

AUTHORS

PENN R. PFIFFNER

Penn is a former state representative, having served in the Colorado legislature from 1993 through 2000.

His major bills included the enhanced sentences for dangerous pedophiles, the state's first full-restitution policy and the ground-breaking performance-based pay



for state employees. His legislation created the Privatization Committee, which he chaired, and the findings and suggestions received national attention. He authored the repeal of the capital gains tax, wrote the major deregulation bill of the decade (trucking) and rewrote the state

employee compensation statutes.

He was an early leader and proponent of the Taxpayer's Bill of Rights, serving as a Regional Coordinator in the 1986 effort, and serving on the TABOR Committee in subsequent years.

His business is financial and managerial consulting to architects, engineers and contractors. He also conducts economic analyses such as forecasting and valuing closely-held stock. He opened his practice, Construction Economics, LLC in 1983.

He taught college Economics at night school, at both the graduate and undergraduate level, for thirteen years.

Penn earned his Masters in Finance from the University of Colorado at Denver and his undergraduate degrees in Economics and Political Science from CU-Boulder.

He is the former President of the Denver Association of Business Economists. In the 1980's, he was a member of the national ASTM's (Association of Standards, Testing and Materials) Building Economics Subcommittee, which established standards for life-cycle costing and the use of net present value analysis. He was one of 300 economists polled nationally by the National Association of Business Economists for quarterly forecasts of the economy.

He is currently a Senior Fellow in Fiscal Policy at the Independence Institute. Penn hosted the Institute's weekly talk radio show on KNRC for its five-month run. He served six years as the President of the Colorado Union of Taxpayers and still sits on that organization's Board of Directors. He is currently Chairman of the TABOR Committee, which grew out of the Strike a Better Balance issue committee that defeated Amendment 59 in 2008.

Penn and Karen are the parents of three adult children. He helps out as a merit badge counselor and served as an Assistant Scoutmaster for Lakewood's Troop 748 for nearly two decades and as a member of the Timberline Executive Committee for a half dozen years.

He is a veteran, having served as an officer in the Navy, assigned to U.S.S. Oklahoma City (CG5), based out of Yokosuka, Japan from 1977 to the end of 1979.

BEN DEGROW

Ben DeGrow is a Colorado-based public policy analyst with a focus on education labor issues. Since joining the Independence Institute in 2003, Ben has advanced its research in the areas of collective bargaining, teacher unionism, teacher employment, and school finance. He oversees the Education Policy Center's informational Web site for teachers and coordinates the Institute's outreach to teachers.

Ben has authored seven Issue Papers, 17 Issue Backgrounders, and numerous opinion-editorials for the Independence Institute. His writings have appeared in such Colorado publications as the *Rocky Mountain News*, *Denver Post*, *Pueblo Chieftain*, *Colorado Springs Gazette*, *Greeley Tribune*, *Longmont Times-Call*, *Colorado Statesman*, *Colorado Daily*, *HeadFirst Colorado*, *Grand County Daily Tribune*, *Denver Daily News* and *Vail Mountaineer*. He is a contributing editor for the national monthly *School Reform News*, and serves as the regular free market blogger voice on Education News Colorado.

Ben has made many guest appearances on Colorado radio and television programs to discuss policy issues. He has testified before legislative committees and has given presentations to community groups, legislators, candidates, and national conferences.

Ben was born in Pontiac, and grew up in the greater Detroit metropolitan area. He graduated summa cum laude from Hillsdale College in 1999 with a B.A. in History (Political Science minor) and received an M.A. in History in 2001 from The Pennsylvania State University.

Ben's experiences in the classroom include leading recitations and discussions as a university graduate assistant and a term as a substitute teacher in public elementary and middle schools in Michigan. He also spent nearly a year on the editorial staff of the *Hillsdale Daily News*, where he earned Associated Press honors for local sports writing.

LINDA GORMAN

Linda Gorman is a Senior Fellow and Director of the Health Care Policy Center at the Independence Institute.

A former academic economist, she has written extensively about the problems created by government interference in health care decisions and the promise of consumer directed health care. Her articles on minimum wages, education, and discrimination appear in the *Concise Encyclopedia of Economics*.

A frequent contributor to John Goodman's Health Policy blog, she is also a member of the Galen Institute's Health Policy Consensus Group and was appointed to the Colorado Blue Ribbon Commission for Healthcare Reform where she co-authored one of the Commission's minority reports. She holds a Ph.D. in economics.

MARK HILLMAN

Mark Hillman is a Colorado native, farmer, and a "recovering journalist." He was elected two terms in the Colorado State Senate and served as Majority Leader, as well as Colorado State Treasurer. In 2008, Mark was elected to represent Colorado on the Republican National Committee.

In the Colorado Senate, Mark was a leader in the fight to protecting the rights of private property owners against government takings, halting frivolous lawsuits and demanding personal responsibility, promoting economic opportunity in rural communities, and empowering parents through educational choice and accountability.

His dynamic, common sense leadership earned recognition as National Legislator of the Year, Champion of the Taxpayer, and Guardian of Small Business.

His commentaries have appeared in the *Wall Street Journal*, *Rocky Mountain News*, *Denver Post*, *Townhall.com* and numerous other publications. He frequently comments as a guest or host on The Mike Rosen Show on Denver's 850 KOA.

Mark raises hard red winter wheat on his family's farm near Burlington, where he also grazes cattle and breeds quarter horses and thoroughbreds.

RICHARD SOKOL

Richard Sokol is a local business owner, focusing on real estate and investments. He serves as the Vice Chairman of the South Metro Fire Rescue District Board, is on the Board of the Colorado Republican Business Coalition, and sits on the Advisory Board of the Leadership Program of the Rockies. He is also a Contributing Editor to *Line of Sight*, a monthly policy-oriented e-magazine. Mr. Sokol earned a degree in Economics from Yale University, and holds an MBA from Harvard Business School. He is married with two daughters, and is an avid Denver Nuggets fan.