

Veritas

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A Look at TPPF's "Recovery Texas" Video Series

A Day in the Life of a TPPFer: Rob Henneke

Affordable, Abundant Energy Resonates with All Texans



**Texas Public Policy
Foundation**

Veritas

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

When our last issue of *Veritas* went to print, America was on the precipice of a crisis. Many of us were questioning our nation's response to the threat of COVID-19, and we faced uncertainty about what lay before us.

Though this crisis is not yet over, we must not lose hope. Despite any doubts or concerns about the present troubles, my mind still returns to one powerful truth: Texas remains a beacon of liberty and justice in America, and Texans are proudly leading the way to recovery.

There have been unprecedented abuses at every level of government and crippling bureaucratic intervention into the U.S. economy. Some Americans have been willing to set aside their freedoms for a veneer of security. But Texans remain optimistic, innovative, self-reliant, and independent. In "A Behind-the-Scenes Look at the 'Recovery Texas' Video Series," you can learn more about the many everyday Texans who carried out selfless, inspiring acts of service in response to the crisis.

Despite the turmoil of recent months, the daily perseverance of our staff has remained unwavering. "A Day in the Life of a TPPFer" highlights our Center for the American Future Director, Rob Henneke, who has great news to share about TPPF's litigation efforts, particularly as he prepares the argument to overturn Obamacare at our nation's highest court.

I also invite you to read about the remarkable life and accomplishments of our dear friend, Brenda Pejovich. She has served on TPPF's board for nearly two decades, and the profile about her formative experiences and strong conservative principles is an excellent testament to her character. I hope you will enjoy reading it as much as I did.

Before closing, I'd like to acknowledge my immense pride and privilege to work alongside the many diligent, forward-thinking, and resilient members of staff here at TPPF. My colleagues have reached new heights in advancing the conservative movement during a time that has been sometimes hectic, but always rewarding.

Above all, I want to thank all of you who have remained steadfast in your commitment to our mission during these trying times. Your friendship, support, and patriotism have inspired all of us at TPPF in our endeavor to set the standard for recovery in our state and nation.

Thank you for your constant dedication to our cause, and God bless you.

Sincerely,



Kevin Roberts

Kevin D. Roberts, Ph.D.
Executive Director

Cover Photo: Austin's Couch Potatoes worker making an n95 mask in March 2020. This image is featured in "Recovery Texas" video series, highlighted in the article beginning on page four.

Veritas is a publication of the Texas Public Policy Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, nonpartisan research institute. The Foundation's mission is to promote and defend liberty, personal responsibility, and free enterprise in Texas and the nation by educating and affecting policymakers and the Texas public policy debate with academically sound research and outreach. Our goal is to lead the nation in public policy issues by using Texas as a model for reform.



A Behind the Scenes Look at TPPF's "Recovery Texas" Video Series

by Nick Haydon



People often wrongly interpret conservatism as lacking empathy, in large part because of its lack of high-quality storytelling. Conservatives master research, facts, and data—tools that are crucial to crafting principled policy solutions to defend liberty and prosperity. But, research, facts, and data can be inaccessible and do little to connect with Texans and Americans.

The Left, however, has commandeered storytelling, particularly through media platforms like video production. Videos powerfully tell stories by connecting human emotions to the impersonal numbers of research data and intangible principles. They create a direct path to the hearts and minds of viewers that more effectively convey the “why” behind the values and ideas that drive the Left’s mission.

Never content with the status quo, the Texas Public Policy Foundation (TPPF) recognizes the opportunity that video storytelling presents. We have seized this opportunity to create and share moving, insightful videos that communicate conservative principles.

Specifically, TPPF launched a video series titled “Recovery Texas” that shares the stories of local Austin, Texas businesses that have risen to the

challenges that the COVID-19 pandemic created. These businesses and Texans demonstrate that human initiative and charity flourish separate from government intervention and coercion, and TPPF’s video series captures the spirit of these inspiring community leaders.

The Crisis and the Response

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected millions of lives across the globe, and the all-too-real human impact has resonated with almost every individual in the nation. Restaurants and businesses have been devastated by the economic shutdown. Forced to shut their doors, owners and employees have suffered in an unprecedented way.

But, instead of counting their losses, four local businesses turned their focus outward, refitting their organizations to help those most in need during this crisis, and our five-part “Recovery Texas” video series captured their stories.

Austin’s Couch Potatoes, Rudy’s, Hopdoddy’s, and Z’Tejas are four businesses that have supplied medical protective equipment, food, and other necessities to the local community. Each company has used its unique capacities not only to remain open and continue to employ its workers but also to go above and beyond by helping the community.

Brian Morgan, the co-founder of Austin’s Couch Potatoes, explained how the material the company uses to make pillowcases is the same material used in medical-grade surgical and n95 masks. They realized that they had the necessary materials to create masks for medical professionals. Brian reached out to the community, letting everyone know Austin’s Couch Potatoes could make masks for those who needed them. Soon, the Department of Homeland Security in Austin called to tell the employees of Austin’s Couch Potatoes that they are all heroes.

In writing, this story is powerful: a small business that can adapt quickly to dire circumstances to help protect and save lives. But, on the screen, the story transcends to a new, more empathetic level. The power of telling stories through videos speaks directly to the common thread that unites humans: emotion. You can hear it in Brian’s voice. You can see it on his face.

Similarly, Rudy’s a local barbecue restaurant, used its cornerstone position in the Austin community to help. Marshal Macari, a Rudy’s team member, explained that Rudy’s asked themselves not only how they “could stay open, but what can we do to provide for our community.” This attitude inspired the company to provide groceries and supplies that Austinites might not be able to afford.

Rather than simply describe this effort, our “Recovery Texas” video shows you the restaurant’s work. You can see the tables laid out with groceries. You can watch the team serve food.

Hopdoddy’s, a nationally renowned burger joint, and Z’Tejas, a local southwestern restaurant, deployed similar strategies during the COVID crisis. Company leaders and employees asked themselves what they could do to keep their doors open and assist. The third and fourth installments of “Recovery Texas” tell their stories.

Why Conservatives Need Video and Storytelling

These entrepreneurial business owners embody the spirit of Texas. As Texans, we do not need to be told to help our neighbors and to serve those who are suffering. We assist without being asked, simply because it is the right thing to do. This attitude, this character, is what TPPF’s video team set out to capture for the “Recovery Texas” series.

The medium of video provides a touchpoint for audiences, a story with which they can empathize and envision themselves. Unfortunately, the Left dominates this space. For example, BuzzFeed Video, a left-leaning YouTube channel, has over 20 million subscribers. PragerU, perhaps the most successful

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A Day in the Life of TPPFer: Rob Henneke

by Seth Galemore

conservative video channel, has only about 2.5 million.

Stories promoting, sharing, and defending conservative values are not often shared in the most compelling ways. It is not because we do not have stories to tell. We do have stories to share—like local Austin businesses helping communities during the pandemic—that communicate the truth in a compelling and engaging way. These are the kinds of stories that help people understand the importance of conservative values and principled policy solutions, but until now, these stories haven't been effectively shared through video.

Beyond “Recovery Texas”

TPPF, as a premier institution of civil society, is taking the lead and embracing video production and storytelling. We are embracing the power that this unique medium contains to spread our values, communicate with audiences, and connect with Texans and Americans.



Nick Haydon is the grants manager at TPPF. A native of Missouri, he became passionate about liberty while at Culver Military Academy in Indiana. He is a graduate of Hobart and William Smith Colleges in upstate New York, where he earned his degree in Classics, the study of Latin, Ancient Greek, and the civilizations that utilize these languages. In addition to his knowledge of ancient cultures, Nick has a deep knowledge of the sea because he is a certified scuba diver! Nick and his wife Katrina are currently living in Virginia and enjoy exploring our nation's capital.

The “Recovery Texas” video series demonstrates the force that the truth has—the series has over 40,000 views on Facebook alone. Moving forward, we at TPPF will continue to identify and capture the stories that need to be told, and, by using video, we will not only reach an audience previously thought unreachable, but we will also connect with people in a truly unprecedented manner.

Your support of TPPF makes reaching the public through projects like the “Recovery Texas” video series possible and we are grateful for your generosity. If you'd like to watch the “Recovery Texas” video series, you can find it online by searching “Recovery Texas” on the TPPF website or going directly to <https://www.texaspolicy.com/multimedia/videos/>.

Be on the lookout for future releases like the “Recovery Texas” video series, and please send us your thoughts or ideas. If you know of a story that epitomizes the principles of liberty, opportunity, entrepreneurship, or more, we would love to hear from you at hello@texaspolicy.com. ★

The Honorable Robert Henneke is the General Counsel for the Texas Public Policy Foundation and Director of the Center for the American Future, which launches legal challenges to government overreach at the administrative, district, and appellate court levels. Seth Galemore, TPPF's newest Veritas contributor, sat down with him in May 2020 to discuss his role at TPPF, some recent victories in the Center's efforts, and what the Center has planned over the next few months.

Galemore: You're the litigation director for the Center for the American Future (CAF). Explain a little about what that means and how CAF advances the overall mission of TPPF.

Henneke: The Center for the American Future is TPPF's litigation arm, so we help TPPF promote liberty, personal responsibility, and free enterprise by fighting back against state and federal abuse of Americans' fundamental freedoms. We litigate cases at every level of government—local, state, and federal.

It's our job to help enforce the framework of the Constitution, advocate for limited government, and roll back the power of the administrative state. The rule of law in our country is supposed to empower individuals to act in their own best interest. The state Constitution of Texas and the U.S. Constitution are meant to preserve the people's rights by granting specific, enumerated powers to the government. Unfortunately, those principles

of limited, pragmatic governance are under constant attack throughout our country. CAF works to press the legal case for ordinary citizens when their rights are violated, on behalf of all Americans. Edmund Burke once said, “Whenever a separation is made between liberty and justice, neither is safe.” CAF exists to enforce justice for the preservation of liberty.

Galemore: What does a normal “day in the life” of Rob Henneke look like? What do CAF attorneys do on a typical day?

Henneke: A typical day? I wish I knew! In all seriousness, my work involves a lot of different tasks and responsibilities. We're always preparing documents for proceedings, so we write a lot of motions, memoranda, briefs—materials that help to move our active cases forward. And then, of course, we actually spend time in court arguing our clients' cases.

Obviously, before we get to that point, I have to confer with clients we're representing, so that means a lot of phone calls, emails, travel. As the director of litigation, I work with the other members of our CAF legal team to supervise their duties, support the work they're doing, provide guidance and input on their cases. We've got a great team of six excellent attorneys with expertise in a wide range of important issues—free speech, property rights, judicial scrutiny, state administrative proceedings—a deep bench of really talented individuals. Though



frankly we've got enough work that we could use a few more!

TPPF is also very focused on advocating for Americans' constitutional rights and promoting the message of liberty, so we're constantly publishing op-eds, writing articles to inform the public about the work we're doing, and celebrating our legal victories in the press when we get a chance.

Galemore: Are there any recent legal victories you have to celebrate? What have been some of CAF's major successes in the past few months?

Henneke: It's been a very successful year for us. For example, just last month [referring, at the time of this interview, to April 2020], there was a ruling that came down in our favor in a case we litigated in Michigan.

The Township of Canton has an ordinance that cutting down any tree, even on privately owned property, without the Township's permission is punishable by up to a \$450 fine. Assessing exorbitant fines when people make harmless use of their own private property is deeply unjust.

We argued that this was an unconstitutional—and, frankly, unconscionable—taking of private property under the 5th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Frank Powelson, the plaintiff in the case, had cleared some brush and small trees from his property because they were blocking a drainage ditch and causing flooding. For doing that, he was fined

more than \$47,000! So Powelson brought a lawsuit against the Township, and CAF represented him.

The judge concluded that the Township's ordinance goes too far in restricting the plaintiff's use of his property, so we're very pleased that common sense prevailed and private property rights were upheld.

Galemore: Have there been any other recent cases with similar victories?

Henneke: Several, yes. CAF has been very successful in preventing the implementation of local ordinances in Austin, San Antonio, and Dallas that disregard Texas law by forcing private employers to offer paid sick leave. TPPF believes paid sick leave is a great benefit, but there are many great benefits and compensation packages that employers can offer, but mandating a one-size-fits-all approach restricts workplace freedom and reduces employees' ability to negotiate their own terms of employment. CAF gained a favorable ruling from the Texas Third Court of Appeals against the City of Austin's ordinance, and judges have rightly issued injunctions against ordinances in San Antonio and Dallas while we wait to see if the Supreme Court of Texas will take up the case.

And, of course, we are excitedly preparing for oral arguments before the U.S. Supreme Court in our case to overturn the Affordable Care Act—also known as Obamacare.

Galemore: That's a very important case on the

horizon. What's the legal reason behind overturning Obamacare?

Henneke: When the Supreme Court upheld Obamacare in 2012, Chief Justice John Roberts held that the individual mandate requiring all Americans to purchase health insurance was unconstitutional. But to save the law, he also ruled that the individual mandate penalty could be construed as a tax, since it required payment to the federal government.

However, Congress reduced that penalty to zero in 2017's Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. Without the penalty construed as a tax, all that remains of the foundation to Obamacare is the unconstitutional individual mandate. The district court and the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals have both agreed with CAF that the individual mandate violates the Constitution, and we are confident that the Supreme Court will also conclude that all the unworkable, burdensome, and illegitimate provisions of Obamacare should be struck down along with the individual mandate.

Galemore: For Veritas readers, what's the biggest takeaway you'd like them to know about the Center for the American Future?

PHOTOS: Page 8: CAF recently represented John Yearwood, pictured here on his property, and secured victory in a case against government overreach (left) | Rob Henneke stands with Lester Holt of NBC's Nightly News following an interview (right). Page 9: TPPF represented Frank Powelson (left) in a case defending his private property rights in the Township of Canton in Michigan.

Please see Seth Galmore's bio on page 15.

Henneke: In the present environment, particularly with the crippling government response to COVID-19 and a contentious general election ahead of us, I think it's more important than ever that people keep in mind the proper size and scope of government. It has become very clear in recent months how precarious our rights are, and how easy it is for elected officials or appointed bureaucrats to snatch them away from citizens. We must be vigilant in holding our representatives and public servants accountable to our brilliant constitutional system.

From a constitutional perspective, the power of our government comes from the people. Government overreach, at any level, is deleterious to the rights of all Americans, because it undermines the rule of law and prevents citizens from acting freely and fairly in their own best interest. The Center for the American Future is committed to preserving the ideals of liberty and human flourishing in Texas and the nation.

For more information about CAF and TPPF's litigation efforts, visit <https://www.texaspolicy.com/initiatives/center-for-the-american-future>. ★



The Power of Virtual Events

The Texas Public Policy Foundation constantly seeks innovative, engaging ways to share our content with the public. Whether it's making academic-quality research available to you with just the click of a mouse or producing videos that relate complex policy topics to everyday life, we continually look for new ways to share our work and why it matters.

Because many of our staff members and supporters like you were staying a bit closer to home this spring, TPPF encountered a new set of challenges in sharing our work. Instead of inviting the public to our building for events or visiting cities around the state, we embraced the opportunity to connect virtually with folks throughout Texas and across America.

In April, TPPF launched a weekly livestream series to share up-to-date policy news on topics ranging from local governance, to healthcare, to virtual education. We also began hosting webinars, movie screenings, and virtual policy discussions to continue to educate and inform Texans on the

most pressing policy issues. While TPPF has been livestreaming events for over a year now, the tumultuous months this spring gave us the opportunity to reimagine our events and reach an even larger audience in the process. As a TPPF supporter, you'll be glad to know that this strategic effort has increased event attendance dramatically, meaning that the policy ideas developed at TPPF are resonating with more people than ever before.

As we return to normal and resume our in-person events this fall, we're taking with us the lessons learned from this season of connecting virtually. We'll continue to use virtual events to connect with a wider audience and bring in expert speakers who many not be able to travel to TPPF headquarters in Austin. With your support, we continue to make quality research and policy ideas accessible to lawmakers and the public—no matter the distance. ★

To view these events and more of TPPF's past virtual events, simply go to: <https://www.texaspolicy.com/multimedia/livestreams/>.

TOP ROW: In April, TPPF hosted Netflix parties to view *Miss Virginia*, a powerful film about the importance of education and school choice. Netflix parties synchronize the participants' film—so everyone is watching the same thing at the same time—and allow viewers to chat about the movie in a group message, which TPPF experts on school choice joined to answer viewers' questions.

In May, TPPF hosted a panel to discuss U.S.-Chinese relations, COVID-19, and the question on everyone's mind, "what's next?" Panelists included The Honorable Chuck DeVore, Vice President of National Initiatives at TPPF; Dr. John Lenczowski, Founder and President of The Institute of World Politics and the Former Director of European and Soviet Affairs at the National Security Council; Steven Mosher, President at the Population Research Institute; and James Fanell, Captain, USN Retired, former Director of Intelligence and Information Operations for the U.S. Pacific Fleet and Government Fellow at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy.

MIDDLE ROW: In May, TPPF hosted a virtual screening of "Switch On," a groundbreaking new documentary on the crisis of global energy poverty and its effects on humanitarian concerns from hunger and clean water to education, women's empowerment, and more. After the screening, Sophie Byard of the Switch Energy Alliance shared information with viewers about how to host their own event featuring the film and then Jason Isaac, TPPF's Senior Manager and Distinguished Fellow of Life:Powered, and filmmaker Scott Tinker, Director of UT's Bureau of Economic Geology, had a Q&A with audience members.

BOTTOM ROW: In June, former TPPF thinker and current Congressman Chip Roy joined TPPF Executive Director Kevin Roberts to discuss dangerous examples of government officials gone power-crazy, and how Texans can draw a line in the sand.



Revisiting the Classroom

by Annie Elliott & Lucy Meckler

Last year, TPPF hosted the inaugural Summer Civics Institute for Middle and High School Teachers and this year, the second Summer Civics Institute took place virtually during the first week of June.

The Summer Civics Institute is a week-long, tuition-free continuing education program designed and led by Dr. Tom Lindsay, TPPF's Distinguished Senior Fellow of Higher Education and Constitutional Studies. In this dynamic course, Dr. Lindsay teaches the origins of the United States, the basics of American civics, and the threats to our democracy. He provides lesson plans, a syllabus, and other resources for teachers to use in their classrooms to enhance students' understanding of American civics, history, and government.

As the second group of Institute Fellows looks forward to implementing this curriculum in the upcoming school year, we wanted to check in with teachers from the inaugural Summer Civics Institute. We asked these teachers, "How did TPPF's Summer Civics Institute affect your classrooms, your teaching, or your students last year?" and their responses were profound.

One teacher shared that "SCI helped me understand the importance of teaching the primary sources to students" while another reported that "my students were far better off in understanding and being engaged in our government unit this year. We were able to dig deeper and become more curious about certain topics."

This student engagement is critical to reversing the course on civic illiteracy in America.

As Sarah Worden, MFA, M.Ed., an eighth-grade social studies teacher and 2019 Summer Civics Institute Fellow, pointed out, teaching the entirety of American civics is impossible in a one-year course. However, focusing on a continuing theme in coursework—a concept highlighted in TPPF's Summer Civics Institute—helped her students draw personal connections and understand the complexity of American civics within their short school year, thus engaging them more deeply in the curriculum. She said, "One line of discussion I repeatedly referenced with my students [last] year was the idea of progress when evaluating history, especially concerning the creation and structure of the U.S. government. I was not able to include all of the new instructional ideas created during and after the Summer Civics Institute, but I continually referenced the idea of following the progress of fulfillment towards the ideals we discussed that week. The idea of evolution concerning ideas of unalienable rights, individual rights, justice and fairness, equality, and suffrage, gave students a more personal tie to the discussion."

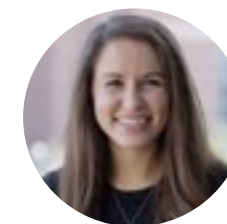
The Summer Civics Institute has done more than simply help the students of Institute Fellows. Last year's Fellows shared what they learned with other teachers so that an even larger group of educators and students could benefit from the lessons and teaching techniques shared in this program. Stephanie Clubb, M.A.T., a U.S. History teacher at Reedy High School shared, "I did teach the Declaration of Independence like how I discussed at the conference and showed the other teachers how I taught it when I taught 8th grade. It went really well and I really like breaking down the document like that with them so they see and understand it better. I'm hoping that since the civics questions are going to

“In addition to enhancing teachers’ knowledge and skills and thus improving students’ civics education, the Summer Civics Institute provides teachers with resources and a community to rely on and ask questions of throughout the year.”

be a part of the end-of-course test in the upcoming years we can think of better strategies to try to cover [the Declaration] in 11th grade.”

In addition to enhancing teachers' knowledge and skills and thus improving students' civics education, the Summer Civics Institute provides teachers with resources and a community to rely on and ask questions of throughout the year. Last year's program left many teachers hoping for more opportunities to work with TPPF, saying:

- “Please let me know if there’s anything else I can do. The institute is amazing!”
-Stephanie Clubb, U.S. History Teacher, Reedy High School
- “The institute provided a great opportunity to examine foundational texts [and] guest speakers were great. Wouldn't mind more of this!”
-Christopher Jameson, Social Sciences, St. Dominic Savio Catholic High School



Annie Elliott is the director of donor communications at TPPF. Born and raised in Austin, Texas, she attended Texas A&M University where she studied psychology. She and her husband, Thomas, enjoy spending their free time together visiting friends and family, as well as exploring hiking and walking trails, trying new restaurants, and listening to live music in and around the Lone Star State's capital. An enthusiastic reader, Annie has a monthly book subscription from a small independent bookstore in Thomasville, Georgia and will tell anyone who will listen about the book she's reading this month.



Lucy Meckler was born and raised in Northern California before moving to Michigan to pursue her undergraduate education. She graduated from Hillsdale College with a B.A. in English and a minor in Classical Education. During her last summer in college, Lucy interned at the Texas Public Policy Foundation where she discovered her passion for education policy. Following her internship, she came back to the Foundation in May 2020 as a Civics Education Project manager. Lucy is based in Austin, Texas and loves spending her free time off-roading, trying new restaurants, or enjoying quality time with her family and their two Great Danes.

- “I hope for more opportunities to work with Tom, the Summer Civics Institute, and Texas Public Policy Foundation for public education initiatives in the future.”
-Sarah Worden, Eighth Grade Social Sciences Team Lead

As our 2020 Summer Civics Institute Fellows begin their school years, we hope they will find the program as meaningful and influential in their classrooms as 2019's participating teachers did. We are grateful for the continued support of donors like you who enable programs like the Summer Civics Institute to take place at TPPF. With your generosity, we're reshaping civics education to increase students' understanding of America's founding principles and, in doing so, brightening our great nation's future. ★

To learn more about this program, please visit <https://www.texaspolicy.com/summer-institute/>.

FINDING COMMON GROUND: How the Message of Affordable, Abundant Energy Resonates with All Texans

by Seth Galemore

At a time when many Americans have conflicting ideas about energy, the environment, and the role of government in addressing those issues, it can be easy to overlook the extent to which most Americans agree. Everyone wants safe air quality and a clean, natural environment. Everyone wants energy policies that will make the world a better place for poor and vulnerable populations in America and abroad. Those values are universally true.

The problem, of course, is that people differ about how to achieve those outcomes. Since voters, activists, and lawmakers are often at odds with each other over politics and partisanship, they often lose sight of the common goal: clean, reliable, abundant energy for all.

With this in mind, TPPF endeavors to understand, appreciate, and connect with the views of ordinary citizens through polling and survey strategies that clarify the diversity of thought in our state. Armed with knowledge of the views, values, and experiences of regular Texans, TPPF is striving to foster a culture of honest, informed communication about the issues. It's time for conservative, liberal, and moderate Texans to stop talking past each other so that we can work together for the common good.

Energy and environmental policies are a great place to start seeking common ground.

Recent TPPF polling finds that only 1% of Texans registered to vote consider the environment the most important issue for the Texas Legislature to

address. This is a promising statistic, because it means that many Texans do not approach the issue from a rigid ideological standpoint.

Rather, Texans stand ready to be convinced, with reasonable facts and analysis, of the best approaches to the issue. Sadly, however, the dominant message that bombards voters—particularly engaged voters and young voters—is that the earth's environment is defiled, doomed, and in decline.

But TPPF is at the forefront of explaining how diverse sources of energy, including the fossil fuels that are unfairly maligned in the media, can preserve our natural environment while helping human beings flourish. The good news is that voters are willing to embrace this message—if conservatives can make the case effectively.

For example, according to recent TPPF polling, voters across the board in Texas indicated support for renewable energy subsidies: 51% of conservatives, 72% of moderates, and 81% of liberals. However, when those same voters who supported such policies were informed that their energy bills could rise by 10-15% as a result of these subsidies, then a majority (58%) concluded they would prefer to oppose subsidies, resulting in a majority of all conservatives, moderates, and liberals rejecting expensive renewable energy subsidies. When they were informed that renewable energy could result in less reliable energy service, an even greater margin of voters across the ideological spectrum changed their minds.

“When Texans hear that environmental policies would hinder their healthcare freedom, affect their choices about food consumption, or reduce their housing and transportation options, they are more willing to oppose ‘green’ messaging.”

Similarly, the more people learn about policies like the Green New Deal and other onerous, expensive proposals to reduce carbon emissions, the less they like them. In particular, voters do not support policies that would impose restrictions or mandates on their behavior. When Texans hear that environmental policies would hinder their healthcare freedom, affect their choices about food consumption, or reduce their housing and transportation options, they are more willing to oppose “green” messaging.

But the values that Texans care about most go beyond how it affects their own wallets. When TPPF tested messaging about how America's abundant energy resources can be used to lift people all over the world out of poverty, even left-leaning respondents had strong support for oil, natural gas, and coal.

How did people react when they learned that fossil fuels can help bring better electricity and a higher quality of life to people in the developing world? They supported fossil fuels.

How did they feel when they heard that energy poverty lowers life expectancy, increases childhood mortality, and reduces access to safe water or edu-

cation opportunities for people in developing nations? They supported plans to bring energy, hope, and a better way of life to the world's most vulnerable populations.

Effective, reasonable, and attainable approaches to energy consumption and environmental conservation are popular among all Texans. As TPPF continues to refine our understanding of the dynamics around American energy independence, our policy experts will strive to dig deeper into those dynamics. Citizens' values and priorities inform their reasons for supporting or opposing important policies concerning energy and the environment, so the more insight we have to citizens' thinking, the more we can advance the message of freedom and prosperity.

Conservative solutions to the questions of energy security, environmental protection, and human flourishing are popular when we find common ground. Texans are willing to have that conversation, and TPPF stands ready to engage with them. ★

For more information about energy policy and TPPF's Life:Powered initiative, visit <https://lifepowered.org/>



Seth Galemore joined TPPF in April 2020 as the development writer. He holds dual Bachelor's degrees in English and Linguistics from Truman State University in Kirksville, MO and is proud to use his experience in writing and communications to promote TPPF's successes to its friends and supporters. Seth loves Shakespeare's writing and purchased *The Collected Works of William Shakespeare* when he was in fourth grade. He has made a point of reading at least one play for enjoyment every year since. Seth and his wife Emilie now reside in Georgetown, Texas. Kansans by birth and upbringing, Seth and Emilie have been “Texans by choice” since 2013.

BUILDING A LEGACY FOR THE FUTURE

Brenda Pejovich

When Brenda Pejovich began her first job at 16 as the “fry girl” at Burger King, she did so influenced by what she calls her father’s “immigrant perspective.” It was a viewpoint not so much spoken, but, rather, modeled, and it has led her to remarkable life success. The Texas Public Policy Foundation is honored that Brenda recently joined the ranks of our Lone Star Legacy Society through a commitment that will permanently fund three TPPF internships annually.



A prominent, yet modest, economics professor, Brenda’s dad came to the United States from Communist Yugoslavia in 1957, married, and found success. Brenda and her two siblings learned from how their dad lived that “no one gives you anything,” that you must “earn what you want,” and that your “work ethic enables your success.” He also modeled the spirit of philanthropy. In 2017 Svetozar “Steve” Pejovich donated his economics papers and library—the Steve Pejovich Collection—to the Texas Public Policy Foundation.

In the 1960’s Steve joined the dynamic economics department at Texas A&M University. The department was filled with young, ambitious economists, among them Drs. Phil and Wendy Gramm and Dr. Thomas Saving, who were out to change the world. Brenda vividly recalls meeting with Nobel Laureates, Prime Ministers, and other great thinkers of the liberty movement from Europe and the United States.

Summers typically took Brenda and her siblings to Europe where they stayed with extended family and traveled throughout communist, socialist, and democratic countries. The vast differences between those economic systems quickly became clear. Back in the States, the kids worked hard to do well academically, and at 16, they began working year-round jobs. It was through those jobs that Brenda says she quickly learned what it took “not to get fired.”

With the help of a student loan and several jobs, Brenda went on to graduate from the University of Texas with a degree in Business Administration, take a position with Arthur Andersen, and, in 1986, become a Certified Public Accountant.

That same year amid the savings and loan crisis, at the age of 23, she founded Brenda Pejovich & Associates to fill a void in the financial services sector. The company soon became one of the top 25 largest Dallas companies in its sector. When Brenda accepted an unsolicited offer to sell the business to a Fortune 1000 firm, she was able to realize a personal aim; that is, the freedom to make choices about her life.

Public service has been her focus since then. Brenda has accepted four Senate-confirmed appointments by two Texas Governors including a term on the Board of Regents of her beloved University of Texas System. She is also actively involved in the liberty movement.



Brenda remains close to Phil and Wendy Gramm, including service on the “Kitchen Cabinet” for Phil’s 1996 Presidential campaign.

In 2001, Wendy asked Brenda, who was by then recognized as a rock-solid conservative and successful fundraiser, to join the TPPF Board of Directors.

Now in her 19th year on the board, Brenda says that TPPF has never wavered from its core principles. “Since 2001,” she observes, “the Foundation has grown from a two-person policy shop to a powerhouse advancing freedom and opportunity not just for Texans, but for all Americans. Results like that are important measures to me as an entrepreneur.”

Brenda’s family is close, and she takes great joy from spending time with her nieces and nephews. But she wants the policy victories she now helps advance to endure beyond them. “My commitment to TPPF is about the very existence of our country; about the battle to forever secure our rights, our Constitution, and the opportunity to flourish,” declares Brenda. “My legacy commitment has assured my everlasting presence in that fight. And, as a member of the TPPF board, I ask every single one of our wonderful donors to join with me.” ★

For more information about how you can join Brenda as a member of TPPF’s Lone Star Legacy Society, contact Shari Hanrahan, Director of the Lone Star Legacy Society, at shanrahan@texaspolicy.com or (512) 627-9831.



OTHER WAYS TO GIVE

Texas Recovery, the CARES Act, and You

The public health crisis of COVID-19 has turned into a serious economic crisis. But TPPF’s Recovery Agenda has led the charge to reopen Texas safely and effectively. Thanks to new legislation, Texans like you can lend a helping hand as we work together for a recovery.

Congress passed the CARES Act to address the impact of the nation’s COVID-19 response. This law provides donors an opportunity to make a tremendous difference in our state’s and nation’s future.

The CARES Act lifts restrictions on the amount of charitable giving that’s deductible from an individual’s taxable income in 2020—donors can give away 100% percent of their income.

Though Congress waived Required Minimum Distributions from retirement accounts in 2020, account holders can still make direct gifts to charity up to \$100,000. Do your retirement accounts yield greater returns than what’s needed for your personal expenses? Then you may want to consult your financial adviser about how this affects your personal and charitable goals.

These new rules make 2020 a great year to consider how you could amplify the lasting impact of your gift.

Happenings & UPDATES

“ Since its March 2020 launch, TPPF’s Election Protection Project has been educating the public about ballot safety and how to protect your vote. The project focuses on helping voters understand the rights and rules of voting, preventing voter intimidation, and preserving the integrity and safety of each and every ballot.”



Vance Ginn Returns to Texas!

In June 2019, TPPF’s beloved Dr. Vance Ginn left his role as TPPF senior economist and director of the Center for Economic Prosperity to join the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) as the associate director for economic policy. But in May 2020, we were glad to welcome Vance back to the Lone Star State when he rejoined our staff as TPPF’s chief economist. In Washington, D.C., Vance advised the OMB director on economic and fiscal policy matters, managed a team who sought evidence of good government and modeled the economic assumptions in President Trump’s FY 2021 Budget, which cut a record \$4.6 trillion in debt over a decade, made the Trump tax cuts permanent (and noted the need for a fiscal rule), and provided in-depth analysis throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Now, Vance is back at TPPF as the chief economist to assist in many policy areas to find what works best for human flourishing. His new role includes developing and coordinating a multi-state entitlement reform initiative, known as the Opportunity Project, and leading the development of policy recommendations for state budget cuts and spending priorities to strengthen institutions so more people can better care for themselves and their families. Vance is instrumental in TPPF’s effort to preserve Texas as a place where Texans can build their careers, raise their families, and live their lives freely. We are happy to welcome him back to the Lone Star State and to TPPF!

Picture with Larry Kudlow, the Director of the U.S. National Economic Council at the White House.



TPPF’s Election Protection Project

Since its March 2020 launch, TPPF’s Election Protection Project has been educating the public about ballot safety and how to protect your vote. The project focuses on helping voters understand the rights and rules of voting, preventing voter intimidation, and preserving the integrity and safety of each and every ballot. Recently, TPPF brought experts Francisco “Quico” Canseco and Michael Leland on board to lead this project.

Quico serves as director of the Election Protection Project. He represented the 23rd Congressional District of Texas in the 112th United States Congress. During his first year in Congress, he was selected by the Speaker to deliver the Spanish language State of the Union response. He served on the House Financial Services Committee and authored legislation for a constitutional economy, promoting border security, and challenging EPA overreach. Quico is a first-generation American and native of Laredo.

“A citizen’s right to vote is the most fundamental feature of a representative democracy,” said the TPPF’s Executive Director Dr. Kevin Roberts. “I can think of no one better to lead this project than Quico Canseco whose background as an elected official and businessman gives him a unique understanding of our election systems and exactly what is at stake in protecting every vote.”

Michael Leland will serve as the campaign director for the initiative and brings with him a decade’s worth of outreach and policy experience. Most recently, Michael served as senior director of outreach and operations at the Committee for Economic Development where he was responsible for the creation and relaunch of their external affairs and government affairs capacity.

For more information about this project visit:

<https://www.texaspolicy.com/initiatives/electionintegrity>



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Our Visionaries Meeting offers special programming for Visionary-level donors. To register for our 2021 Policy Orientation/Visionaries Meeting or to learn more about Visionaries membership, please contact Annie Casteel at (512) 615-7982 or acasteel@texaspolicy.com.