just would not have happened over email. It was so refreshing to see so many people moving the needle in their localities and commu-

nities. This Network is a perfect example of why America has not fallen, thanks to individuals who are invested in their communities and who continuously advocate for better outcomes and opportunities for everyday Americans.”

Identifying and cultivating the next generation of Network leaders like Tanner is the heartbeat of the Generation Liberty Fellowship program. Originally, the Generation Liberty Fellowship was started as a way to build the talent pipeline into the Network, with a focus on identifying and engaging college students. As the program began to expand, SPN leadership had identified an audience that the Network had not yet tapped into: young professionals and state think tank staffers. SPN's president and CEO, Tracie Sharp, recalls the overwhelmingly positive response to expanding the applicant pool: “We wanted to grow our own audience beyond college students and began to look for partners in different industries and specialties who were working in the states and really making an impact and affecting change in their communities,” she said. The individuals who participate in this program are not only involved in the state think tanks but also come from a wide range of fields, including academia, tech, medicine, finance, marketing, and more. These young leaders not only bring a fresh perspective and new ideas to Annual Meeting, but to the entire Network. “We need to continue to outreach and engage these young professionals if we are going to continue to build a Network of extraordinary and talented professionals,” Tracie adds. “How are we going to shape the future of our nation if we are not talking to those who will be leading it?”

Through the generosity of our donors and supporters, this program provides SPN and the Network with the opportunity to reach the next generation of nonprofit leaders, influencers, and policymakers who will successfully drive change in the states.

As SPN continues to invest in and develop these young leaders through the Generation Liberty Fellowship Program, we are also investing in the future of the Network and our nation, equipping the next generation of the liberty movement with the tools and skills to take on tomorrow's challenges.

# Tennessee Education Funding Overhaul Invests in Students over Systems

Tennessee has one of the most complicated education funding formulas in the country, using over 46 different factors to determine how much money a school district receives. Because this formula is so complex, it makes it very difficult, if not impossible, for taxpayers and families to understand why a school receives certain funding and what it is used for. SPN affiliate, the Beacon Center of Tennessee, has long advocated for education funding reforms.

## Seizing the Moment for Historic Reform

Governor Bill Lee knew Tennessee's funding model was ineffective and in need of substantial reform to reprioritize students. The Beacon Center had worked on the issue for years and saw a rare opportunity for change. They seized the moment and quickly updated critical research on the state's education finances. Through SPN strategic support, Beacon published a report which found that out of the \$11 billion the state spends each year on education, just 53 percent of funding makes it to the classroom. After reviewing this research from Beacon, the governor announced a campaign to determine how Tennessee funds its education system and welcomed solutions for reform. During this campaign, SPN helped connect Beacon with national partners who understood the structures and processes of education funding and provided strategic messaging support on how to effectively communicate this issue to lawmakers and the public. Beacon also credited State Voices, SPN's monthly public opinion study that tracks Americans' attitudes on policy issues, as particularly helpful in making the case that education reform was popular among most American families.

Governor Lee then appointed a subcommittee of community, business, and school leaders to offer recommendations on how to improve the system for Tennessee students and named Beacon Center President and CEO Justin Owen as its chairman. After reviewing the subcommittee's recommendations, the governor released his plan, the Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement Act (TISA), in January 2022.

The Beacon Center's advocacy partner, Beacon Impact, endorsed TISA and worked with a broad coalition in Tennessee, which included TennesseeCan, Tennesseans for Student Suc-

cess, State Collaborative on Reforming Education, the American Federation for Children (AFC), and ExcelinEd, to promote this important reform to Tennesseans. Through earned media, social media channels, and other outreach, Beacon Impact reached thousands of people across the state. The state's largest newspaper and a liberal outlet, *The Tennessean*, also endorsed the bill and encouraged lawmakers to adopt it. The bill received bipartisan support, and the Legislature passed TISA in May 2022.

## Holding School Leaders Responsible for Educational Outcomes

Tennessee's new funding formula gives schools more flexibility to fund programs that address the unique instructional needs of their student population and helps parents keep their school leaders accountable. Under TISA, every child in



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HAS CHAMPIONED  
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INITIATIVES FOR MANY  
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ALONGSIDE STATE THINK  
TANKS LIKE BEACON  
TO HELP ADVANCE  
EDUCATION REFORM.

the state will receive a specific amount that is generated based on various factors—like if a child has special needs or is an English language learner. Tennessee's Department of Education will provide school districts with the money in a lump sum and schools will have flexibility in determining how that mon-



ey is spent. This new funding model will also empower school leaders, who previously had little say over school budgeting, to have more control over their budget and how to best educate their students.

The new funding formula will also enable parents to access an online dashboard that shows how much money their child generated, how much money their public school generated, and the programs and curriculum their school is spending funds on. "It takes our entire staff of experts months to navigate the old funding formula system, so you can imagine how hard it is for a parent or even the average taxpayer to understand this model," said Justin Owen. "The new funding model puts parents in the driver's seat and provides more transparency and accountability in education spending."

## State Policy Network Expands Education Reform Efforts

State Policy Network has championed education reform initiatives for many years and has worked alongside state think tanks like Beacon to help advance education policies. Katherine Bathgate, SPN's senior policy advisor, remarked how the Network's efforts have had an impact on increasing better education outcomes for students: "In 2018, SPN held an education reform symposium which included a panel of experts who led a discussion on student-based funding. This exposure to the concept of student-based funding helped prompt Network leaders to work on advancing student-based funding models in their states."

Knowing that education finance would be an emerging issue, SPN began sending cohorts to the McCort School of Public Policy's education finance training program at Georgetown University. As one of the most prestigious training programs in the country, participants gain a deeper understanding of the education funding process and how to best apply this knowledge to address education funding needs in their state. By exposing groups to this work, connecting Network leaders with experts, and funding professional development trainings, SPN has equipped Network leaders with the skills to advance education finance reform across the country.



Beacon Center CEO Justin Owen receives SPN's prestigious Roe Award in 2021 for outstanding leadership.

# Donor Spotlight:

## Richard Lee

**Family has always been at the center of the Lee household.**

Richard Lee is an entrepreneur and real-estate developer in sunny Orlando, Florida, and a supporter of State Policy Network since 2015.

Since taking over the family business more than 50 years ago, his children, sons-in-law, and grandchildren have also become involved and have helped it grow into a local household name in the Orlando area.

Richard's story is one many share of the American Dream. His father worked on an oil rig and lived in a tent, moving frequently for work, including as a dynamiter in a rock quarry in East Texas. He eventually settled in Florida with his wife, Elizabeth, and started a dairy farm in 1925 – buying one cow and one calf. When they sold the dairy, it had sales of over \$90 million.

Richard grew up working on the farm and dairy operation, learning the ins and outs of the business. When his father turned over the keys to Richard, they sold the milk company in the 1970s and eventually turned their farm into the LeeVista community development. The name "Vista" came from Richard's mother, who said "the Lees have always had a vision into the future."

And so, they did. LeeVista has built and dedicated to the City of Orlando 10 miles of roadways, developed 800,000 square feet of office space, 2.5 million in industrial space, 750,000 in commercial space, and 4,500 units of hotels and apartments. Today, three generations of the Lee family (including Richard and Kathy's six grandchildren) now own or manage the LeeVista Center.

Richard had always leaned conservative (he says he must have gotten it from his father), but it wasn't until the Obama administration that he opened his eyes to the harm the federal government causes average Americans when it grows too intrusive. He saw "everything changing" through programs like the Affordable Care Act, tax hikes, and major spending programs. He saw the direction the country was headed and decided to get involved in organizations focused on preserving that American Dream for future generations. For decades, the family has given to many causes they believed in and has taught the value of philanthropy to their children.



Richard Lee, his wife Kathy, and their six grandchildren

Richard started supporting the work of State Policy Network because of our focus on the states.

"The 10th Amendment and the Founders' vision of a country with decentralized government really appeals to me," said Richard. "I enjoy meeting all of the great people who work at SPN and all of the young people that are part of the Network. And Tracie is unbelievable. I am so impressed with her and what she's built."

Richard attended SPN's Annual Meeting in 2019 in Colorado Springs and was inspired by the many young people he saw and the stories of impact he heard from across the Network. He had such a great experience that he returned for SPN's 2021 Annual Meeting and introduced SPN staff to a number of his family and friends.

In 2021, Richard decided to make a special investment in SPN towards a unique fellowship focused on communicating federalism (empowering states, rather than the federal government, to make decisions) to the public.

Especially at this moment, where he sees the Biden administration growing the federal government's power, he understands the importance of communicating to the public why problems are better solved on the state and local level.

Richard created the Lee Family Fellowship and sponsored the work of SPN's senior messaging strategist Erin Norman. Erin, who came to SPN with over a decade of messaging and polling expertise, is focused on measuring public opinion on federalism





**"THE 10TH AMENDMENT AND THE FOUNDERS' VISION OF A COUNTRY WITH DECENTRALIZED GOVERNMENT REALLY APPEALS TO ME. I ENJOY MEETING ALL OF THE GREAT PEOPLE WHO WORK AT SPN AND ALL OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE THAT ARE PART OF THE NETWORK. AND TRACIE IS UNBELIEVABLE. I AM SO IMPRESSED WITH HER AND WHAT SHE'S BUILT."**

Richard Lee,  
SPN supporter

and SPN priority issues like education, healthcare, economic policy, and government overreach. With that data, she is equipping our 50-state Network with powerful messaging to show how state solutions, not the federal government, are better able to meet the unique needs of Americans.

Through the Lee family's support, Erin conducts regular focus groups of people affected by policy change (educators, workers, business owners, etc) and helps identify where we can strengthen our Network's messaging. In some cases, having the wrong messaging will make you lose public support in big ways.

"The news cycle moves fast, and you see this happen all the time. Someone comes out and says something and it's a disaster," said Erin. "In Virginia, the former governor said that

parents shouldn't have input in their children's education, and then look what happened."

The battle over education reform and parental rights was a leading issue that paved the way for Governor Glenn Youngkin to win the Virginia gubernatorial election in 2021.

To keep the pulse of public opinion in real time, Erin spearheads SPN's "State Voices" monthly polling tracker, where she monitors issues, messaging, and American attitudes to see how they change over time. SPN disseminates these findings to key audiences, including our state partners so they can use them to educate state policymakers, governors, and the public. Tennessee, for example, recently overhauled its education funding formula to invest in individual students with the help of the Beacon Center of Tennessee. Beacon credited SPN's State Voices polling in helping demonstrate to state lawmakers that the American public was in favor of education reform.

"When we dig into the data, there is so much out there that shows a unified American spirit – certain values and ideals we hold, even if we are divided," said Erin.

Erin also packages her research and analysis into compelling stories that get featured in the media. She has placed opinion pieces in news outlets including the *Washington Examiner*, *Governing*, *The Hill*, and *InsideSources*.

"Richard is making this important work possible. It brings so much value to our Network and we are now getting requests from our partners for more so we can help advance their strategies and push back on the federal government," she said. "This new resource would not be possible without the Lee family."



Erin Norman  
Lee Family Fellow and Senior Messaging  
Strategist at State Policy Network

If you are interested in learning more about SPN's fellowships or joining Richard to sponsor a fellow at SPN, contact Crystal Baker at [crystal@spn.org](mailto:crystal@spn.org).

## 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](https://SPN.org).*



### ALABAMA

#### ALABAMA POLICY INSTITUTE • [alabamapolicy.org](https://alabamapolicy.org)

After years of **Alabama Policy Institute** highlighting the importance of school choice and the opportunities of universal Education Savings Accounts, the Alabama Legislature finally considered a universal school choice program during the 2022 legislative session. Opposition, however, was strong. The Alabama Education Association, the state's teachers' union, mounted its usual campaign against change to the education system. To support the measure, API hosted and organized a school choice day in the Alabama State House. Dozens of students and parents from schools across the state flocked to Montgomery to make their support for school choice known to the Legislature. Various legislative leaders spoke, including the lieutenant governor. Despite the momentum, the measure failed to get a vote in either the Senate or the House. Political pressures from the traditional public school system during a campaign year doomed the school choice program. API, however, is confident that Alabama is moving toward school choice. With other states across America increasing choice, the only question is when it will finally arrive in Alabama.



### ALASKA

#### ALASKA POLICY FORUM • [alaskapolicyforum.org](https://alaskapolicyforum.org)

**Alaska Policy Forum** has been engaging policymakers and the public regarding the state's high unemployment rate and its depleted unemployment insurance (UI) trust fund. In a series of publications, APF compiled stories of employers affected by the employee shortage, and presented a solution called "unemployment insurance indexing." APF provided legislators with a policy brief about this simple yet effective reform. Legislation was introduced and has been received favorably, and APF provided educational testimony on the bill. Policymakers also attended an APF-hosted webinar that featured a lawmaker from a state that has implemented this reform, as well as a policy expert from the Foundation for Government Accountability. APF worked with affected small-business-owner employers to help them provide their own testimony, as well as an opinion article published in the *Juneau Empire*. Additionally, APF worked with The Buckeye Institute on a further recommendation for rebuilding Alaska's UI trust fund.



### ARIZONA

#### GOLDWATER INSTITUTE • [goldwaterinstitute.org](https://goldwaterinstitute.org)

During the 2022 session, the **Goldwater Institute** continued to achieve significant wins for liberty through legislation and litigation. Following an outpouring of support from patient advocates, Arizona became the first state to enact Goldwater's innovative Right to Try for Individualized Treatments Act, which allows patients to access cutting-edge, personalized medicine. Arizona also adopted Goldwater's union release time reform, a law prohibiting public employees from engaging in political activity on the taxpayer's dime. Further, the Institute scored two critical state Supreme Court victories for Arizona taxpayers when it defeated the largest tax increase in state history and defended the Institute's 2.5-percent flat tax from legal challenge. Thanks to these successes, Arizona taxpayers now enjoy one of the lowest tax rates in the country. Additionally, the Institute worked with multiple state groups across the country to advance other Goldwater reforms, including laws to ensure academic transparency, reduce licensing burdens, and protect the rights of small business owners.

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## ARKANSAS

**ARKANSAS POLICY FOUNDATION** • [arkansaspolicyfoundation.org](https://arkansaspolicyfoundation.org)

Governor Asa Hutchinson announced his support for accelerating implementation of a state income tax rate reduction, an idea advanced by the **Arkansas Policy Foundation**. In early June, Hutchinson said a legislative special session could be called later this summer if policymakers are able to agree on details of tax relief for Arkansans. The state of Arkansas is expected to record a budget surplus nearing \$1.5 billion in the current fiscal year, which ends June 30. The Policy Foundation notes the surplus, occurring in a period of economic expansion, makes it feasible for policymakers to address the issue of high tax rates. Since 2015, policymakers have reduced the income tax rate from 7.0 to 5.5 percent. A further reduction to 4.9 percent by mid-decade has been enacted, though Hutchinson's proposal would make it retroactive to Jan. 1, 2022.



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## CALIFORNIA

**CALIFORNIA POLICY CENTER** • [californiapolicycenter.org](https://californiapolicycenter.org)

**California Policy Center** launched a new Take Action tool on its website this year. The on-line portal allows Californians to easily identify their legislators by zip code and email their representatives directly regarding the bills CPC spotlights. Californians were outraged by a series of bills proposing extreme health mandates, including legislation allowing children to receive COVID-19 vaccines without parents' consent (SB 866), silencing physicians' right to speak freely about COVID-19 (AB 2098), forcing employers to require employees to be vaccinated (AB 1993), requiring COVID-19 vaccination for school-age children (SB 871), and stripping funding from law enforcement agencies that refused to enforce health mandates (SB 1464). CPC updated Californians as bills were presented in committees and progressed through the legislative process, allowing people to use the tool to respond to bill developments in real time. Thousands used the tool to oppose these bills and contact legislators on other important legislation such as a proposal to establish a state-run labor council for fast food restaurants (AB 257) and a high-profile curriculum transparency bill (SB 1045). CPC will continue to expand its Take Action tool to track additional legislation in the next session.



**PACIFIC RESEARCH INSTITUTE** • [pacificresearch.org](https://pacificresearch.org)

In February, **Pacific Research Institute** released a multi-year research project, "The CEQA Gauntlet," authored by one of the state's top land-use attorneys, Chris Carr, along with his colleagues Navi Dhillon and Lucas Grunbaum. The study details how the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) adds expense and delays—and in some cases, halts—to critical California projects including housing, schools, infrastructure, renewable energy, homeless shelters, and wildfire prevention. The cornerstone of the report is a flowchart illustrating the CEQA gauntlet—a maze of tests and trials that too often frustrates construction across the state. The Southern California News Group newspapers ran a full-size print of PRI's flowchart in its Sunday opinion section, along with a column by Carr and Ken Broad, after a court ruling that jeopardized the admission of 3,000 prospective University of California-Berkeley students due to a CEQA lawsuit. Following the release of PRI's report, the California Legislature passed legislation offering a "fix" to the "misapplication" of CEQA in the case. The study has received significant media coverage, capped by an op-ed authored by Carr in the *Wall Street Journal*. Other highlights include an op-ed by Carr in California real estate publication *The Registry*, as well as coverage in *Calmatters*, *Bloomberg News*, the *San Jose Mercury News*, the *Northern California Record*, and *KNX News Radio* in Los Angeles, among other outlets. A PRI-produced social media video promoting the study has received more than 47,000 views to date.







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## COLORADO

### INDEPENDENCE INSTITUTE • [i2i.org](https://i2i.org)

The 2022 state legislative session has yielded a mixed bag for **Independence Institute**. Defeats in the state house and the title board on curriculum transparency legislation have pushed the Institute to think creatively on this important issue. The next step is to pursue curriculum from major school districts via Colorado Open Record Act (CORA) requests, which will set a legal precedent for these disclosures. The Institute did mobilize a parent's group of more than 17,000 to stand up against proposed social studies standards and will continue to build this coalition and teach these parents how to submit CORA requests for curriculum. The Institute was not able to halt legislation related to new green energy building codes, but did succeed in altering the bill, reducing it to a study and securing code exemptions for Marshall Fire victims, saving them \$100,000 or more to rebuild their homes. Thanks to investigative reporting, the Institute learned about legislation that would allow unionization across every level of government and the 5,000 special districts in Colorado. The efforts of the Institute's specialists and allies led to significantly reduced legislation that only applies to the 65 county governments. Another step toward the goal of zero income tax, Initiative 31, yet another decrease, is on this November's ballot. The Institute continues the fight to build long-term infrastructure for freedom for all Coloradans.

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## CONNECTICUT

### YANKEE INSTITUTE • [yankeeinstitute.org](https://yankeeinstitute.org)

When Governor Ned Lamont asked Connecticut state lawmakers to ratify more than 1,800 scanned, unsearchable pages of tentative labor agreements, **Yankee Institute** sprang into action. Two weeks of round-the-clock analysis revealed the deals called for raises averaging 15 percent between March 2022 and July 2023 on top of \$3,500 bonuses. Yankee Institute quickly issued a detailed report, "Bad Deal: The Case Against the 2022 SEBAC Agreements," and launched a public health-style campaign with radio ads, text messages, and social media ads that warned taxpayers that the state's public sector unions were bad for Connecticut's fiscal health. While the deal was ultimately approved, lawmakers read directly from "Bad Deal" on the floor of the General Assembly as they explained why they opposed the agreement. That a vote was held reflected a major win by Yankee Institute from 2017, when state law was changed to require legislators to vote on labor agreements instead of having them "deemed approved," and it forced lawmakers to go on record siding with the unions against Connecticut taxpayers.

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## DELAWARE

### CAESAR RODNEY INSTITUTE • [caesarrodney.org](https://caesarrodney.org)

The **Caesar Rodney Institute** co-hosted an event inviting staff members from the Delaware Senate and House caucuses. The event was held in the state's capital (Dover) in March 2022. The staffers enjoyed dinner while listening to CRI and ABD's 2022 legislative solutions for the issues of government accountability and transparency, workforce development, taxes and budget, healthcare, energy, and education. CRI's energy director, David T. Stevenson, educated guests about how Delaware's participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) program may actually be increasing emissions globally despite its original intent of reducing it. Stevenson recommended a one-year "tax-free carbon holiday" review of the program since as much as \$100 million in RGGI funds may be sitting unspent by the state. CRI's education director, Tanya Hettler, stressed the importance of school transparency in curriculum and that parents have a right to know what their child is learning.



Dr. Hettler recommended changing the current process of having parents fill out a FOIA request, requiring instead that the schools provide that information on their website. Center for Analysis of Delaware's Economy & Government spending director, Charlie Copeland, exposed and educated the staffers about Delaware's "hidden income tax" on small business owners—Delaware's gross receipts tax. With 54 different tax rates affecting growing small and family-owned Delaware businesses, Copeland demonstrated how this tax could cause a blended tax rate of more than 200 percent on business owners' personal income. He recommended the tax be eliminated so those small businesses could thrive, especially in the aftermath of one of the most invasive and long-lasting lockdowns in the nation.

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## FLORIDA

### FOUNDATION FOR GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY • [thefga.org](https://thefga.org)

Just this month the South Carolina General Assembly put in place critical election reforms that will greatly increase transparency and trust in the democratic process. **Foundation for Government Accountability** worked closely with South Carolina lawmakers and Governor Henry McMaster to unanimously pass one of, if not the, strongest election bill in the nation, making Election Day about the will of the voter—not special interests and politicians. The omnibus elections reform package S. 108, included 17 out of FGA's 35 election reforms. For years FGA has been laying the groundwork for this robust package of reforms by sharing information, conducting polls, writing bill analyses, and providing talking points for legislative leadership. It's exciting to see the implementation of commonsense election reforms that will increase transparency and accountability in South Carolina's democratic process.



### THE JAMES MADISON INSTITUTE • [jamesmadison.org](https://jamesmadison.org)

Florida has once again illustrated that policymaking and governing from conservative principles are possible. The Florida Legislature responded to growing parental concerns about the dangers of promoting Cultural Marxism in the classroom. It also addressed the need for greater instruction in practical money management skills for students. **The James Madison Institute** has been advocating for these reforms through research and key messaging. Florida continues to be a national leader in empowering parents to play a greater role in their children's education, and this session saw meaningful gains made that will hopefully continue for years to come.



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## GEORGIA

### GEORGIA CENTER FOR OPPORTUNITY • [georgiaopportunity.org](https://georgiaopportunity.org)

The Georgia Legislature failed to pass legislation that would have granted education choice to every student in the state. Despite this setback, **Georgia Center for Opportunity** was able to engage hundreds of thousands of voters through video and phone calls resulting in at least 4,000 parents leaving voice messages with representatives still on the fence on the issue. While the results ultimately fell short, support for school choice continues to grow in the state, with 30 percent more representatives supporting the issue than just four years ago. As a result, special needs scholarships, which give options to many kids in the state with specialized learning needs, have expanded. The Center made huge strides in May by joining with fellow Alliance for Opportunity members in Washington, DC, to meet with Reps. Rick Allen (GA) and Burgess Owens (UT) to discuss federal changes to help reform the safety net system and encourage workforce participation. Both meetings were productive and will likely open the door for both state and federal changes needed to build a better safety net system that helps those in need find and keep work.





#### GEORGIA PUBLIC POLICY FOUNDATION • [georgiapolicy.org](https://georgiapolicy.org)

This quarter, **Georgia Public Policy Foundation** has been on the move around the state, hosting well-attended policy luncheons in Savannah, Atlanta, and Fayetteville. Between the three events, more than 175 people joined Georgia Policy for discussion on its latest report showing the dizzying cost of compliance with government regulation in new-build housing construction. According to the data, almost 27 percent of the price of a new single-family home in Georgia comes from some sort of regulation, tax, fee, or other government-imposed cost. The big mover at the 2022 Legislature was a flat-tax bill that drops the state income-tax rate from 5.75 to 4.99 percent by 2029. Georgia Policy, in conjunction with partners at the Beacon Hill Institute, published multiple reports analyzing the economic and fiscal effects of the legislation. After months of dedicated publishing and outreach, the historic flat tax was passed in early April, with Georgia Policy President and CEO Kyle Wingfield present at the bill signing.

Georgia Policy has also added three new staff members in the last month in research and development departments.

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## HAWAII

#### GRASSROOT INSTITUTE OF HAWAII • [grassrootinstitute.org](https://grassrootinstitute.org)

The **Grassroot Institute of Hawaii's** most important achievement during the state's 2022 legislative session was approval of a bill that seeks to reform the state's emergency powers, which the current governor has exercised without legislative constraint since March 2020 when he imposed severe lockdown restrictions in response to the spread of COVID-19. From the outset, the Institute urged that the state's emergency powers law be reformed because it is vague and gives too much power to the executive. In January 2021, the Institute published a report, "Lockdowns Versus Liberty," which contains many of the reforms in the bill approved in 2022. Current state law allows the governor to enact states of emergency for 60 days, but Governor David Ige has extended the crisis more than 25 times over the past two years. The orders severely restricted personal freedoms and also suspended Hawaii's transparency laws, making it possible for government agencies to ignore public-records requests and hold meetings privately. The governor's actions were challenged in court without success. The Institute determined the best path was to go through the Legislature and proceeded to work with legislators in both houses to craft SB 3089, which would enable the Legislature to terminate a state of emergency by a two-thirds vote. It would also require that any executive powers exercised be consistent with the state constitution, any suspension of laws be justified, and the state's transparency laws be protected. SB 3089 passed both chambers and awaits a decision by the governor.

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## ILLINOIS

#### ILLINOIS POLICY INSTITUTE • [illinoispolicy.org](https://illinoispolicy.org)

This fall, for the first time in two decades, many voters across the state of Illinois will have a choice at the ballot box. Last year, the **Illinois Policy Institute** published key research identifying the root of voter suppression in the Prairie State: uncontested races. Roughly half of all Illinois House races over the past 10 years had only one candidate on the ballot. The Institute found that voter participation was on average 7 percentage points lower in uncontested House districts. This has translated to 1.7 million "missing votes" in Illinois since 2012, an average of 334,000 votes each election cycle. The Institute's advocacy partner, Illinois Policy, launched an effort to educate and train people interested in running for state office in districts where incumbents faced no opponent in 2020. As of April, their team





has filed petition signatures to put 19 Republican House candidates, one Republican Senate candidate, and eight pro-reform Democratic House candidates on the ballot. They're now working to file signatures for two independent candidates and fill remaining vacancies through a process known as "slating." Their goal is to ensure that 100 percent of Illinois House races and as many Senate races as possible are contested. The Institute's research estimates that these candidates will boost statewide voter turnout by at least 220,000 new votes at the top of the ticket in November, leading to a more vibrant expression of choice and democracy.

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## IOWA

### IOWANS FOR TAX RELIEF FOUNDATION • [itrfoundation.org](https://itrfoundation.org)

**Iowans for Tax Relief Foundation** helped lead a historic victory for taxpayers during the 2022 legislative session. Governor Kim Reynolds and the Iowa Legislature passed the first, and largest, package of tax cuts enacted by a state this year. ITR Foundation was on the frontlines of this policy battle, advocating for pro-growth tax reform through numerous op-eds, grassroots outreach, and meetings with key lawmakers and stakeholders. Governor Reynolds herself highlighted many pieces of the Foundation's work on her social media accounts. Iowans can now look forward to personal income taxes being reduced from a top, progressive rate of 8.53 percent to a low, flat rate of 3.9 percent. Corporate income taxes rates are similarly being reduced from a top, progressive rate of 9.8 percent to a flat rate of 5.5 percent. Additionally, the tax on retirement income was eliminated in this year's reforms. This success comes on the heels of previous reductions to personal and corporate income tax rates, as well as the elimination of the inheritance tax.



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## KANSAS

### KANSAS POLICY INSTITUTE • [kansaspolicy.org](https://kansaspolicy.org)

**Kansas Policy Institute** had a busy legislative session and secured more than 10 victories in education, donor privacy, occupational licensing, taxes, free speech, and asset forfeiture. This year, Kansas Policy's litigation arm, the Kansas Justice Institute, was able to ratify its free speech victory with a signature from Democrat governor, Laura Kelly. KJI took action in 2019 when dairy goat farmers, Mark and Coraleen Bunner, sued to overturn the state's prohibition of advertising raw milk off the farm's premises—and won. Before the suit and victory, it was perfectly legal to sell raw milk to consumers on the farm; however, it was a crime to let people know you had raw milk for sale anywhere except on the farm. After the 2019 lawsuit, special interest groups attempted to ban raw milk and even talked about placing a Centers for Disease Control warning level on the product. Even though a court had declared the advertising ban unconstitutional, the battle to get the language out of the statute books took three legislative sessions, thanks to COVID-related stoppages. KPI worked with legislators to get a bill passed 119–3 in the House, and it went on to pass the Senate by a 27–12 vote before being approved by Governor Kelly. KPI was able to get simple and straightforward labeling and advertising standards on raw milk products moving forward. Kansas Justice Institute's litigation director, Sam MacRoberts, also brought a suit to exempt eyebrow threaders from more than 1,000 hours of required training. Until 2022, it was a crime in Kansas to remove a single eyebrow hair with a piece of cotton thread unless the threader held a government-issued license; it was also a crime to hire an unlicensed threader. Though eyebrow threading is a non-invasive, simple procedure, Kansas law required eyebrow threaders to obtain a license at an expensive cosmetology school by completing 1,000 hours of instruction—even though threading comprised less than 1 percent of schooling, if it was taught at all. KPI advocated for legislation to exempt threaders and hopes to dismiss *Jigisha Modi v. Kansas Board of Cosmetology* once the Board of Cosmetology implements revised guidelines.



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## KENTUCKY



### BLUEGRASS INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC POLICY SOLUTIONS • [bipps.org](https://bipps.org)

During this year's Kentucky General Assembly session, **Bluegrass Institute for Public Policy Solutions** worked with legislative leaders to use budget-surplus revenues and federal pandemic relief dollars to bolster the state's rainy-day fund to a historically strong \$1.75 billion. The commonwealth moved from having fewer than four days' worth of expenses to a 40-day cushion, resulting in the kind of economic stability that makes Kentucky more competitive and better positioned to deal with future economic downturns and natural disasters. BIPPS is working with The Pew Charitable Trusts to create a framework to ensure the rainy-day fund remains strong into the future. The Legislature also followed BIPPS's suggestion to improve its economic competitiveness by beginning to move away from taxing income and investments to a consumption-based taxation approach. Legislation passed will ultimately eliminate the individual income tax, beginning with a reduction from 5 to 4.5 percent on Jan. 1, 2023; revenue increases trigger future cuts. BIPPS again played winning defense, stopping for the fifth consecutive year attempts by well-funded big business and special interest groups to raise the state's gas tax by a dime per gallon, which would have added a half-billion dollars to Kentuckians' overall tax burden. BIPPS helped inform and coach an army of parents when bureaucrats shut out their calls for better policies and more choices in the wake of COVID-related school shutdowns. Several key educational reforms passed as a result, most significantly, a funding mechanism for public charter schools and two charter school pilot projects.



### PEGASUS INSTITUTE • [pegasuskentucky.org](https://pegasuskentucky.org)

The 2022 Kentucky General Assembly was the first normal session since the 2020 COVID lockdowns. While the Legislature passed many important bills and **Pegasus Institute** priorities, perhaps none will have a longer lasting impact than SB 1, a comprehensive education reform bill that, in part, allows for the Jefferson County superintendent to actually govern the district without being micromanaged by the school board. This finally puts Louisville's public schools in line with successful large-city districts across the country. No longer will the politics of the school board negatively impact the kids of Jefferson County Public Schools.

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## LOUISIANA



### PELICAN INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC POLICY • [pelicanpolicy.org](https://pelicanpolicy.org)

At the start of the 2022 legislative session, the **Pelican Institute** team initiated an ambitious agenda to pass fundamental occupational licensure reform (right to earn a living act, universal licensure recognition, and fair chance) and targeted Education Savings Accounts for military families, foster families, special needs children, children who have been bullied, and children who are not reading on grade level. The Pelican Institute team has been hard at work to move these bills and has built broad coalitions of support from across the political aisle and has even picked up 21 politically diverse co-authors on the Right to Earn a Living Act.

## MAINE

MAINE POLICY INSTITUTE • [mainepolicy.org](https://mainepolicy.org)

**Maine Policy's** biggest legislative successes this year include stopping a handful of harmful policies and ensuring a majority of the budget surplus wasn't spent on wasteful programs or new and permanent spending. As a result of inflation and the billions of dollars sent to the states from the federal government during the pandemic, Maine ended up with a \$1.2 billion surplus despite a projected \$800 million shortfall in the middle of the pandemic. About \$740 million of the \$1.2 billion was returned to taxpayers in the form of \$850 checks, which Mainers will begin receiving in June. Maine Policy pushed for tax reform instead, but the majority party wouldn't budge on the issue and latched onto the idea of sending checks to everyone during an election year. In the end, about 60 percent of the surplus was returned to 859,000 taxpayers. Maine Policy also led the charge in stopping measures that called for sin tax increases, a ban on flavored tobacco products, allowing public employees to strike, and a doubling of the annual motor vehicle inspection fee. These wins will stop regressive tax and fee policies from taking effect in Maine and hurting those who are already feeling the pinch of 8.3-percent inflation.



## MARYLAND

MARYLAND PUBLIC POLICY INSTITUTE • [Mdpolicy.org](https://mdpolicy.org)

In recent months, the **Maryland Public Policy Institute** has taken direct aim at Maryland's failing Affordable Care Act insurance exchange, as well as Baltimore City's excruciating property taxes. In May, the Institute published a ground-breaking report examining the mounting blunders of the state's insurance exchange, which underscores that the ACA is not working for Marylanders. The Institute also announced the formation of a new, bi-partisan coalition called Renew Baltimore, which the organization is a major part of. The coalition's goal is to revive the city's struggling economy and unburden tens of thousands of low-income homeowners by lowering property taxes through a ballot referendum. Baltimore's property tax rate is more than double that of any other Maryland County and Washington D.C., which has led to an unending flow of economic activity and residents away from the city.



## MASSACHUSETTS

PIONEER INSTITUTE • [pioneerinstitute.org](https://pioneerinstitute.org)

**Pioneer Institute** published research, paired with a video, calling for state action to address ongoing problems within the Boston public schools, from high turnover among management to poor academic performance, with 30 percent of students ranked in the bottom 10 percent statewide. The report received extensive media coverage and ignited a conversation that has led to a third state review of the district and forced the newly elected mayor to move it to the top of her agenda and offer a plan for reform. Pioneer also launched a new public law center, Pioneer Legal, that defends and promotes educational options, accountable government, and economic opportunity, under the leadership of retired US Bankruptcy Court Judge Frank J. Bailey. Pioneer also released a new book on a proposed amendment to the state constitution that will nearly double the income tax on higher earners: *Back to Taxachusetts?: How the Proposed Tax Amendment Would Upend One of the Nation's Best Economies*. The book is a distillation of two dozen academic studies Pioneer has published over the past 18 months educating the public about the impact of this ballot measure, and was the topic of an event held on May 25 featuring Harvard economist Ed Glaeser.







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## MICHIGAN

**MACKINAC CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY • [mackinac.org](https://mackinac.org)**

After Michigan lawmakers increased the personal income tax in 2007, the public was promised that the tax hike would be temporary. Yet there was nothing temporary about the hike to a 4.25-percent personal income tax. The **Mackinac Center for Public Policy** criticized the tax hikes when they happened and has continued to call for lawmakers to bring rates down. Not only is lowering the personal income tax the fiscally responsible move, it's also the right thing to do. This year, the Center ensured that the public and lawmakers were made aware of the benefits of tax cuts and just how much the state budget had grown. State lawmakers took action and passed a bill that would lower the tax rate to 3.9 percent. The bill, which the Center testified on, passed through the Legislature and headed toward Governor Gretchen Whitmer's desk. Unfortunately, the governor vetoed the bill in favor of her other priorities. That's one of the downfalls of divided government, but there may be hope. News that the state will collect even more in tax revenue than the increases that were already expected is prompting Michigan lawmakers to vote once again to cut taxes. This includes a bill that would reduce the income tax rate to 4 percent. The governor will likely veto this cut as well, but the Center will keep fighting for lower taxes for all Michiganders. A rate reduction to the personal income tax is a good policy that will promote job growth, encourage small business, and improve state competitiveness.

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## MINNESOTA

**CENTER OF THE AMERICAN EXPERIMENT • [americanexperiment.org](https://americanexperiment.org)**

Many of the **Center of the American Experiment's** energy proposals received committee hearings in the Senate, and policy fellow Isaac Orr spent several days testifying in front of the Energy and Utilities Finance and Policy Committee. Progress was made in allowing nuclear power to be included in the mix of energy sources, with new allies appearing from the Left (Minnesota currently has a ban on new nuclear power development). It's getting harder and harder for environmentalists to argue against the cleanest form of energy on the market. Governor Walz's idea to create gas station inflation by adopting California's fuel standards became so toxic that the Minnesota House changed a planned bill hearing to "informational" status to avoid a recorded vote. American Experiment quickly stood up a campaign against "Gas Station Inflation" and emails poured into the governor's and legislators' offices. Preventing the implementation of the California fuel standard was a policy win for the 2022 session.

**FREEDOM FOUNDATION OF MINNESOTA • [freedomfoundationofminnesota.org](https://freedomfoundationofminnesota.org)**

The **Freedom Foundation of Minnesota** has been working since the November 2020 election to realize greater accountability, transparency, and confidence in the state's elections. Legislators are listening and they included several of the Foundation's recommendations in the State Government Finance and Policy and Elections Committee as passed by the Senate. Included in the Senate omnibus bill was legislation that would require voters to show a valid Minnesota ID in order to cast an in-person vote starting with the midterm elections in November 2022. Another important provision would end the use of private funding for future elections in the state. This was adopted after the Freedom Foundation provided research to the Legislature indicating that Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg donated nearly \$7.3 million to a nonprofit organization that in turn made contributions to 28 local election offices in Minnesota. Further investigation revealed that 93 percent of those funds were distributed in the Twin Cities seven-county metro area while the rest of the state's 80 counties received only 7 percent. "Elections must always be decided by voters not by lib



eral, special interest groups or individuals who are seeking to influence election results in a state. That is why Minnesota should prohibit any private philanthropy to fund legitimate election activities,” said Annette Meeks, CEO of the Freedom Foundation of Minnesota.

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## MISSISSIPPI

### EMPOWER MISSISSIPPI • [empowerms.org](https://empowerms.org)

After more than two years of work, negotiations, and debate, Mississippi lawmakers adopted and the governor signed the Tax Freedom Act of 2022. The largest tax cut in state history will create the largest tax exemption in the country, make Mississippi one of 10 states to operate with a simple and fair flat tax, and lower its tax rate to 4 percent—the fifth lowest rate in the nation. The average family will save more than \$800 per year in taxes when the legislation is fully implemented. During this effort, **Empower Mississippi** built the case for substantive tax reform in Mississippi. Empower issued the first dynamic economic modeling of income tax elimination plans, testified at joint legislative hearings, and engaged the media with more than 1,100 mentions, while reaching the general public with at least 4.3 million views of website and social media content. Empower also designed alternate policy suggestions and activated citizens to send more than 9,200 emails in support of tax reform to lawmakers.

### MISSISSIPPI CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY • [mispolicy.org](https://mispolicy.org)

The Mississippi Tax Freedom Act of 2022 was a huge win for all Mississippians, giving them the largest tax cut in Mississippi history. As a result, Mississippi now has a flat-rate income tax and one of the lowest rates in America. **Mississippi Center for Public Policy** worked with Americans for Tax Reform and others to create a local coalition for change, including publishing a policy paper at the start of the legislative session and sharing research findings with the Legislature. When progress stalled and there was deadlock, MCPP helped facilitate discussions to achieve consensus and to mobilize support for the income tax, built an online “tax calculator” tool, and produced a hard-hitting video ridiculing opposition to tax reform. MCPP also crafted a bill combating Critical Race Theory that received overwhelming support. SB2113 makes it illegal to compel students to affirm that any “sex, race, ethnicity, religion or national origin is inherently superior or inferior”. The organization has also added 85,000 subscribers to its weekly newsletter.

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## MISSOURI

### SHOW-ME INSTITUTE • [showmeinstitute.org](https://showmeinstitute.org)

The **Show-Me Institute** enjoyed real and steady progress during the 2022 legislative session, with the highlights being a series of victories in education reform. The Legislature finally “fixed the glitch” regarding charter school funding. Until now, state funding for charter schools has essentially been capped—funding stops increasing after too many students in an area pick a charter school. The state will now be required to make up the difference. There were also needed improvements made to the Missouri Course Access Program (MO-CAP), the state’s virtual learning platform. Students who wish to be full-time virtual are no longer required to get permission from their local superintendent to enroll in MOCAP. This requirement had been a roadblock to students wanting to access the virtual program. There was also a win for accountability in Missouri schools. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) is now required to rank each district and school based on the state accountability system scores, and the lowest 5 percent of schools and districts must notify parents of that status and put it clearly on their website. Finally, the state has



MISSISSIPPI CENTER FOR  
PUBLIC POLICY



allocated \$50 million in stimulus funds to Close the Gap scholarships for low-income students who are behind academically. Students can directly receive up to \$1,500 to purchase tutoring, summer programs, or other academic services. The school choice movement has real momentum in Missouri, and the Show-Me Institute continues the push to put parents in the driver's seat for their children's education.

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## MONTANA



**FRONTIER INSTITUTE** • [frontierinstitute.org](https://frontierinstitute.org)

In March 2022, **Frontier Institute** published the Montana Zoning Atlas report, which included an interactive resource to demonstrate how strict local zoning regulations worsen Montana's housing shortage by making it difficult to build affordable homes. The Atlas used an innovative parcel-level GIS analysis to examine the use of single-family zoning and minimum lot areas within the city limits of Bozeman, Missoula, Kalispell, Whitefish, Billings, and Helena. The report has since made waves across Montana, provoking responses and calls to action from major newspaper editorial boards, legislators, local officials, and other leaders from all sides of the political spectrum. The report has already been featured in at least five original news stories by Montana media, received support from at least two editorial boards of major state newspapers, and prompted at least seven additional op-eds responding to the report. Frontier Institute is driving a growing consensus that strict local zoning regulations are making Montana's housing crisis worse, and must be addressed. Frontier's work to create uniform and transparent restrictions on the government use of facial recognition is making progress. In 2021, Frontier suggested lawmakers create study bill HJ 48; now legislators are learning that there is a severe lack of legislative oversight when it comes to how government can use facial recognition technology. The committee has been following Frontier's recommendations, and the partnership will continue as they draft legislation. The Free Market Healthcare Hub report helps Montanans locate Direct Patient Care clinics, as well as provides resources they can use to shop for healthcare from providers that embrace price transparency and free-market principles. The report received statewide attention after the governor cited it when touting expanded healthcare access in Montana.

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## NEBRASKA



**PLATTE INSTITUTE** • [platteinstitute.org](https://platteinstitute.org)

Nebraska ranks 35th on the Tax Foundation's State Business Tax Climate Index, and as the gap has widened between the Cornhusker State and its peers—which often have or are adopting more welcoming tax climates—lawmakers are recognizing the need to get on a more competitive footing. A series of **Platte Institute** polls conducted during the 2021–2022 legislative session set the stage for what Nebraskans think would make the state a better place for taxpayers and economic growth. Sixty-two percent of voters said state and local taxes are among the top three issues facing Nebraska. On income taxes, 72 percent favored eliminating state taxes on the first \$50,000 individuals earned. On property taxes, 77 percent of voters supported adopting a Truth in Taxation law to provide accountability for proposed local tax increases. And on Nebraska's antiquated county inheritance tax, 78 percent of voters said they thought it was time to end that tax altogether. The Platte Institute team used these insights to frame the debate leading up to one of the biggest tax-cutting sessions in state history. Lawmakers passed reductions to income taxes, the inheritance tax, adopted a Truth in Taxation law, and increased local property tax relief. But many of these improvements were only piecemeal efforts, and further reforms are needed to keep Nebraska on pace with its neighbors and competitors, like Iowa. By amplifying the voices of voters and taxpayers, the Platte Institute can continue to help lawmakers craft a winning strategy for modernizing the tax system.



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## NEVADA

**NEVADA POLICY RESEARCH INSTITUTE** • [npri.org](https://npri.org)

Despite a constitutional prohibition against working in two branches of government at the same time, the Nevada Legislature has been run by active prosecutors for years. In addition to being unconstitutional, this has stifled all criminal justice reform efforts, as the prosecutors/legislators put the needs of their law enforcement colleagues over the public interest. Thanks to **Nevada Policy Research Institute's** ongoing lawsuit, however, there are no longer any prosecutors simultaneously serving in the Nevada Legislature for the first time in nearly a decade. Nevada state Sens. Melanie Scheible and Nicole Cannizzaro both just resigned from their jobs as county prosecutors, after it became clear that Nevada Policy's lawsuit was all but certain to prevail. This will make the Legislature much more responsive to the public going forward, particularly on issues related to criminal justice reform.



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## NEW JERSEY

**GARDEN STATE INITIATIVE** • [gardenstateinitiative.org](https://gardenstateinitiative.org)

In 2021 the New Jersey State Veterans Chamber of Commerce contacted the **Garden State Initiative** regarding the state's failure to meet its commitments to businesses owned by disabled veterans. That contact led to collaboration on a research report, "A Promise Not Kept: NJ's Failure to Support Veteran Owned Businesses," issued in May 2022, which uncovered that New Jersey is failing to adhere to a 2015 state law that requires a percentage of state procurement contracts to be set aside for veteran-owned businesses. Of the 72 state agencies that have procurement power, few have awarded contracts to disabled-veteran-owned businesses, only two are enforcing the law, and none are reporting their numbers as legally required. The research report, which included suggestions for improvements in state law and policy changes, garnered significant media coverage. Several legislators cited the report in calling for action from the governor's office as well as legislative oversight hearings.



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## NEW YORK

**EMPIRE CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY** • [empirecenter.org](https://empirecenter.org)

When New Yorkers passed a constitutional amendment for an Independent Redistricting Commission in 2014, they thought that's what they'd be getting. But even before it started, the Commission faced an uphill battle. After the Legislature refused to release funds so the now constitutionally required Commission could begin its work, the **Empire Center for Public Policy's** partners at the Government Justice Center were forced to file a lawsuit to compel action. When it became clear the Commission had been corrupted by political interests, the Empire Center stepped in and submitted its own maps—vetted by a team of independent experts to help guarantee their political ambivalence—to show that fair maps could be drawn. The Empire Center then led an extensive media and grassroots campaign to raise popular awareness around the importance of fair redistricting. Overwhelmingly, independent experts and media outlets (including FiveThirtyEight) agreed that Empire's electoral maps were better than those the Legislature proposed. The Legislature pushed on and enacted its own maps anyway, only to be embarrassingly overruled by the state's court of appeals. New, fair maps were ultimately created by a court-appointed special master. In the end, the Empire Center's work, supported by coalition partners, led to a redistricting process that produced fair, representative, commonsense maps that are good for New Yorkers, not for their elected officials' political ambitions.





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## NORTH CAROLINA

**JOHN LOCKE FOUNDATION • [johnlocke.org](http://johnlocke.org)**

**John Locke Foundation** has a full bench of policy priorities that are aimed at expanding freedom and prosperity for North Carolinians. During this short session, JLF intends to champion a comprehensive parents' bill of rights, dedicated to promoting transparency, accountability, and choice for families; introduce a right-to-work amendment to the North Carolina Constitution, which would enshrine the state's 75-year-old pro-worker laws, shielding workers from overreaching unions; call for full practice authority for qualified advanced practice nurses; and ensure long overdue certificate-of-need reform. North Carolina is a fast-growing state, having just gained another congressional seat due to extensive migration. Locke's extensive policy portfolio is forward thinking and innovative, with a mind toward making this the Roaring 2020s for the state.

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## OHIO



**THE BUCKEYE INSTITUTE • [buckeyeinstitute.org](http://buckeyeinstitute.org)**

The long-awaited Ohio Afterschool Child Enrichment (Ohio ACE) program has finally launched. **The Buckeye Institute** tirelessly promoted Ohio ACE and similar policy initiatives to help families better afford K-12 learning resources and improve their children's education. Families have faced significant disruptions to schooling over the past two years, and Ohio's first Education Savings Account (ESA) program arrived just in time to help families pay for a variety of necessary educational services. Beginning April 11, eligible families were able to apply at [ACEOhio.org](http://ACEOhio.org) for a \$500 account to cover tutoring, curricula, day camp fees, language and music classes, and field trips. The accounts will be distributed on a first-come, first-serve basis to families earning up to 300 percent of the federal poverty guidelines, until the allocated funding is exhausted. During the pandemic, The Buckeye Institute inspired Ohio ACE with its persuasive calls for federally funded ESAs. Ohio's new program builds on Buckeye's Policy Solutions for the Pandemic series and its earlier recommendations detailed in "Education Savings Accounts: Expanding Education Options for Ohio." As a result of Buckeye's strategic work, eligible families may now access \$125 million in federal COVID-relief funds to personalize their children's education. Ohio ACE should become only the beginning—not the end—of ESAs and other such programs in Ohio. Policymakers ought to quickly expand this vital initiative and make it permanent so that all families can afford the educational resources needed to help their children succeed.

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## OKLAHOMA



**OKLAHOMA COUNCIL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS • [ocpathink.org](http://ocpathink.org)**

**Oklahoma Council of Public Affairs'** greatest 2022 legislative win was SB 615, which prohibits public schools from adopting policies that allow the opposite sex into private spaces such as bathrooms and locker rooms. After a concerning policy in the Stillwater school district that allowed a boy to use the girls' bathrooms if a boy claimed to identify as a girl, and vice versa, OCPA took action. The first action item was to create a coalition of Stillwater business owners to encourage their representative to file an amendment using specific language for the bill. Next, several OCPA policy fellows spoke directly to the Stillwater School Board about the harmful implications of their existing policy. From there, the team

activated concerned constituents across the state to encourage their representatives and the governor to support the legislation. Within weeks of bringing attention and awareness to the issue, a bill that had no chance of being considered by the Legislature was passed by both chambers and signed into law by Governor Kevin Stitt. Along with SB 615, OCPA had two other notable policy wins this session, including getting HB 3316 signed into law and stopping HB 2486 from passing through the Senate. HB 3316 automates the process of expunging someone's criminal record, effectively getting them back to work, as well as lowering recidivism. HB 2486 attempted to roll back previous pension reform that switched government employees from a defined-benefit plan to a defined-contribution plan, which would effectively line legislators' pockets while putting taxpayers at risk.

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## OREGON

**CASCADE POLICY INSTITUTE** • [cascadepolicy.org](https://cascadepolicy.org)

**Cascade Policy Institute** published a report exposing Portland Public Schools' negligence with bond money. Entitled "The \$60 Million Question: What Is the Center for Black Student Excellence?" and authored by Eric Fruits and Mia Tiwana, the detailed report focuses on a \$1.2 billion school bond measure put on the ballot by Portland Public Schools (PPS) in November 2020. Shortly before the school board voted to send the measure to the ballot, they slipped in \$60 million for a "Center for Black Student Excellence." Over the course of a year, Cascade dug into the details of the "Center" to discover that no one—not the school board or staff, not the voters, and not the taxpayers—has any idea what the Center will be, what will be built, what it will do, how it will be run, or how to measure the success or failure of the concept. PPS appears to have circumvented critical due diligence processes required under state law when seeking voter approval for a bond measure. Based on Cascade's research, the Center does not seem to constitute a capital improvement, meaning PPS may be violating state law regarding the use of funds from capital improvement bonds. Cascade has urged PPS to escrow the \$60 million in bond funds earmarked for the Center until a due diligence process is conducted to define the Center and the capital improvements, if any, associated with it. More fundamentally, the board should revisit whether a Center for Black Student Excellence is the best use of funds in a district which suffers from across-the-board deficiencies in academic achievement.



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## PENNSYLVANIA

**COMMONWEALTH FOUNDATION** • [commonwealthfoundation.org](https://commonwealthfoundation.org)

The Lifeline Scholarship Program—HB 2169—passed the Pennsylvania House of Representatives on April 27, 2022. This is the first time a bill providing education scholarships accounts to students has ever passed the lower chamber in Harrisburg. The bill passed with bipartisan support by a vote of 104–98. This historic win is a huge step toward helping Pennsylvania students get out of failing schools and proves that both parties can work together on education choice solutions. HB 2169 has Republican and Democratic co-sponsors, and its passage shows Pennsylvanians are done with the educational status quo. Parents are ready for more choices for their children. What makes this victory even more remarkable is that the Lifeline Scholarship bill passed against the wishes of one of the most—if not the most—anti-educational-choice governors in the country. The passage of HB 2169 sends a strong signal that educational choice will remain a key issue even after Governor Tom Wolf leaves the governor's mansion. **The Commonwealth Foundation** will continue these efforts to ensure that every child has the opportunity to get an excellent education.





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## SOUTH CAROLINA

**PALMETTO PROMISE INSTITUTE** • [palmettopromise.org](https://palmettopromise.org)

A few weeks before the 2021–22 session began, **Palmetto Promise Institute** published its Palmetto Playbook, a comprehensive freedom policy roadmap for South Carolina, making recommendations on issues like education, healthcare, energy, quality of life, and taxation and spending. The Institute “flooded the zone” with policies that would expand freedom and brush back government interference. Although it’s difficult to predict exact bill language, many pieces included in the Playbook passed both chambers and are in Conference Committees now. The most exciting successes are the passage of an Education Scholarship Account (ESA) bill and a tax rate cut. ESAs will now be available for some of South Carolina’s most vulnerable students, allowing students who had no options beyond their zip code–assigned public schools the choice of public or private schools. With the tax cut, South Carolina is finally chipping away at the highest marginal personal rate in the Southeast. Both efforts have been at least a decade in the making.



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## TENNESSEE

**BEACON CENTER OF TENNESSEE** • [beacontn.org](https://beacontn.org)

In one of the Tennessee General Assembly’s final actions of the year, legislators passed the Tennessee Investment in Student Achievement Act (TISA). The proposal completely overhauls the state’s education funding formula for the first time in decades. TISA replaces the nation’s most convoluted funding formula with a student-based approach. In short, Tennessee will begin to fund students, not systems. It will bring increased transparency for taxpayers and parents. By simplifying the formula, parents can better understand how much is spent on their child and what that money is spent on. **Beacon Center** has in past years attempted to make education spending understandable, pulling all the available data together from dozens of Excel spreadsheets. It takes a think tank with full-time employees months to do this. Now it will be at everyone’s fingertips. This transparency alone will lead to greater accountability. By tying results to dollars spent, effective use of those dollars will be easier to determine. TISA also adds outcomes-based funding to the mix, rewarding districts that boost student achievement, incentivizing them to invest tax dollars in the right way. It will give school-level leadership greater flexibility. On average, principals across the state currently have control over just 8 percent of their budgets. Local leaders can use the flexibility TISA provides to innovate and structure an education that reflects the needs and opportunities of the students. Every public-school student in Tennessee will benefit from this much-needed reform.

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## TEXAS

**TEXAS PUBLIC POLICY FOUNDATION** • [texaspolicy.com](https://texaspolicy.com)

During the 18-month interim between legislative sessions in Texas, **the Texas Public Policy Foundation** has been laying the groundwork for ensuring that parental empowerment—including the right of parents to choose where and how they educate their children—will be the top legislative priority for the 88<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature. TPPF’s parent empowerment campaign has raised awareness of the need to safeguard the rights of families, parents, and children. Through billboards, radio advertising, and social media outreach, TPPF has built a groundswell of support at the constituent level throughout Texas. The Foundation has generated tens of thousands of leads, including more than 51,000 sign-ups across 10 weeks. In tandem with those efforts, the Foundation’s Parent Empowerment Tour, a series of in-person education and formation events, has come to population centers across Texas.





These efforts have reached not only constituents but also local officials, legislators, and statewide leadership. Multiple state senators and representatives have attended Parent Empowerment Tour events, and some have even requested additional events within their districts. Governor Abbott has made parental empowerment the number-one issue for his re-election efforts, and Lt. Governor Patrick announced his support for the cause at TPPF's Policy Orientation, the annual policy summit in Austin. TPPF is spearheading the effort to help citizens, activists, and public officials coalesce around parental empowerment and education freedom as the defining issues of the 88<sup>th</sup> Legislature.

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## UTAH

**LIBERTAS INSTITUTE** • [libertas.org](https://libertas.org)

Anxiety and depression are an ever-present problem for many Americans, yet our country faces a shortage of mental health practitioners — and for too many people, conventional medications aren't helping. There's overwhelmingly positive research emerging regarding the use of psychotherapeutics for people with mental health illness — especially as it relates to psilocybin, a derivative of so-called “magic mushrooms.” Building on its successful five-year campaign to legalize medical cannabis in Utah, Libertas spearheaded an effort this year to create a task force to study the legalization of psychotherapy drugs for people with mental health struggles. The new law creates a structure for stakeholders to review research, consider the right regulatory model, and recommend to the Legislature a path toward legalization to empower patients with more options. Following their report, Libertas intends to support efforts to legalize these substances for patients in need.



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## VERMONT

**ETHAN ALLEN INSTITUTE** • [ethanallen.org](https://ethanallen.org)

The attempt to upend heating in Vermont's built environment collapsed this legislative session. The Clean Heat Standard (CHS) bill was touted as the most effective way to meet the carbon reduction goals mandated by the state's Global Warming Solutions Act. It planned to replace fossil-based heating fuels with (carbon-intensive) biofuels or wood burning systems and force local fuel dealers to pay for installing cold-climate heat pumps and weatherizing homes across the state. **Ethan Allen Institute's** relentless efforts to educate legislators and the public about the CHS's disruptive economic impact, unethical and unworkable logistics, and exorbitant costs played an important role in defeating the bill. The Institute published commentaries detailing every aspect of the poorly conceived bill in various news media outlets, and interviewed industry experts and stakeholders on its Common Sense Radio show. Legislators relied on the organization's data-backed findings to make the case against the bill to their constituents. Ethan Allen recommended an amendment to prevent the Legislature from delegating its policymaking authority to an unelected three-member commission. It won support from the governor, who ultimately vetoed the bill. The Legislature failed to override his veto by one vote, however, so Vermonters must pay a carbon tax to heat their homes with fossil fuels. The fight is expected to continue next year as the Vermont Climate Council is looking for other states, such as Massachusetts and Maine, to join a CHS interstate coalition.





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## VIRGINIA

### THOMAS JEFFERSON INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC POLICY • [thomasjeffersoninst.org](https://thomasjeffersoninst.org)

It's been more than a year since the **Thomas Jefferson Institute** first suggested key tax reductions to restore Virginia's competitiveness and let Virginians keep more of what they earn. The work paid off via a tax bill representing the first step toward genuine tax reform and reduction. When the Virginia Legislature refused to conform to the federal Tax Cut and Jobs Act, resulting in a state income tax increase, Institute senior fellow Steve Haner jumped into action with proposals to both double the state's standard deduction and index tax rates for inflation. Step one was to highlight the issue during the 2021 gubernatorial campaign, and the Institute produced a 30-second video seen by more than 250,000 Virginians, engaging thousands through social media. The effort gained further momentum when candidate Glenn Youngkin supported doubling the standard deduction, making it part of his tax package once in office. It passed the House, but failed in the Senate—setting the stage for conference committee negotiations behind closed doors. The Institute didn't let up, creating another advertisement reminding Virginians of the \$16.7 billion budget surplus. This ad reached more than 150,000 and engaged thousands more, including those signing an Institute tax petition. The final bill adopts 77.78 percent of the deduction proposed by the Jefferson Institute, providing a permanent tax cut of nearly \$400 to every couple and putting the state back on the road AWAY from higher taxes. The governor gets one more crack at amendments and the Jefferson Institute will be weighing in there, too.



### VIRGINIA INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC POLICY • [virginiainstitute.org](https://virginiainstitute.org)

The 2022 legislative session in Virginia was interesting as both parties seemed to be getting used to the surprising results of the November election. With a slim majority in the Senate for Democrats, a slim majority for Republicans in the House, and a new Republican governor, a lot of legislative priorities changed overnight. Education choice was a significant issue during the election, but efforts at immediate solutions, unfortunately, failed at the last minute in the Republican-held House. Although the election was a significant win for Republicans, the struggle for education was a strong signal that achieving good policy is unlikely to be easier despite the change. There has been the growing appetite for regulatory reform staked out by both parties in the Commonwealth. A sweeping reform policy known as the Regulatory Budget Bill was narrowly defeated in Senate committee after passing the House. HB 244 ultimately failed in this last session due to a political hitch having little to do with the policy itself. The Regulatory Budget Bill is coupled with a bill introducing a universal regulatory sandbox into Virginia's governing structure. This regulatory reform initiative will allow regulators to engage in perpetual pilot programs and eliminate or adjust regulations as newly discovered best practices are revealed. The **Virginia Institute** was, frankly, amazed and excited at the amount of interest and support that this significant departure from the status-quo garnered in only its first year before the General Assembly. The regulatory reform package should make a strong second showing in the 2023 session.

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## WASHINGTON

**FREEDOM FOUNDATION** • [freedomfoundation.com](https://freedomfoundation.com)

During the second quarter of 2022, the **Freedom Foundation** reached an important milestone in helping more than 115,000 public-sector employees resign their union membership and stop having dues deducted from their paychecks. The Freedom Foundation also crossed the \$200 million mark in the amount of money its efforts have cost unions since the *Janus v. AFSCME* ruling in June 2018. Educators are one of the fastest-growing groups of public employees who are leaving their union behind, thanks to the Freedom Foundation's outreach efforts. Since March 2020, when the school shutdowns began across the country, the Freedom Foundation has helped thousands of teachers get out of their union and stop funding what became an obvious bargaining tool to keep schools closed for a political agenda. Freedom Foundation staff have been holding teacher roundtables both in person and online to inform teachers about alternative resources for liability insurance and other benefits the teachers' unions offer. The University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) is a location of particular note, as the Freedom Foundation has carried out a campaign for the past year that includes in-person canvassing, digital advertising, and emails of the previous average of 10 UCLA union opt-outs per year has turned into approximately 100 employee opt-outs every month in the first half of 2022. That's an 11,900 percent increase. The Freedom Foundation also put forward an aggressive national teacher outreach campaign in May and June 2022, before the school year's end.



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## WEST VIRGINIA

**CARDINAL INSTITUTE** • [cardinalinstitute.com](https://cardinalinstitute.com)

The majority of the **Cardinal Institute's** focus for the past year has been on Hope Scholarship implementation. The state has currently approved over 3,000 students for the program's first year. The Institute has learned a lot from this process and will be focusing on an awareness campaign to help families better understand the program and how it could benefit them.



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## WISCONSIN

**BADGER INSTITUTE** • [badgerinstitute.org](https://badgerinstitute.org)

The 2021–22 Wisconsin legislative session included victories on several policy reforms the **Badger Institute** has advanced. One that will benefit Wisconsin residents and businesses for years to come is a tax reform that reduced the state's second-highest individual income tax rate for a savings of \$2 billion. The measure, passed by the Republican-led Legislature and signed into law by Governor Tony Evers (D), was one of the recommendations the Badger Institute and the Tax Foundation presented in a joint report, "Wisconsin Tax Options: A Guide to Fair, Simple, Pro-growth Reform." Earlier this year, Institute president Mike Nichols submitted legislative testimony in favor of a constitutional amendment that would restore legislative oversight to much of the federal spending flowing into the state. The measure passed both the Assembly and the Senate; if it passes again during the next session, Wisconsin voters will have a chance to vote on the amendment. As part of the Tracking the Trillions project, which monitors where federal COVID funds are being spent, the Institute made the case for a state audit of such spending. A legislative audit committee instructed the Legislative Audit Bureau to do just that, and an extensive audit is now underway. The Institute led an effort to kill a \$100-million state venture capital program included in the governor's budget and kept there by Republican legislators.



That changed when the Badger Institute published an analysis of the program's shortcomings and organized a free-market coalition education campaign in opposition. Not long after, the measure was quietly dropped. Other successes included four of Badger's 2020 police data and transparency recommendations and some licensing reforms becoming law.



#### **INSTITUTE FOR REFORMING GOVERNMENT • [reforminggovernment.org](https://reforminggovernment.org)**

On the legislative front, the **Institute for Reforming Government**, aided by its advocacy partner, IRG Action Fund, advanced historic reform packages in the Wisconsin Legislature on K-12 education and welfare. The K-12 reforms included expanding the voucher program, enabling greater course choices, giving parents access to course and classroom materials, enshrining a parents' bill of rights in state statute, creating new charter authorizers, improving reading outcomes, and tackling the largest—and by many measures the worst—school district (Milwaukee Public Schools) by dissolving its failed governance structure and bringing control back to voters and parents. While the reforms met an eventual veto from Governor Tony Evers, the table is set for meaningful action going forward. The Institute also sought historic changes to the failed bureaucratic welfare system in Wisconsin, especially in the area of unemployment insurance (UI) benefits. The reforms would crack down on fraudulent “ghosting” by job applicants, create a sliding scale of UI benefits, better equip the workforce department to handle the next crisis, and repurpose the workforce department to focus on job placement rather than benefit delivery. Governor Evers vetoed these measures as well, but the Legislature is primed to take them up again in January.



#### **WISCONSIN INSTITUTE FOR LAW & LIBERTY • [WILL-LAW.ORG](https://will-law.org)**

This past legislative session, the **Washington Institute for Law & Liberty** policy team partnered with concerned parents who were instrumental in getting critical education reform legislation passed: a first-in-the-nation curriculum transparency bill. While the governor ultimately vetoed this legislation, it served as model legislation for other states like Kansas. WILL also worked with parents and lawmakers to craft legislation that would increase the transparency of school district finances. A similar measure was introduced last session, but failed to advance. In the 2022 session, the bill passed with bipartisan support and was signed into law by Wisconsin's governor. WILL backed the measure because citizens want to know how spending correlates with academic outcomes and they deserve to know which districts are proving efficient and which ones are wasteful with taxpayer dollars. The first step is providing them with accessible, uniform information on public school district spending. Before this bill passed, it was nearly impossible to compare one school district's expenditures to another. The new law will require Wisconsin's Department of Public Instruction to collect information at least annually and upload it to a website that allows the public to access, sort, and download school district information. Now that the bill has been signed, the next step will be the creation of a commission to determine what information will be included in the online dashboard.



## 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.*

1851 Center for Constitutional Law	DonorsTrust	Manhattan Institute for Policy Research
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Competitive Enterprise Institute	Leadership Program of the Rockies	
	Liberty Justice Center	
	Lincoln Network	
	Lone Star Policy Institute	
	Louisiana Family Forum	
	Lucy Burns Institute	



## SPOTLIGHT PARTNERSHIP: Tax Foundation



State Policy Network's Economic Recovery Working Group has partnered closely with the Tax Foundation on multiple fronts to advance our shared goals for economic reform. In response to the American Rescue Plan Act, SPN and the Tax Foundation hit a similar communications theme warning about the risks of too much federal aid. The organizations presented a unified front on policy recommendations on how states should use the ARPA aid, particularly when we made recommendations to influencers like the Republican Governors' Association. Tax Foundation also partnered with SPN and state think tanks to advance historic tax reform, both in Iowa and Mississippi in 2022. Tax Foundation provided expertise to lawmakers and state think tank leaders along with specific recommendations on how to improve their reforms. Tax Foundation has been a long-term partner with Iowans for Tax Relief, helping build their in-house knowledge necessary to advance Iowa's successful reforms over the last 5 years.

SPN has amplified specific Tax Foundation research on state tax reform options through multiple webinars and called on Tax Foundation leaders to present at SPN's Annual Meeting. The Tax Foundation also works with individual state think tanks to advance state-specific reforms.



“STATE POLICY WORK REQUIRES BLENDING LOCAL KNOWLEDGE AND RELATIONSHIPS WITH EXPERTISE, AND STATE POLICY NETWORK AFFILIATES ACROSS THE COUNTRY DO THAT EVERY DAY, WHICH IS WHY THE TAX FOUNDATION SO OFTEN PARTNERS WITH THEM ON STATE TAX REFORM. BY BRINGING THIS EXPERTISE AND THESE LOCAL CONNECTIONS TOGETHER, SPN'S ECONOMIC RECOVERY WORKING GROUP PROVIDES A VALUABLE FORUM FOR ALL THOSE LOOKING TO MAKE STATES MORE ECONOMICALLY COMPETITIVE.”

—Jared Walczak, Vice President of State Projects, Tax Foundation

# 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.

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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](mailto:kilduff@spn.org).

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


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