



INDEPENDENCE
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SUMMER 2018

Independent Inking

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Letter from the President



We all feel underpaid, and somehow our employers all feel we're overpaid. So, who's right? Well, if we keep working for the amount they're paying us, and our boss keeps paying that amount instead of letting us go, then it's pretty safe to say that's the market amount for our circumstance.

We are programmed from childhood to reflexively say teachers are underpaid. The

sun comes up in the east and teachers are underpaid. So how is it that, for the most part, there is a teacher in every classroom? Teacher shortages do happen—we're likely in one now—so districts must pay more to fill those classrooms. But whenever there are enough teachers to fill classrooms, we can say they are being paid enough.

The real question is, given their important role and the value they provide, should they be paid even more? The fact is that we don't know because there's no truly open market for teachers.

Teachers are insultingly compensated like factory workers. They are mostly paid via a union "salary schedule," meaning they get pay raises based on only two factors: the number of college courses they take and certificates they earn, and how many years they've been on the job.

That makes a pretty lousy incentive structure: you keep putting in your years (which explains those few bitter old teachers who obviously hate their jobs and your kids), and you keep taking classes (which is why everyone in education at some point demands to be called "doctor" even though they can't remove your appendix). But what of their comparative individual value?

Imagine what our tech industry would be like if computer programmers were paid that way. As true professionals, programmers are able to negotiate their own contracts, get judged on the quality of their work, and demand more pay under threat of going to a different, better paying employer. They are professionals because they're not paid the same!

Teachers unions call their members "professionals," yet don't respect teachers enough to let them negotiate for their own pay as free agents.

We keep hearing Colorado is 49th in the country for educational spending. That lie is repeated so often it has become legend. Funding for Colorado schools is split between the local school district and the state. So, if you compare only the state funding part to states that have no local match, yep, ours looks low. But when you look at total funding, which can be counted in different ways, the picture doesn't look so dire.

According to the Colorado Department of Education, the average salary for teachers here is \$52,728. But that's only one piece of the compensation.

The school year is about 180 days, or 36 weeks. So, the pay is \$1,465 for every week a teacher is teaching. Vacation time? Well, 52 weeks in a year minus 36 weeks in the classroom equals 16 weeks off—roughly four months! Compare that to someone who only gets two weeks off but still gets paid \$1,465 a week when working, and you get an equivalent annual salary of \$73,233.

And let's count the present-cost value of their retirement benefits. Studies suggest that to buy a private retirement plan that guarantees the same benefit as PERA with current dollars up front like a 401(k), you'd have to pay teachers 25 percent more. Not bad for a system where you can retire at 58.

If we still think teachers deserve more, where should the money come from? Might I humbly suggest we look at the growing administrative costs? Let's think of it this way. According to Colorado Department of Education data from 2015-16, we spend roughly \$12,700 per student. So, in a classroom of 24 kids at \$12,700 each, that comes to \$304,800 to educate that class.

Silly question here but, if the teacher's salary is, say, \$52,000, what's going on with the remaining quarter of a million dollars? With administrative staff in most districts growing twice as fast as the teaching staff, it's not a surprise.

But the protests at the Colorado Capitol wouldn't have the same ring if all the signs read, "Pay us teachers more, cut administrative staff!"

Think Freedom!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jon Cohen".



Family-wide Benefit of Educational Opportunity Needs a Closer Look

By Ross Izard

How does expanded educational opportunity impact families in terms of expectations, habits, and aspirations? This central question too often gets lost in purely data-driven debates about private school choice programs. Given the early evidence, perhaps it is time to change that.

Longstanding public policy debates often begin to take on a strange feeling of *déjà vu*. Nowhere is this truer than in the realm of nonpublic educational choice, where both sides have built veritable fortresses atop their chosen positions. They sling test score and other academic data across the parapets at one another, with one side citing studies finding negative results in private school choice programs and the other highlighting a large body of positive research. The more human side of the conversation too often gets lost in the data melee.

Don't get me wrong. Measurable academic achievement matters. Students deserve to leave school with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in an increasingly competitive world, and nonpublic school choice programs are an important lever for reaching that goal. Yet, as others have pointed out, test scores can only ever tell part of the story.

Even the longer-term outcomes of school choice programs—high school graduation rates, college attendance rates, attainment, etc.—offer an incomplete picture because they focus solely on scholarship recipients themselves. That's not to say these things are not critical. After all, the average high school dropout will cost taxpayers nearly \$300,000 over a lifetime, even *before* one factors in the hundreds of thousands of dollars they will forfeit in wages over the course of a working career.

But there's more to it, isn't there? Educational opportunity does not exclusively impact students in an academic context. It changes expectations and outlooks on life. It affects entire families and ripples across generations.

I remember one particularly striking story about a low-income student in Denver. The student attended a well-respected private high school with the help of financial aid. As part of its innovative work-study program, the school placed her at a prestigious law firm located in one of downtown Denver's gleaming skyscrapers.

After returning from work one day, the student said something powerful to school staff. She said she always thought she would work in a skyscraper downtown. She just thought she would be the lady cleaning it, like her mother.

This story speaks to the power of intergenerational expectations. It also makes sense in the context of the existing literature on parental impacts on children. Most studies identify parental education as “the single strongest correlate of children's success in school, the number of years they attend school, and their success later in life.” Although research does not always agree on the exact mechanisms involved, a substantial body of literature indicates that parental expectations play a significant role in children's success.

One particularly fascinating study relies on the semi-random adoption process to examine parental effects on Korean children adopted by American parents. It finds that children adopted by smaller families with higher education levels “are twice as likely to graduate from

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Running for Josie

By Todd Lubas



Introducing freedomfysm!

Todd raised money for his cause on freedomfy.com! A project of the Independence Institute, freedomfysm brings a crowdfunding platform to the center-right. We are a liberty-centered crowd-sourcing platform that connects freedom fighters who have great ideas on how to spread freedom and limited government with liberty lovers who want to make a difference in a tangible way.

Have a great freedom idea but don't have the money to get it off the ground? Plug into our network of like-minded individuals and freedomfy it!



My brother-in-law Matt made a promise to his daughter, Josie, during one of the many trips to Penn State Hershey Children's Hospital in Pennsylvania, where she was being treated for a rare form of pediatric brain cancer. "When you beat this," Matt told her, "I'm going to run that marathon." That marathon, which would be Matt's first marathon, was a race one of Josie's nurses had recently run and told Josie all about: the Antarctica Marathon.

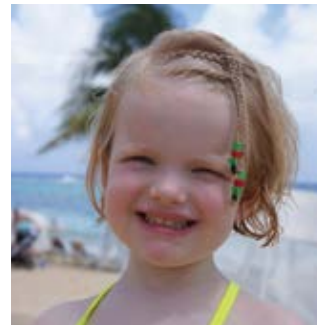
Josie's courageous battle came to an end on August 8th, 2015. That Christmas, the wheels were set in motion to travel to the end of the world in 2018 and run with the penguins for Josie—Matt's daughter, my niece.

Before our journey began, we knew honoring her was more than just running. We wanted to raise money in her memory to help fund research for Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Gliomas (DIPG), the rare form of cancer Josie was diagnosed with at three years old. The disease most commonly affects young children. We raised that money on freedomfysm, the Independence Institute's crowdfunding site. **Using freedomfy.com, we raised over \$14,000 for The Cure Starts Now**, a nonprofit dedicated to DIPG research. The outpouring of support from near and far was humbling,

and I can't thank our generous supporters enough for helping us surpass our \$10,000 goal.

A retired research vessel took us from Argentina to Antarctica, and after two choppy days on the Drake Passage, we arrived on King George Island off the Antarctic Peninsula for race day. It was a crisp 15 degrees that morning, visibility was scarce, and the terrain was a mix of ice, snow, rocks and mud. With high altitude training on my side, and a beautiful angel lifting me up when miles got tough, I was first to cross the finish line. I was overcome with emotion of knowing that she was proud of her uncle and her father (who, in his first marathon, finished second in his age group). It was liberating to intentionally live my life for the little girl who never got to live out hers. Our journey has allowed us to tell many people the story of a cute little girl who loved cooking, the color green, and her twin sister Samantha—a little girl who brought us to the Last Continent to run a marathon. And that story is even sweeter than victory.

Todd Lubas is the Director of Strategic Partnerships at Independence Institute.



Bloomberg is Back

By Staff

The following is based in part on a recent article by Dave Kopel in *America's 1st Freedom*.

Part of the genius of the Bloomberg gun control system is how it creates prohibitions indirectly. Bloomberg's so-called "universal" background check scheme is a prime example. These bills are never just about having background checks on the private sales of firearms. That aspect is the part the public is told about. Yet when you read the Bloomberg laws, you find that checks on private sales are the tip of a very large iceberg of gun prohibition.

First, the bills criminalize a vast amount of innocent activity. Suppose you are a firearms instructor teaching an introductory safety class. Under your supervision, students will handle a variety of unloaded firearms. They will learn how different guns have different safeties, and they will learn the safe way to hand a firearm to another person. But thanks to Bloomberg, these classroom firearm lessons are now illegal in Washington state, unless the class takes place at a shooting range.

It's now also illegal to lend a gun to your friend, so that you can shoot together at a range on your own property—or to lend a firearm for a week to your neighbor who is being stalked.

Under the Bloomberg system, gun loans are generally forbidden, unless the gun owner and the borrower both go to a gun store first. The store must process the loan as if the store were selling the gun out of its inventory.

Then, when your friend wants to return your gun to you, both of you must go to the gun store again. This time, the store will process that transaction as if you were buying the gun from the store's inventory. For both the loan and the return of the gun, you will have to pay whatever fees the store charges, as well as what-

ever fees the government might charge. The gun store will have to keep a permanent record of you, your friend, and the gun, including the gun's serial number. Depending on the state or city, the government might also keep a permanent record.

In other words, the "background check" law is really a law to expand gun registration—and registration lists are used for confiscation.

In Australia and Great Britain, which are often cited as models for the U.S. to follow, registration lists were used for gun confiscation. In Great Britain, this included all handguns. In Australia, it included handguns over .38 caliber. Both countries banned all semi-automatic or pump-action long guns.

Most American jurisdictions don't have a comprehensive gun registration system. But even if your state legislature has outlawed gun registration, firearm stores must keep records. Those records could be harvested for future confiscations. Under the Bloomberg system, the store's list would include not just the guns that the store actually sold, but all the guns (and their owners) that the store processed, for friends or relatives borrowing guns.

In the history of the world, you will find few, if any, examples of places where comprehensive gun registration was not eventually followed by the confiscation of some or all arms. An early example was seventeenth century England, under the despotic Stuart kings. A recent example is the Communist tyranny in Venezuela. In between are countries like Germany in the 1930s and France in the 1940s, where gun registration lists compiled by democratic governments later fell into the hands of genocidal ones. At the Independence Institute, we work to protect the United States of America from the dangerous and deadly follies of arms registration and confiscation.



Get a Roof, Save a Life

By Todd Lubas

Our friends at Westminster-based “Get a Roof, Get a Gun” program by 1776 Roofing are giving back more than just gift cards for firearms with their roofing projects these days. They are proud 2A supporters and patriots, and they made headlines when they first brought the promotion to the Front Range. After hearing about Independence Institute’s involvement in FASTER (Faculty/Administrator Safety Training and Emergency Response) training for armed school staff, owner James Webb decided it’s time to “Get a Roof, Save a Life” by helping provide more FASTER scholarships to Colorado teachers.

FASTER provides the tactical and medical training to school staff to protect their students from an active shooter. This training saves lives in the crucial minutes and seconds before first responders arrive. For each residential and commercial roof James and his team install, a contribution will be made to FASTER to deliver the necessary training at no or low cost to teachers, administrators, and other school employees that have approval from their school district and/or board to carry concealed. As more schools see armed staff as part of their school safety plans, there is a significant need for more scholarships to fit tight school budgets. Thanks to James

and many other FASTER supporters, an intensive three-day class where teachers and staff learn the same skills and tactics used by law enforcement is available to them so they can be ready to act when tragedy strikes in our schools.

We thank James and 1776 Roofing for their vision and support. Visit www.getaroorofgetagun.com or call (833) 777-1776 for a quote today!



School staff member attending FASTER training



If Loving TABOR is Wrong, We Don't Want to be Right...

By Amy Cooke

By the time you read this, members of the TABOR Yes Coalition will have spoken in seven different Colorado communities, had our column placed in multiple news outlets, and educated thousands of natives and newcomers about the beauty and benefits of Colorado's Taxpayer's Bill of Rights.

As impressive as our TABOR Road Show has been, even more impressive is the number of organizations representing tens of thousands of Coloradans and the hundreds of individuals who have signed the pledge to protect our Taxpayer's Bill of Rights and hold



accountable elected officials who violate and trample it. Yes, we're looking at every single Democrat and some Republicans like Jerry Sonnenberg, Owen Hill, Polly Lawrence, and Dan Thurlow.

This is our line in the sand. Our coalition won't tolerate any more attacks on our Taxpayer's Bill

of Rights—the single greatest gift we voters have ever given ourselves and future generations. We won't stand on the sidelines as elected officials and the courts continue to weaken TABOR in order to consolidate power and get their hands on more of our money.

For more than two decades, TABOR has been the constitutional guardian keeping the ruling class out of our wallets and preventing them from expanding their own power without consent. We have what others want. Nationally renowned economist Dan Mitchell said this about attacks on our Taxpayer's Bill of Rights: "TABOR should be nationally emulated, not locally emasculated."

Our Taxpayer's Bill of Rights isn't complicated. Politicians can raise taxes; they just have to ask us first. Politicians can increase debt; they just have to ask us first. They just can't take from us without asking. It's that simple.

President of Americans for Tax Reform Grover Norquist, a member of our coalition, said it perfectly in a column in the *Washington Times*:

Colorado is home to the best tax and expenditure limitation in the country, called the Taxpayer's Bill of Rights. TABOR provides an exoskeleton for those elected officials that lack an endoskeleton



Colorado State Treasurer Walker Stapleton signs the TABOR pledge.

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Future Leaders

By Brit Naas

This summer, we have eight students participating in our Future Leaders Program. From energy policy to constitutional studies, these freedom-loving free marketeers are learning what it means to work for a think tank that puts policy into action!

If you're concerned about Colorado's progressive energy policy, be on the lookout for Lili Valis. Lili is a rising senior at the University of Colorado Boulder and the newest addition to II's Energy and Environmental Policy Center. She is working with Amy Cooke and is helping author an extensive report about Colorado's Public Utilities Commission. We can neither confirm nor deny it, but it's rumored she's already an "energy feminist," which makes Amy very proud.

Ayana Thomas and Elijah Pardo are joining Todd Lubas and the development team this summer. Ayana decided to trade humidity for aridity by leaving Georgia and joining us in Colorado. She will be helping the development team with donor relations and is participating in State Policy Network's Development Apprenticeship Program pilot, which Independence Institute and eleven other State Policy Network affiliates were chosen as partners. The development team's other intern, Elijah, grew up in Colorado but attends the University of Delaware. Elijah just finished his first year of college and

decided to spend his summer promoting freedom. He's an avid supporter of the Second Amendment, so he's interning with Laura Carno and our FASTER Program in addition to working with Todd.

We're also joined by Andrew Marchesseault and Trevor Vogel, who have the nearly impossible task of quantifying the debt of Colorado's metro and special districts. Allured by the mountains, Andrew ventured west to spend his last summer as a college student combing through local government financial records. Trevor, who's home for the summer after finishing his first year at Hillsdale College, makes up the second half of this project—a project that Colorado's Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) acknowledges has never been done before. Their research involves diving into the DOLA website and pouring over the financial statements for thousands of metro and special districts. Stay tuned for the final number, which we think may rival the GDP of some small countries.

The last three interns are working in our legal policy centers. Jonathan Cleary and Greg Golyansky are joining Shayne Madsen in the Political Law Center, and Taylor Stafford is joining Rob Natelson in the Constitutional Studies Center.

Jonathan, a resident of Colorado and a student at the University of Notre Dame, is working with Shayne Madsen on the Fix Our Damn Roads initiative. His longtime use and

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Independence Institute interns Jonathan Cleary, Andrew Marchesseault, Greg Golyansky, and Lili Valis tour the Colorado Supreme Court

Retracing the Constitution's Roots

By Staff

Rob Natelson's research into the Constitution's true meaning is the subject of a new series.

Freedom cannot thrive without the rule of law. The law has to be interpreted honestly and applied fairly. And that includes the U.S. Constitution, the "supreme law of the land."

For decades, however, a coterie of left-wing judges and law professors have been twisting the Constitution to serve their political agenda.

Rob Natelson, the Institute's Senior Fellow in constitutional jurisprudence, believes that practice has to stop. So, just as II's Research Director Dave Kopel helped recover the true meaning of the Second Amendment's right to keep and bear arms, Rob is doing the same with the rest of the Constitution.

Now a national law journal has signed him up for a series of short articles on the Constitution's original meaning.

Rob is an old hand at constitutional research. He was a law professor for 25 years. During that time, he built a national reputation as a constitutional lawyer and historian. His breakthrough research uncovered the intended meaning of many of the Constitution's words and phrases. He's also the author of *The Original Constitution: What It Actually Said and Meant*, which is available through Amazon.com.

Rob became an II senior fellow in 1994, but moved back to Colorado in 2010 to work more regularly with the Independence Institute. Since 2013, three U.S. Supreme Court justices—Roberts, Thomas, and Scalia—have explicitly referenced his work 19 times in six cases. He's also been cited innumerable times by parties before the court, and by the highest tribunals of at least 15 states.

Despite Rob's long list of publications, much of his research has never appeared in academic legal journals. One reason is that those journals are hopelessly slow. It typically takes a year to publish an article. One of Rob's current studies still remains unpublished after two years! Another problem is the arbitrary selection criteria and leftist bias that prevail in legal journals. Most are operated by second- and third-year law students who often care more about political correctness than they do about scholarship.

But the *Federalist Society Review* has a professional editor. She's signed Rob up for a series of short articles, which the Review will publish quickly and insert into the standard legal databases and the public domain.

Rob strives to keep his research objective, and emphasizes that he goes where the evidence leads, whether he likes the results or not.

TABOR continued from page 7

(backbone). It should be easiest to fight taxes in Colorado.

TABOR puts taxpayers in charge of tax and debt increases. Any government in Colorado can jack up taxes as high as they like, and it's all fine. All they have to do is ask first by putting the question on the ballot.

Memo to politicians: Consent is good! Harvey Weinstein is bad. Don't go Weinstein on us. Whether it's in the state capitol, in the media, on the streets of Denver, or anywhere else our Taxpayer's Bill of Rights is threatened, we will be there to protect, strengthen, and preserve it.

Check out our impressive coalition at TABORYes.com. While you are there, sign the pledge to let every Colorado elected official know that you support our Taxpayer's Bill of Rights and will be watching to ensure they don't violate your right to give your consent.



Amy Cooke is the Executive Vice President of the Independence Institute and Director of our Energy and Environmental Policy Center.

Education continued from page 3

a college ranked by *U.S. News & World Report*, have an additional .75 years of education, and are 16 percent more likely to complete four years of college.”

Because parental expectations tend to rise with higher levels of educational attainment, it stands to reason that programs driving higher levels of attainment will have substantial impacts even on the *children* of scholarship recipients many years from now. We have not even begun to quantify those effects in the context of school choice.

But what about intergenerational impacts in the other direction? ACE Scholarships, a multistate K-12 scholarship-granting organization, conducted an initial evaluation of thousands of low-income scholarship recipients. The evaluation indicated that the average parent of an ACE scholar advances from having no post-secondary credentials when their child enters the program to earning at least one such credential. This trend is particularly significant when you consider that many low-income scholarship students are the first in their families to attend college. Some will be the first to graduate high school.

The examination of prior-generation ripple effects is in its infancy at this stage, and more data is required to establish causal relationships. But one hypothesis is that watching their children succeed academically motivates parents to further their own education. Another is that changing peer groups and expectations alters behaviors and habits, which in turn drive positive change for families. There is some early evidence of this: scholarship families tend to eat dinner together more often, talk about school at home more often, and engage in external educational trips and activities at a higher rate than others from their socioeconomic background.

It is one thing to talk about ending the cycle of poverty in the context of student-focused academic data. It’s quite another to truly investigate the family-wide impacts of expanded educational opportunity. My hope is that in the continuing pursuit of the former, we don’t forget to study and talk about the latter.



Ross Izard is a senior fellow in education policy for the Independence Institute and director of policy for ACE Scholarships.

Future Leaders continued from page 8

experiences with Colorado’s transportation infrastructure make him the perfect intern for this project. Greg, an intern with substantial experience in Colorado politics, attends law school at the University of Wyoming. He is helping Shayne research the Colorado Open Records Act (CORA). Taylor, another rising senior at the University of Colorado Boulder, is conducting archival research for a report Rob will author for the Federalist Society.

All three legal interns aspire to be lawyers in the future, and the Independence Institute’s Future Leaders Program affords them an incredible opportunity

to work alongside some of Colorado’s top legal minds.

It isn’t easy to defend liberty and promote freedom, but it’s certainly worthwhile. The Independence Institute stands ready to instruct, train, and prepare our next generation of leaders to carry on the fight. As Thomas Jefferson said, “The price of freedom is eternal vigilance.”

Brit is the Future Leaders Coordinator, Operations and Energy and Environmental Policy Center Assistant at Independence Institute.

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Independence Institute Rides the Courage Classic



In November 2001, Independence Institute President, Jon Caldara, received the worst news possible from the doctors at Children's Hospital. His happy, gregarious 11-month-old daughter, Parker, was diagnosed with a rare choroid plexus carcinoma, a cancer in the parts of the brain that produce spinal fluid. It almost always strikes kids younger than 18 months, and is almost always fatal. Jon lost his beautiful "Super Parker" on November 13, 2001.

In 2010, Tracy Kimball Smith of the Independence Institute formed Team Parker. Every summer, Team Parker rides in Parker's memory in the Courage Classic, a fundraising bike tour for Children's Hospital. They ride to honor Parker and also to raise money for Children's Hospital to help other parents and kids facing similar situations.

Over the last eight years, Team Parker has raised \$88,514 for Children's Hospital. Damon Sasso, our VP of Operations will also be riding this year.

Jon Caldara has put out a FUNDRAISING CHALLENGE. If Team Parker can raise \$20,000, he has agreed to ride with Team Parker. \$20,000 would not only put us over the \$100,000 mark for total fundraising, but it would get Jon to put on those ridiculous spandex bike shorts.

Please donate at i2i.org/courage-classic

Support the Independence Institute

Yes! I want to join the Independence Institute in advancing the principles of limited government.

Enclosed is my gift of:

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Tom Gresham at the ATF Party & Fundraiser

Enjoy the perks of adulthood!

Join your favorite freedom fighters at our annual Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms Party and Fundraiser.

Our guest speaker this year will be Tom Gresham of Tom Gresham's Gun Talk®, the original national radio show about guns and the shooting sports! We're thrilled to have this knowledgeable and entertaining speaker.

Since 2002 the Independence Institute has made it tradition to "trigger" the nanny state by cheerfully shooting,

drinking, and smoking through a day. Join us in preserving your right to enjoy these freedoms at our 2018 Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms Party & Fundraiser on Saturday, August 18th, at the Kiowa Creek Sporting Club. We're aiming to have a great time, and it's a sure-fire way to have a memorable day with family and friends! For sponsorship and ticket information, contact Shari Hanrahan at 512.627.9831 or shari@i2i.org. **You don't want to miss this incredible day of sun, guns, and fun with fellow lovers of liberty!**



Tom Gresham of Tom
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