

# THE NATIONAL CENTER

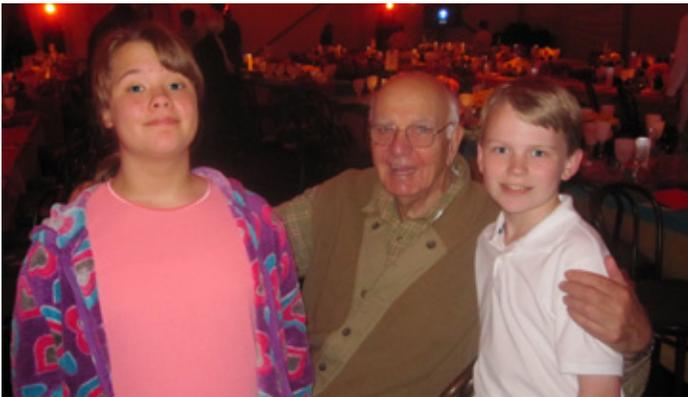


# FOR PUBLIC POLICY RESEARCH

*Winter 2012/2013*

## Message from David and Amy Ridenour

With 2012 soon coming to an end, we hope you'll consider including your National Center for Public Policy Research in your year-end giving plans.



*Kate and Chris Ridenour meet former Federal Reserve Chairman Paul Volcker while helping their father promote free-market environmentalism at the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Annual Dinner.*

Year-end gifts are critical to our success next year as such donations can constitute up to 25% of our budget.

And with the left newly-energized following the re-election of arguably the most liberal president in our lifetimes, your year-end gift has never been more important.

You know that no organization is better equipped to fight and beat the big government left, even under the most difficult circumstances.

Our programs – your programs – have achieved incredible results for liberty. Among them:

- Turning two pharmaceutical firms that had bankrolled ObamaCare against it;
- Prompting a government investigation that concluded that a provision of ObamaCare may have illegally funded lobbying activities at the local level;

- Defunding the left to the tune of millions of dollars by forcing corporation after corporation to withdraw from a key environmental lobby group;
- Discrediting left-wing groups that pretend to be honest brokers in the public policy debate by exposing their funding, associations, extreme statements, and inaccuracies to the media and the public;
- Defending our free market allies when the left launches a coordinated campaign to deny them of their funding;
- Educating millions of Americans about the benefits of freedom and free markets through an average of two television appearances per week; 16 radio appearances per week; and one published op/ed per day.
- Diminishing the constituency for Solyndra-style programs by forcing a major Internet corporation to pull the plug on its green energy programs;
- Neutralizing the left when it calls our allies and our ideas “racist” by using our black network to defend them.
- And much, much more.

The task before next year will be immense, but with you at our side, we know we'll prevail, we know that the best days for liberty lie before us.

Thank you for your generous support. We continue to be humbled and honored by the faith you've shown in us.

All our very best wishes to you and your family for a happy and healthy holiday.

Sincerely,

David and Amy Ridenour



## National Center's Minority Outreach More Important Than Ever

An important message came out of the 2012 election: We must invest more in showing minorities the value of conservative and free-market ideas.

In Virginia, exit polls indicate that 21% of those who voted were black, even though blacks represent less than 20% of the commonwealth's population. Fully 94% percent of these voters went for Barack Obama.

The story was much the same in other swing states. Only 38% of whites voted for Barack Obama, meaning that minorities provided him with his margin of victory.

This has meaning far beyond elections. Minorities will also be crucial to the President's policy agenda over the next four years. We ignore minority communities at our peril.



*General Counsel Justin Danhof cites statistics showing that voter identification laws increase, rather than suppress, black voter turnout in an interview with the Voice of America.*

our message more effectively than has any other organization.

In 2012, hundreds of black newspapers and radio stations published Project 21 commentaries or quoted or interviewed its members, including WVON Radio (Chicago), the Compton (CA) Bulletin, the Pittsburgh New Courier, the Atlanta Inquirer, WHUR Radio (Washington, DC), the



*Project 21 Co-Chairman Cherylyn Harley LeBon questions the wisdom of DC public schools instituting mandatory sex education testing on PBS's "To the Contrary."*

Our Project 21 program remains one of the few programs on the right doing anything to bring minorities into our movement.

Through our New Visions Commentary syndication service and other publications, Project 21 has been able to penetrate the black community media with

Philadelphia Tribune, the Dallas Examiner, and the Hampton Roads (VA) Voice.

Your continued support is critical to expand these important efforts. They're also critical to America's future.



## NOAA Manipulates Hurricane Data to Support its Forecast, Escape Shame of Being Bested by 5th Grade Forecasters

The results for the 2012 hurricane season are in and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the federal government's official hurricane forecasting agency, was wrong yet again.

*Continued on page 4...*

### THE NATIONAL CENTER

### FOR PUBLIC POLICY RESEARCH

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# *Federal Policy Driven by Radical Environmentalism Endangers Forests*

By DAVID A. RIDENOUR, PRESIDENT

If President Obama was serious about “saving and creating” jobs, he would have done something to save the jobs at Aero Union.

He didn't lift a finger. In fact, he pulled the trigger, killing the air tanker firm and making Colorado's Waldo Canyon fire worse in the process.



David A. Ridenour

Over 18,000 acres of forest were destroyed; some 350 homes were raised; septuagenarians William and Barbara Everett were killed; and area streams were polluted by fire-related ash, debris, and soil run-off.

Last year, the U.S. Forest Service abruptly cancelled its contract for six of Aero Union's air tankers. This left the Forest Service short of tankers just as last year's fire season was getting underway. Only a few weeks later, fires swept through Texas burning some 100,000 acres and leaving four dead.

The Obama Administration apparently learned nothing from the tragedy. In the intervening year, it did little to address its tanker shortage and Colorado paid the price for it.

The Administration says it cancelled the contract due to aircraft safety concerns. That doesn't explain why it dithered in replacing the aircraft. But

something else may: President Obama's allegiance to his green allies.

Environmentalists have long opposed the use of slurry, the fire retardant dropped from air tankers, due to its potential for polluting streams.

Following an accidental drop of slurry into Oregon's Fall River in 2002 and a subsequent environmentalist lawsuit, the Forest Service issued new rules barring drops of retardants within 300 feet of waterways except when fire threatens human life and property.

Make no mistake: The rule inhibits firefighters' ability to control blazes. Think about a football defensive line that isn't allowed to do anything until the opposing team reaches the five-yard line and you get the idea.

Now, the agency is implementing even more stringent regulations prohibiting drops within 600 feet of waterways. Little wonder it was in no hurry to line up replacement tankers.

Hampering fire control efforts is only one way federal policy driven by greens contributes to wildfires.

One of the main culprits for the Colorado fires is believed to be pine beetles.

The beetles carry a blue stain fungus that pulls moisture from trees. In sufficient numbers, these insects can cause whole forests to die of dehydration, creating a tinderbox.

What forests are most susceptible to beetle infestations? According to the Forest Service, forests with “large-diameter trees and dense stands.”

Environmentalists have blocked logging operations that could thin these stands at every turn.

In 2003, the General Accounting Office estimated that some 190 million acres of federal land were at high risk of wildfire due to “excess fuels buildup in forests.”

Environmentalists claim that our federal fire suppression efforts are responsible for much of the fuel buildup and they aren't entirely wrong. Thanks partly to effective suppression methods, the average number of acres burned annually dropped from 38 million acres in the 1930s to about 3 million acres in the 1980s. By the 1990s, wildfires started to increase again and in the last decade claimed an average of 6.9 million annually.

The answer to this problem isn't to stop suppressing fires, as some environmentalists suggest. Even if we were willing to risk lives and property by taking the “let it burn” approach – and rational people are not – the fuel load today is so great that this would produce catastrophic fires, fires so intense that they would cook the soil and destroy whole ecosystems.

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***“Hampering fire control efforts is... one way federal policy driven by greens contributes to wildfires.”***

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The answer is to reduce the fuel load through thinning of trees followed by forest management using prescribed burns, logging and other measures that could restore forests to their historic states.

This wouldn't just “save and create” jobs, as President Obama says he wants to do.

It would also save and create healthy forests.

*(A version of this article was published in over 30 publications, including the Denver Post, Newsday, the Arizona Daily Star and the Lexington Herald-Leader.)*

*Continued from previous page...*

Last May, it forecast four to eight hurricanes in the Atlantic basin for the year and as of this writing there have already been ten.

This is – officially, at least – the fifth time in the past nine years that the agency’s forecast has been wrong.

But unofficially, it is probably the sixth time its forecast has been wrong.

Last year, when it appeared that NOAA’s mid-season forecast of hurricanes would be too high, agency officials went to extraordinary lengths to find data that would allow them to increase the official count of hurricanes.

That’s what we found out after examining some 800 pages of NOAA communications obtained through a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request.

NOAA’s annual hurricane forecasts have come under criticism in recent years, especially from The National Center for Public Policy Research, which last year put up the prognostication skills of two fifth graders against those of the multi-billion dollar agency. The children, Kate and Chris Ridenour, used a game of UNO as their prognostication tool, letting the cards that remained at the conclusion of the game – 3 and 8 – serve as their range estimate of hurricanes in 2011.

Previously, we’d put the forecasting skills of a trained chimp, armed with a pair of dice, up against the agency. We released videos of both our forecast and the video of the chimp forecast received nationwide coverage, including from the O’Reilly Factor, The Washington Post and Star.



*Jeff Stier chastises New York Mayor Bloomberg for letting his irrational fear of pesticides contribute to the city’s outbreak of West Nile Virus on Good Day New York.*



*Project 21 Co-Chairman Horace Cooper explains why using race as a basis for college admission, even with good intentions, is wrong. He is speaking to students outside the U.S. Supreme Court as oral arguments began in the affirmative action case Abigail Noel Fisher v. University of Texas. The students had just heard a different interpretation of the case from Al Sharpton and Jesse Jackson.*

Just days before last year’s hurricane season ended, NOAA records indicated that six hurricanes had occurred. The kids’ forecast turned out not only to be on the mark, but to have bested most of the major hurricane forecasts, including, for a time, NOAA itself.

To have produced yet another bad forecast was bad enough, but being out-forecast by fifth graders appeared to be too much for the agency. So officials went shopping for data to ensure their forecast wouldn’t be wrong again and to prove that they were at least as smart as a pair of fifth graders.

Documents we obtained through FOIA indicate that NOAA officials engaged in a rigorous debate over whether to reclassify September Tropical Storm Nate as a hurricane during their post-season analysis. Ultimately, that’s precisely what they decided to do.

But to justify the reclassification, they needed new data, as hurricane hunter aircraft and satellite imagery did not consider Nate a hurricane. NOAA sought that data from Petróleos Mexicanos (PEMEX), Mexico’s state-run oil company.

“We are having a bit of an office debate of whether Nate was a hurricane or not,” wrote Eric Blake, a hurricane specialist



*Research Associate Jody Ferris shows her opposition to ObamaCare outside the U.S. Supreme Court.*

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# Chesapeake Takes Shareholder Heat for Giving Sierra Club \$26 Million to Attack Coal

By RON ARNOLD

Billionaire raider Carl Icahn isn't the only one who shook up Chesapeake Energy's high-living CEO Aubrey McClendon at the firm's annual meeting last week.

It was bad enough that Icahn, with the power of his new 7.6 percent stake in the natural gas and oil company, had forced Chesapeake to replace four board members and rework its corporate accountability procedures.

It was worse that both the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Internal Revenue Service are probing McClendon's undisclosed \$200 million hedge fund and his trading in natural gas securities while serving as the CEO of natural gas giant Chesapeake Energy.

But then a shareholder at the Oklahoma City annual meeting turned a spotlight on modern corporate ethics by grilling the ruthless McClendon on his decision to give the anti-energy Sierra Club \$26 million to fund a "Beyond Coal" attack against the coal industry.

It was almost like the plot of a bad gangster movie about a for-profit hiring a nonprofit to make a hit on a competing for-profit.

The secret cash-for-conflict connection started in 2007 and ended in 2010, but nobody had confronted McClendon face to face for his outrageous predatory relationship until last week. The shareholder was also president of the nonprofit National Center for Public Policy Research, David Ridenour, a widely known conservative leader.

Speaking from his organization's Capitol Hill headquarters, Ridenour said, "I asked Mr. McClendon if in retrospect it was a mistake to provide this funding, and he said, 'We're in a

market share struggle with coal, and because of that campaign, 150 new coal plants were stopped. That demand will go to natural gas.'"



Ron Arnold

"It was like he was bragging," Ridenour fumed. "Aubrey McClendon told his investors, 'I have no regrets about working with the Sierra Club. Coal is dirty. I think it was a good investment.' As far as I'm concerned, Mr. McClendon, the oil and gas wildcatter had metaphorically drilled a hole in the coal economy and kicked all the workers in it, as if his proudest product was unemployment."

Ridenour continued, "But Mr. McClendon largely ignored my next question, 'By funding Beyond Coal, did you not unnecessarily pick a fight with another fossil fuel industry that now will have every incentive to fund Beyond Natural Gas?'"

Ridenour thought it would be darkly amusing if the coal industry did turn out to be funding Beyond Natural Gas, and did have a stipulation in its grant contract limiting the use of the gift to fighting Mr. McClendon's industry.

Ridenour challenged the Sierra Club, "So we call upon it to fully disclose who is underwriting Beyond Natural Gas." The Sierra Club, like all tax-exempt 501(c)(4) environmental groups, is not required to publicly disclose any infor-

mation about its contributors.

Sierra Club Executive Director Michael Brune said Chesapeake's funding came "mostly" from Aubrey McClendon but has said nothing about funders of the attack against natural gas.

Ridenour still hopes to find out what Chesapeake's grants to the Sierra Club were spent for, and beyond that wants to make environmental groups know that people are watching for corporate donations to nonprofits that might be paying for predatory attacks against competitors.

America's tradition of honest charitable contributions should remain honest and not degenerate into charity abuse.

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***"Energy independence is important to national security, and low-cost energy is important to American jobs and prosperity. We shouldn't be fighting things that are good for us."***

***- David Ridenour***

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Ridenour concluded, "As a representative of a Chesapeake shareholder and an employee of another shareholder, I'm not thrilled that Mr. McClendon gave money to an activist group dedicated to the company's destruction, but I'm even less happy as an American."

"Energy independence is important to national security, and low-cost energy is important to American jobs and prosperity. We shouldn't be fighting things that are good for us."

*This column originally appeared in the Washington Examiner on June 14, 2012. It is reprinted with permission.*



## Donor Profile:

### George R. Hearst, Jr.

#### *In Memoriam: "A Silent Giant"*

George R. Hearst, Jr. was born into a famous and wealthy family. He could easily have coasted through life, but instead he chose the path of hard work right up until his death in June of this year at the age of 84.

At that time, George was chairman of the board of the Hearst Corporation, a position he assumed in 1996.

Previously he had served as vice president of the Hearst Corporation and managed its extensive real estate holdings.

The Hearst Corporation is one of America's largest and most diversified media companies. It has a storied history that began with George's grandfather, the colorful newspaper publisher William Randolph Hearst – familiar to moviegoers as the subject of Orson Welles' famous film, *Citizen Kane*.

George Hearst, Jr. was born in 1927 and came of age in the World War II era. He spent nearly 10 years in the military, first serving in the Naval Air Corps during World War II and then serving in the Army during the Korean War, including a stint as a combat helicopter pilot.

During that period, he also began his career in business, joining the staff of the Los Angeles Examiner in 1948 and then moving to the staff of the San Francisco Examiner for two years. He subsequently joined the Los Angeles Evening Herald-Express, where he became business manager in 1957. By 1958, he was a vice president of Hearst Publishing Company and a director of Hearst Corporation.

In addition to his long career in business, George devoted his time and resources to many philanthropic endeavors. He was president of the Hearst Foundation and a director of the William Randolph Hearst Foundation.

George also personally contributed to conservative political candidates and causes, both in California and nationwide.

"He was a silent giant," says George R. Hearst III, one of George's two sons. "He was probably one of the most generous people anyone could ever hope to know. He always did great things, good things, for people when nobody was looking. I'm sure many will be forever grateful for his generosity."

He was certainly generous to The National Center.

George supported our work for more than a decade, first underwriting our programs to defend property rights and fight against irrational and counter-productive environmental regulation and later, supporting Project 21 and our Free Enterprise Project.

George's interest in our property rights and environmental work stemmed from his involvement in the ranching community, a community that often finds itself in cross-hairs of the environmental movement.

He not only owned a ranch, the Estrella Ranch, but also supported youngsters wishing to pursue careers in ranching by buying livestock every year at the

California Mid-State Fair. He also paid for the construction of several buildings at the fair grounds.

George's last contribution to The National Center was made the day before he suffered a stroke that eventually would claim his life. A breeder of champion cutting horses, George was doing what he loved when he fell ill: watching his trainer show some of his horses at a competition in Bakersfield.

George's son called him a "silent giant" and we couldn't agree more.

George R. Hearst, Jr. will be greatly missed not only for his great works, but also for his friendship.



*George R. Hearst, Jr. (Photo Credit: Midge Ames)*

## I See a Great Year for Liberty... With Your Year-End Gift

You don't need to be a weatherman to know which way the wind is blowing.

And you don't need to be a psychic to know that 2013 will be a crucial year in the struggle between those who support America's tradition of free enterprise and limited government and those who want to increase the power of government.

Your National Center is on the side of free enterprise and limited government. And we're effective. Whether it's Project 21, the Free Enterprise Project, the Risk Analysis Division, the Enterprise and Environment Institute or our other work, National Center programs achieve results.



Your year-end gift will help us to wage the battle for liberty in 2013. And best of all, it's tax-deductible.

There are a number of ways you can save money on taxes and make a year-end gift to support The National Center's vital programs...

### Gifts of Cash

A year-end donation by cash, check, or credit card is the easiest and most popular way to support the National Center. If your contribution is received by December 31, you can take a 2012 charitable deduction of up to 50% of your adjusted gross income for such gifts. Amounts greater than that can be carried over up to five years. Because credit card donations can take a few days to process, please send those gifts early to ensure they'll be recorded in 2012.

### Gifts of IRAs

Although the IRA charitable rollover expired at the end of last year, it will likely be extended late this year as it enjoys broad-based, bipartisan support and has been extended repeatedly since it first expired in 2007. The IRA charitable rollover allows retirees 70½ and older to contribute up to \$100,000 directly from their IRA accounts to qualified charities such as The National Center for Public Policy Research without taking a distribution that would ordinarily incur a tax liability. Assuming the rollover is extended, your gift would have to be

transferred directly from your IRA trustee (bank or brokerage firm) to The National Center and the transaction would have to be completed by December 31, 2012. If the rollover is not extended, you may wish to donate all or a portion of your minimum required distribution to The National Center for Public Policy Research to reduce or eliminate entirely the tax liability of the distribution.

### Gifts of Appreciated Stock

By contributing appreciated stocks you've held for at least one year to the National Center, you can avoid federal and state capital gains taxes while earning a generous tax deduction for the full current market value of the stock. This is a great way to substantially reduce your tax liability. If, for example, you donate 20 shares of Apple Computer (currently, \$574 per share) to The National Center today, you might avoid \$1,722 in capital gains taxes while earning a deduction of \$11,480. This would be in spite of the fact that you may have spent only \$770 on the shares when you purchased them in 2005.

To take advantage of this giving option, please provide your broker with our broker's contact information and our account information:

**Scott Wilson, UBS Financial Services**

**Phone: (202) 585-5419**

**E-mail: [scott.a.wilson@ubs.com](mailto:scott.a.wilson@ubs.com)**

**Account #: WS-39878**

**DTC#: 0221 FBO**

It would help us if you indicate on the envelope provided with this newsletter the security or securities and the number of shares you plan to donate. That will alert us to the gift so we can keep an eye out for it. The transaction must be completed by December 31, 2012 to qualify for a deduction for this tax year.

### Insurance Policies

Another good way to make a year-end gift and earn a generous tax deduction is to donate life insurance policies you no longer need. To qualify for a charitable deduction, you must name the National Center as your beneficiary and transfer ownership of the policy.

A year-end gift can offer you significant tax benefits while also advancing the cause of freedom. If you have any questions about making a gift, please call David Ridenour at (202) 543-4110, ext. 16, or send him an e-mail at [dridenour@nationalcenter.org](mailto:dridenour@nationalcenter.org).

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David Almasi discussing the dangers of ObamaCare in an interview with WMAL Radio.

at NOAA in an email to PEMEX's Fabian Romana Vazquez. "...[We] need something more concrete if we decide to do it..."

Communications between PEMEX and NOAA suggest that the Mexicans were extremely reticent about providing the data. The Mexican government made its wind speed data available

'unofficially' and only after receiving assurances from NOAA that certain data, such as the longitude and latitude of the oil rigs, would be kept strictly confidential. The Mexicans consider this data sensitive national security information. NOAA wanted it badly enough that it was willing to let Mexico's security concerns take a back seat.

Without information on the longitude and latitude of the oilrigs and their height, it is also, conveniently, impossible to independently verify the accuracy of the rigs' data.



Project 21's Lisa Fritsch calls on liberal politicians to apologize for embracing the hateful "Occupy Wall Street" movement in an interview with Fox's Neil Cavuto.



Jeff Stier takes issue with a new video by Center for Science in the Public Interest blaming sugary sodas for everything from obesity to diabetes-related amputations in an interview on CNBC.

rising carbon concentrations on our climate 25, 50 and 100 years from now.

Thanks to our videos, which were made possible by your generous support, millions more Americans now understand this.



## GroupSnoop Exposes Left-Wing Bias of Supposed Non-Partisan Groups

The Brennan Center for Justice. Color of Change. News21.

These groups may have innocuous-sounding names, but all three are committed left-wing organizations. All three also are at the forefront of the campaign to overturn voter identification laws.

Their spokesmen are frequently heard in the mainstream media charging that voter ID laws are designed to disenfranchise voters or are motivated by racism, with no mention of their liberal biases.



Project 21 Co-Chairman Horace Cooper blames liberal big city mayors' anti-business policies for diminishing resources for schools on Russia Today.

We're exposing these groups and others through GroupSnoop.

Launched late last year, GroupSnoop is the National Center's educational website that includes profiles of left-wing organizations that have, until now, operated with complete impunity. For many years, these outfits have contributed to Wikipedia-style websites that assail conservative organizations using exaggerated rhetoric and outright falsehoods to tarnish the image of the free-market, conservative and pro-Constitution movements.

Now we're giving them a taste of their own medicine, only we're doing it fairly and honestly: we expose their biases using their own words and documented facts so that they discredit themselves.

In operation a little over a year, GroupSnoop has already established itself as one of the most important reference sites on the Internet.

Average daily traffic for GroupSnoop is now triple what it was in its first full year of operation, with more than 2,500 journalists, lawmakers, and citizens accessing it every month to learn the truth about liberal non-profit organizations.

GroupSnoop currently offers profiles of more than 30 left-leaning organizations (including the primary opponents of voter ID laws), with many more profiles in the pipeline. We'll also soon add profiles of free-market and conservative organizations, too, to counter negative profiles of such groups on SourceWatch, Wikipedia, and ExxonSecrets.

GroupSnoop is having an enormous influence on the policy debate. A good case in point is its profile of the Brennan Center.

The Brennan Center is a left-wing advocacy group operating



*Jeff Stier speaks about government efforts to police what foods we eat at a forum sponsored by the Columbia Law School Federalist Society.*

out of New York University (NYU) Law School. For years, the Brennan Center has led the liberal effort to stamp out voter ID laws. Meanwhile, the public has been led to believe it is just an impartial academic center whose work should be taken seriously.

Not anymore.

In a profile we published in July, we showed that the Brennan Center is funded by liberal billionaire (and convicted felon) George Soros; its reports are biased and have been debunked by election scholars; and it uses scare tactics to claim voter ID laws suppress minority and elderly votes.

Along with the profile, we issued a statement criticizing the ACLU for using Brennan Center data in its legal arguments



*General Counsel Justin Danhof calls for prosecution of WikiLeaks' Julian Assange under the Espionage Act during an interview with China Central Television.*

trying to strike Pennsylvania's voter ID law.

This attracted considerable media attention, including from over a dozen radio talk shows and even the liberal Boston Globe.

An interview National Center General Counsel did on Columbus, Ohio's

top rated talk radio station WTVN discussing the Pennsylvania voter ID case and criticizing the Brennan Center's flawed reports was supposed to be a debate that included a representative from the Brennan Center, but the group refused. In fact, Brennan Center officials have ducked National Center experts on multiple occasions regarding the voter ID debate.

That shows the effectiveness of GroupSnoop. It uses facts and evidence to expose the left, and liberal organizations seek to avoid that kind of public scrutiny.

More significantly, the judge in the Pennsylvania case gave no weight to the Brennan Center's work in rendering his decision to uphold, but delay implementation of the law. That work is highly biased advocacy that has no place in serious legal proceedings.

The public is also taking notice.

A Google search for the Brennan Center now shows its GroupSnoop profile as the fifth highest result, while our press release about its flawed data is third. Many other GroupSnoop profiles are in Google's top ten search results and climbing.

Your generous support allows GroupSnoop to grow and expose more left-wing organizations to real scrutiny.



*David Almasi discusses the dangers of ObamaCare with the English-language Chinese news channel CNC World.*

## Growing for Liberty...

With demand for your National Center's valuable programs continuing to grow, we're growing to meet it and proud to announce the following additions and changes to our team...



**Horace Cooper**, a member of our black leadership group Project 21 since its inception in 1992, was named Co-Chairman of Project 21. Horace was also named director of our new Voter Identification Task Force. A long-time member of The National Center's board of directors, Horace previously served as chief-of-staff at the Voice of America, as assistant law professor at George Mason University and as Counsel to then-U.S. Representative Richard Armey (Majority Leader of the U.S. House of Representatives from 1994-2002 and now Chairman of FreedomWorks).



**Cherylyn Harley LeBon**, another long-time member of Project 21, was also named Co-Chairman of Project 21 and will join Horace Cooper in leading the important program. Cherylyn previously served as senior counsel to the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, as a political appointee in the George W. Bush Administration, and as a deputy press secretary and spokesman for the Republican National Committee. A popular policy commentator, she's appeared on Fox, CNN, PBS, MSNBC, and many others.



**Justin Danhof**, General Counsel, was named the new director of the Free Enterprise Project. Justin is responsible for a significant portion of the project's success this year, as he personally took on corporate CEOs at no fewer than ten shareholder meetings. Prior to joining The National Center, Justin worked in the Miami-Dade State's Attorney's Office in the Economic and Cybercrimes Division, for the Massachusetts Alliance for Economic Development and at the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. Justin will also continue his role as General Counsel.



**Duncan Clark** was named development manager and senior writer to oversee communications with our 100,000+ supporters. He brings a wealth of experience to The National Center, having served for 13 years as development director for the National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation. He's been an editor for two trade associations, a speechwriter and editor at the U.S. Department of Energy, a Capitol Hill press secretary and a writer and editor in the Reagan White House.



**Teresa Platt**, a 26-year veteran of the environmental policy debate, was named director of the Environment and Enterprise Institute. Teresa served for 13 years as Executive Director of the Fur Commission USA, the national mink farming association, where she built strong and broad coalitions that led to the passage of legislation to combat eco-terrorism. She previously served as co-director of the Fishermen's Coalition, a non-profit she founded in 1992 to educate the public on responsible fishing practices. In that capacity, she was a key leader in a successful effort to amend the Marine Mammal Protection Act.

Teresa is a widely sought-after interview source and has worked with journalists from CNN, ABC, NBC, Fox News, BBC, The Wall Street Journal, The New York Times and many others.

# Obesity Scare Will Collapse Under Its Own Weight

By JEFF STIER AND DAVID W. ALMASI

Take those grim claims about a fat future for America with a grain of salt. Several grains of salt, in fact. Add flour, sugar, baking powder, shortening, milk, eggs and vanilla. Mix them all together and bake for 20 minutes at 350 degrees.

Enjoy the cupcake this will create with the realization that the predictions are half-baked. But eat in moderation. That's the key to beating obesity.



Jeff Stier



David Almasi

In a media blitz that includes a taxpayer-funded conference, reports from the Institute of Medicine (the health policy arm of the National Academy of Sciences) and Duke University, and a four-part HBO "Weight of the Nation" documentary, a study led by researchers

at Duke predicts that 42 percent of Americans will be obese by 2030.

That's a huge increase from about 36 percent in 2010 -- a figure that's held relatively steady for about a decade.

The assertion, however, is as reliable a predictor as a Magic Eight Ball. It's based on projections like the number of fast-food restaurants likely to be built over the next two decades. Wall Street analysts can't predict such things five years out. Yet the researchers claim to guess not only the number, but what people will eat in those establishments and how those choices will fit into their overall lifestyles.

That's about as nutty as predicting obesity based on Internet access, which the researchers also did, predicting technological advancement encourages laziness.

Another factor they threw into the mix was the price of alcohol. The thinking is that if alcohol prices are low, people will drink to excess and gain weight -- a very speculative assumption for what is supposed to be a scientific report.

The real purpose of the report is to ease the public into an acceptance of authoritarian interventions. The proposed solutions -- which include high soda taxes, minimum pricing on alcohol (already being considered in Europe) and restrictions on where fast-food restaurants can open (already law in Los Angeles) are very unpopular. So activists feel the need to overstate the risk to make the case that we need emergency measures, no matter how drastic.

Institute of Medicine committee member Shiriki Kumanyika said as much in a Reuters interview, claiming: "The average person cannot maintain a healthy weight in this obesity-promoting environment."

Other remedies for America's junk-food junkies would likely include food restrictions that mimic today's tobacco regulations. Expect to see higher taxes on food that government bureaucrats don't want you to eat, as well as mar-

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***"...activists feel the need to overstate the risk to make the case that we need emergency measures, no matter how drastic."***

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keting restrictions, and more laws like the one passed in Massachusetts -- a ban on public school bake sales.

These activists underestimate the American people. Amid the calls for government control over the nation's cupboard, scant credit is given to the public's willingness to adopt healthy eating habits.

The Walt Disney Co. found more than half of its theme park customers took to its healthier food offerings. The Chop't Creative Salad fast-casual restaurant chain had a 260 percent growth in revenue between 2006 and 2009.

To be sure, obesity is a public health problem that should be addressed with scientific discipline. Instead, as the current campaign illustrates, activists are politicizing obesity -- using it as a vehicle to try to remake the American way of life.

Just as too much candy and soda crowd out more nutrient-rich and lower-calorie food and drink, flawed approaches such as this taxpayer-funded nanny-state blueprint could crowd out better ideas.

*(A version of this article originally appeared in New York Newsday.)*

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“Judge Simpson delivered a message that Pennsylvania’s voting booths are open for fraud.”

– *Justin Danhof, responding to a Pennsylvania judge’s decision to delay implementation of the Commonwealth’s voter identification law.*

### *The St. Croix Review*

“Dr. Bonner Cohen’s [“Energy Independence for the U.S.”] lecture was a tour de force in its scope and depth.”

### **INVESTOR’S BUSINESS DAILY**

“Voter fraud... is a crime with real victims. And, according to the National Center for Public Policy Research, those victims are predominantly black and the poor.”

## **StarTribune**

“Retailers are trying to cleanse their guilt over selling consumer products by advancing this green initiative [but] suppliers, customers and shareholders [pay the costs].”

– *Justin Danhof criticizing the Retail Industry Leaders Associations sustainability standards.*

## **The★Star** THE KANSAS CITY STAR

“... election fraud has been woven into the political fabric of the community, tainting elections... disenfranchising legal voters and compounding voter cynicism...”

– *Project 21 Co-Chairman Horace Cooper on the need for voter identification laws.*