

The Patriots' Truth

Flint Hills Party News

For the time being we will NOT be holding the Saturday meetings. We may have Special Meetings when we have Special Guests, which will be publically announced in the paper, email, word-of-mouth. Check for updates at flintheastparty.com! We are now posting news items, events & the newsletters both recent & archived issues at our website. Weekly meetings are held at McAlister's, 5:30/6-10pm, Wed. evenings. They are come & go, at your convenience. Bring your concerns for discussion. Your concerns are important - they are why we exist. In this publication, what is in green is me (Sylda), other color is just for getting attention. Changes in font are for letting you know it is a new subject or person speaking. Help me include YOU!! What do you want to talk about? May GOD be with you now & always.

THE CULTURE OF CORRUPTION IN KANSAS' CAPITOL

by KRIS W. KOBACH | NOVEMBER 27, 2017 08:30 PM

When I launched my campaign for governor in June, I announced that one of my top priorities was to end the culture of corruption in Topeka. A few days later, legislative leadership there denied my claim that there's any corruption. A legislative council promised to send me a letter demanding that I prove this problem exists.

Five months later, I finally received their letter. In the meantime, several articles in The Star had confirmed that there is indeed serious corruption in Topeka.

So I will now make my case, not privately to the legislators but publicly to the people of Kansas, demonstrating this fact.

Exhibit one is the fact that **committees in the Kansas Legislature do not record their votes**. Instead, they operate through unrecorded voice votes. As a result, constituents have no way of knowing which way their representatives are voting and no ability to hold legislators accountable. Other states' legislatures are far more transparent, recording all votes in committees.

Exhibit two is state Rep. Erin Davis, who is simultaneously serving in the House and being paid as a "senior government strategist" for Cerner. In other words, a lobbyist. At the end of the 2017 session, shortly before going to work for Cerner, this legislator — the vice chair of appropriations — sat on the conference committee that inserted a \$2.7 million provision to build a state employee health clinic. Cerner lobbied for the clinic. **The Star's editorial board agrees that the dual-position "raises ethics questions."**

Exhibit three is a collection of reports about sexual harassment by state legislators and attempts by legislative leadership to cover up this activity. For example, several Democratic legislators, including House Minority Leader Jim Ward, **admitted they resided in what they called the "frat house."** From there they used state interns, including young women, as designated drivers so they could go out on the town drinking.

Exhibit four is former **Commerce Secretary Antonio Soave, who frequently handed out lucrative state contracts to his friends and business associates**. Upon leaving his position, he began working for one of those companies that received a state contract.

Exhibit five is the **Tonganoxie chicken processing plant scheme**. In September, the citizens of Tonganoxie were informed by their state government that they were being given the gift of a massive Tyson chicken factory that would completely change the face of their community. In addition, they would get the honor of paying for this factory they didn't want, as it would be financed through hundreds of millions of dollars in tax incentives and revenue bonds. It's also highly likely that hundreds of unauthorized alien workers would have been brought in to work at the plant. Fortunately the citizens of Tonganoxie stopped the project.

Exhibit six is the **multitude of reports of missing, abused and even deceased children under the Department for Children and Families**. Yet the agency remains largely silent.

Exhibit seven is the lack of term limits for legislators. To see just what a problem this is, consider the fact that Senate Minority Leader Anthony Hensley has been in office for more than 40 years — since Gerald Ford was president.

I rest my case. There is undeniably a culture of corruption in Topeka.

As governor, I'll make it my priority to bring it to an end. I'll push for term limits for all legislators and statewide officials, recorded votes in all committees, restrictions on the revolving door of legislators immediately swapping their legislator badges for lobbyist badges, reforms of the process for awarding

government contracts, restrictions and greater transparency in the provision of tax incentives for private businesses and reform of DCF. I won't rest until Kansans again have confidence in, and respect for, their government. *Kris W. Kobach is Kansas Secretary of State.*

Isn't it amazing what can be going on right under our noses and not be aware. Since the public CANNOT (as far as I know) attend many of these committee meetings, we have no record of who is for or against anything coming from committees. If we wanted to visit with Committee member concerning a topic we have no idea who voted how. Therefore a committee member can tell us they voted however would please us, preventing citizens from knowing which committee members we need to have a discussion with. Sounds like a way to avoid discussions with constituents to me. Legislators are well known for avoiding such discussions with those they are to be answering to.

HUMOR: PUT SENIORS IN JAIL AND CRIMINALS IN NURSING HOMES

By Dana Anspach | Updated September 21, 2017

Let's make one thing clear right from the start: **This a joke.** It's not intended to be taken seriously. If you're looking for nursing home humor and you have a sense of humor, read on. Otherwise, click to another page — don't stay here and get offended!

That said, here goes...

Put Seniors in Jail and Criminals in Nursing Homes

"Let's put the seniors in jail and the criminals in a nursing home. This way the seniors would have access to showers, hobbies, and walks. They'd receive unlimited free prescriptions, dental and medical treatment, and wheel chairs. They'd receive money instead of paying it out.

They would have constant video monitoring so they could be helped instantly if they fell or needed assistance. Their bedding would be washed twice a week and all their clothing would be ironed and returned to them.

A guard would check on them every 20 minutes and bring their meals and snacks to their cells. They would have family visits in a suite built for that purpose. They would have access to a library, a weight room, spiritual counseling, a pool, and education.

Simple clothing, shoes, slippers, pajamas and legal aid would be free on request. Private, secure rooms would be had by all, along with an outdoor exercise yard with gardens. Each senior could have a PC, a TV, radio, and daily phone calls.

There would be a board of directors to hear complaints, and the guards would have a code of conduct that would be strictly adhered to.

The "criminals" would get cold food and be left all alone and unsupervised with lights off at 8pm. They would get showers once a week, live in a tiny room, and pay [assisted living costs](#) of nearly \$5,000 per month. They would have no hope of ever getting out.

Justice for all.

Finding Quality Care

Of course, many excellent nursing homes provide outstanding care for seniors, but some don't. Just as with anything else in life, if you or a loved one need a living place that provides you with care, you'll want to do your due diligence to make sure you [find a location](#) that provides quality elder care.

If you have [long-term care insurance](#), the insurance company will likely provide a service which can help you locate a quality care facility. If you don't have insurance but need help with basic [activities of daily living](#), perhaps you can hire help on your own. If your income and assets are low, take steps to see if you qualify for Medicaid assistance.

Another option is to locate a [continuing care community](#) if you have equity in a home or other assets, which can be an alternative to long-term care insurance. You purchase living space in a community that guarantees to provide you with care should you need it at some point in the future.

And, if all else fails, you could always find a way to get yourself thrown into jail.

Actually it is NOT humorous that criminals have better treatment than our countries elders. Got any idea how this could be reversed??? Doesn't the realization of this just make your tummy roll? The thought that convicts have it better than our elderly citizens make me realize that we have more "Draining of the Swamp" than I realized. We need jails like Sheriff Joe had in Arizona. I've seen them and how they were reported is real and actually how they were. Lawbreakers deserve no better. Sheriff Joe said, "If our military overseas can live like this – so can you lawbreakers. If you don't like

it -- stop breaking the law.” We are way to nice to convicts. And way to ignorant as to the living conditions in too many elderly living homes. Let’s switch the money from making life so good for law breakers and make it better for those living in assisted living. Think about it!! Do something about it!! Is there a law stating how our convicts/jails/prisons are run?? I think we need more consideration of our disabled citizens and not worry so much about our law breakers. Whattya think?



FYI, from JD’A | <http://thefederalist.com/2017/11/22/im-not-giving-ten-year-old-smartphone/>

WHY I AM NOT GIVING MY 10 YEAR OLD A SMART PHONE:

According to Time magazine, ten years old is the average age kids receive phones nowadays. That’s ridiculous.

by [Nicole Russell](#) | November 22, 2017

We live in an era where not only does every adult own a smartphone, but most teenagers and even young kids do as well. My ten year-old has been asking for one for at least two years and many of his friends, including those younger than him, come to play, smartphone in tow. They’re asked to place it on the kitchen counter and can grab it again when they go home.

On the one hand, who can blame my son for wanting one, too? According to this Time magazine article, [“We Need to Talk About Kids and Smartphones.”](#) ten years old is the average age kids receive phones. On the other hand, despite pressure from other parents, him, and his friends, I’m not giving him one — at least not yet. Here’s why.

ANECDOTAL AND CLINICAL RESEARCH ARE ON MY SIDE

Mothers have an intuition. I can’t speak for fathers, but I’m sure many do as well. Ever since my son’s friends started coming over to play at six years old with an Android, iPhone Touch, or any other battery-powered thing, I didn’t like it.

Now, I’m not an old-fashioned parent, although I do homeschool. I’m a millennial, and I appreciate technology. But I could see right away 1) there was simply no need for my young son to have a phone yet, and 2) it would only serve as a huge distraction. How do I know? I’m a grownup and my own phone is a distraction from the daily tasks of regular life.

Fast-forward a few years later and loads of anecdotal and clinical research have only proved this mama’s intuition right. I didn’t need it, but data backs me up and only affirms the gut feeling I had and the choice I made to hold off on giving him a phone until there was a pressing need.

In an article in The Atlantic, [“Have Smartphones Destroyed a Generation,”](#) author and psychologist Jean M. Twenge writes she has been studying “generational differences” for 25 years and notes smart phones have adversely affected young people in a way few predicted: “Psychologically, however, they are more vulnerable than Millennials were: Rates of teen depression and suicide have skyrocketed since 2011. It’s not an exaggeration to describe iGen as being on the brink of the worst mental-health crisis in decades. Much of this deterioration can be traced to their phones.”

PHONES DISTRACT FROM INTIMATE CONNECTION

Another reason I don’t think my son needs a phone yet is because smartphones are distracting. They encourage lack of focus and self control, not only on the present moment but on real people. How do I know? They distract me and my friends. Have I mentioned yet we’re grownups?

Think about how many times you scroll Facebook while at the grocery store or see a driver checking his or her phone while at a stop light (or phon!). If grown-ups find phones distracting, and sometimes prefer to scroll Twitter than text a friend back because it requires less effort and thought, how much more will young people?

Time reported, “Parents, teens and researchers agree smartphones are having a profound impact on the way adolescents today communicate with one another and spend their free time. And while some experts say it’s too soon to ring alarm bells about smartphones, others argue we understand enough about young people’s emotional and developmental vulnerabilities to recommend restricting kids’ escalating phone habit.”

In the same article, high school guidance counselor Colleen Nisbet tells the reporter about how phones distract from real people and intimate connections: “Lunch was always a very social time when students were

interacting and letting out some energy. Now they sit with their phones out and barely talk to each other.”

Experts [have long linked isolation](#) to depression. Quality time with other people can improve a person’s mood and well-being. As Brian Primack, director of the University of Pittsburgh’s Center for Research on Media, Technology, and Health, said, “If smartphones are getting between an adolescent and her ability to engage in and enjoy face-to-face interaction — and some studies suggest that’s happening — that’s a big deal.”

SMARTPHONES ACCELERATE OUR TEMPTATION TO COMPARE

The Time author features Nina Langton, a teen who has it all but still struggles with depression, to the point of attempting suicide. The culprit? Doctors and her parents pinpointed her smartphone’s access to social media that allowed her to compare herself to the beautiful, no-doubt-filtered photos of models on social media. Who can blame her? I’ve closed a Kardashian Instagram feed feeling kinda bummed, too.

Adults reading this have two things going for them that “twens” and teenagers today don’t: They neither grew up with instant access to “other” worlds via social media and smartphones, nor do they (typically) lack the ability to understand the façade of those things. Adults know Instagram isn’t exactly real life and typically can make peace with it if they’re grounded and mentally healthy.

For teenagers, I suspect it’s more like living in “The Truman Show”: They’ve grown up looking at Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat so much that it is real to them. This is dangerous and a breeding ground for depression, loneliness, and other problems.

NOT ALL KIDS NEED PHONES, EITHER

Finally, I haven’t given my son a smartphone yet because he doesn’t need it. Really. Does any 10-year-old? Grant it, my son is homeschooled, so he’s around home a little more than other kids are, but he is a member of three instructional co-ops and multiple extracurricular activities, including a baseball league that has two practices and a game once a week.

We have an emergency cell phone at the house if I skip out for a few minutes, so he can call if he needs. Still, I don’t see a pressing logistical need. His desire to be just like his friends, while important, doesn’t outweigh my other concerns. If you think your tween really needs a smartphone, ask yourself: How did you survive your childhood without one?

Is my son old-fashioned? Am I? Am I setting him up to be unprepared and nerdy? Perhaps. He’s not a perfect kid, but he’s also kind, enthusiastic, well-adjusted, and hilarious. This may or may not be due to the fact that he lacks a smartphone, but with the tsunami of choices ahead when he does get one, regarding apps, social media, videogames and more, I’m not prone to welcoming a device that might upset that balance just yet. Particularly when the only pressing reason to do so is just to be like everyone else. *There is not much more to say except: I agree 100%!!*

Balanced Budget Solution — Protecting Middle-Class Kansans Legislators Unveil Republican Balanced Budget Solution

<https://www.kansastruthcaucus.org/single-post/2017/05/22/Legislators-Unveil-Republican-Balanced-Budget-Solution>

Topeka, KS – A broad coalition of Republican legislators unveiled the “Republican Balanced Budget Solution” on Monday afternoon, providing a pathway for legislators to meet their constitutional obligation without increasing the tax burden on Kansas families.

The Republican Balanced Budget Solution, which balances the budget in 2018 and fully funds KPERS without a tax increase, stands in stark contrast to the array of proposals that have emerged during the legislative session, which is fast approaching 100 days. After several votes and many false starts, leaders of the coalition supporting the Republican Balanced Budget Solution said it was time for a new approach.

“As we approach Memorial Day, those controlling this legislature are no closer to a solution than they were in January,” said Senator Ty Masterson, who added, “As they work behind the scenes to reach the magic number of votes necessary to ram through a plan that includes new and unnecessary spending and pays for that new spending with higher taxes on the middle class, we have a simple, straightforward plan that balances our budget without increasing the burden on hard-working Kansans.”

The benchmark of the Kansas Republican Balanced Budget Solution is that it slows the growth of government by not including new spending, thereby unnecessarily inflating the state’s need for added revenue. In addition, it brings

KPERS up-to-date and fulfills promises made by taking advantage of the opportunity to leverage the state master settlement agreement (MSA), which 18 other states have done previously. Partial securitization allows the state to utilize a cash payout to address a past due, one-time balance.

“This Balanced Budget Proposal is our way of saying – there is another way. If we really want to, there is a responsible path that does not require any new taxes. It’s not easy – but it’s simple: no new spending, keep promises, deliver the essentials,” said Rep. Chuck Weber.

Another feature of the Republican Balanced Budget Solution is that it returns to the practice of passing one-year budgets. It is not prudent to pass two-year budgets when the revenue picture can dramatically change year-to-year, particularly as our economy grows. Furthermore, imposing a premature tax increase can undermine that very growth. By this simple process change, the Republican Balanced Budget Solution eliminates the need for a tax increase to fund a deficit that may not exist.

Republican *Balanced Budget Solution*:

PROTECTING MIDDLE-CLASS KANSANS, BALANCE THE BUDGET, NO TAX INCREASES, FUNDS KPERS, GETTING THE JOB DONE WITHOUT TAX INCREASES — KEY POINTS OF REPUBLICAN BALANCED BUDGET

- Protects Kansas families struggling to make ends meet from massive, unnecessary tax increases
- Safeguards all Kansas taxpayers from an unexpected retroactive tax increase
- Controls government spending that leads to budget shortfalls
- Keeps legislative promises to fund delayed KPERS payments.
- Protects Children’s Initiative Fund (CIF) programs

The Kansas Republican Balanced Budget Solution is a proposal that balances the state budget and fulfills promises to fund KPERS without increasing taxes on hard-working Kansas families and seniors on fixed incomes.

The benchmark of the Kansas Republican Balanced Budget solution is controlling the growth of government by eliminating new and unnecessary spending. Unfortunately for Kansas taxpayers, budget proposals currently under consideration in the Legislature add new spending and unnecessarily inflate the state’s need for added revenue.

According to the recently released Docketing Institute Kansas Speaks poll, a whopping 75% of Kansans want the budget deficit solved with either spending cuts alone (41%) or a combination of cuts and taxes (34%). Only 25% of Kansans approved of new taxes to fill the deficit. The proposals currently being debated in the Kansas Legislature will INCREASE spending AND raise taxes.

Kansas taxpayers expect the Legislature to find solutions without imposing a massive tax hike on families already struggling to make ends meet. This proposal applies the same live-within-your-means solution that Kansas families utilize when balancing their own budgets.

In order to balance the budget, we must first stop new and unnecessary spending. Kansas government spending has increased by 145% since 1992 - \$1.9 billion above the rate of inflation during that same period. This year, for example, the Senate Ways and Means Committee has added \$298 million in new spending above the Governor’s recommendation to date, despite a challenging budget situation.

In addition, it is prudent to bring KPERS up-to-date and fulfill the promises made to state employees. The state has delayed KPERS payments for three years running. Those promises can be kept by taking advantage of the opportunity to partially securitize the state master settlement agreement (MSA) — a prudent option already exercised by 18 other states.

This partial securitization is fiscally sound while funding and protecting important Children’s Initiative Fund programs.

Perhaps most importantly, this proposal responsibly addresses the current budget situation without suppressing future growth. After several years of recession level growth, the national economy is finally rebounding under the new administration. As clearly evidenced in the nearly 626,000 new jobs since January, unemployment is at a near 10-year low at 4.4 percent, Consumer Confidence is the highest it has been in 17 years, and the average hourly private-sector earnings are up 2.5 percent over last year.

With these positive economic indicators in mind, imposing a massive, unnecessary tax increase on Kansas families and businesses just as they are beginning to recover would be irresponsible and will ultimately impede growth. A simple process change of reverting back to annual budgets will allow the Kansas Legislature more flexibility moving forward as we monitor and assess economic indicators rather than rushing to burden Kansans with harmful and unnecessary tax increases.



PREACH: DENZEL WASHINGTON SAYS BLACKS SHOULDN'T BLAME SYSTEM FOR BLACK INCARCERATION

By Kailey Guillemin | Nov. 27, 2017 at 11:22am

Academy Award-winner Denzel Washington isn't turning his back on the American justice system. Instead, the highly-admired actor suggested that all eyes should be turned towards the home when looking at black incarceration.

"It starts at the home," Washington told reporters at the New York premiere of his upcoming film, "Roman J. Israel, Esq."

In Washington's new film, he portrays Roman Israel, an ambitious defense attorney whose beliefs begin to be tested in the aftermath of joining a new law firm.

However, the actor admitted that the film didn't change his views on the justice system. Rather, he told the New York Daily News that the film reiterated what he believes is the root of the issue.

"It starts with how you raise your children," he said. "If a young man doesn't have a father figure, he'll go find a father figure."

"So you know I can't blame the system," Washington continued. "It's unfortunate that we make such easy work for them."

Washington has seen firsthand what fatherless homes look like within the black community.

In an interview with Reuters about the upcoming film, Washington opened up with his experience on family dynamics and how it affects young criminals.

"I grew up with guys who did decades (in prison)," Washington said. "And it had as much to do with their fathers not being in their lives as it did to do with any system."

"By the time we got to 13, 14, different things happened," Washington recalled. "Now I was doing just as much as they were, but they went further."

"I just didn't get caught, but they kept going down that road and then they were in the hands of the system."

And views seem to be mixed on the issue, with some either agreeing or disagreeing with Washington's recent statements.

The film's director, Dan Gilroy, told Reuters that many still believe there is inequality within American society.

"Our prison system needs reform at a fundamental level," Gilroy said. "We have the highest incarceration rate of any place in the Western world... It's not racially equal, it's not socio-economically equal."

But for Washington, it is bigger than just the justice system.

"It's about the formative years," he said. "You're not born a criminal."

I was reading on an internet site on things the late President Obama's daughter, Malia Obama, has been doing that some found objection to. The one thing that caught my attention was a remark concerning her kissing a white fellow student. The comment was, "We can't lose Malia Obama to a white guy!" This person is saying her relationship with a white man/person is wrong because **he is white!!** If that comment was made in reverse – a white person saying we are losing a white person to the white person's cause because they were kissing a black person we would be showing prejudice. Now it is the black person being prejudice – how is that OK?? Just to say what is fair for one race is fair for the other. **We are all Americans – NOT BLACKS & WHITES!! I would like a response.**



Think back – when did we start having racial problems? Oh, yes, soon after this enemy of the USA came into office. He and the Democratic Party are the ones who stirred up the problem. Racial differences were being well avoided and in many areas did not exist. You really cannot blame any race that is offered favoritism when they take it. Without the interference of such troublemaking folks the USA would be well on

our way all being one.



The Bangladesh national who immigrated to the U.S. in 2011 and is currently recovering from his [failed suicide bombing attempt](#) in New York City near Times Square will be charged with terrorism. Unfortunately, that's going to happen [in civilian federal court](#). Early reports are that the terrorist, Akayed Ullah, had become recently radicalized and was inspired by the Islamic State. While he may have acted alone, he was no "[lone wolf](#)." Indeed, this is yet another reminder that the Islamic ideology promoting radical jihad is as pervasive as ever, even as the Islamic State's physical caliphate is on the brink of total defeat.

Donald Trump responded to the failed terrorist attack by highlighting the need to reform the nation's immigration policies. "Today's terror suspect entered our country through extended-family chain migration, which is incompatible with national security," Trump asserted. "Congress must end chain migration. Congress must also act on my administration's other proposals to enhance domestic security, including increasing the number of Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers, enhancing the arrest and detention authorities for immigration officers, and ending fraud and abuse in our immigration system." He added, "The terrible harm that this flawed system inflicts on America's security and economy has long been clear. I am determined to improve our immigration system to put our country and our people first."

Attorney General Jeff Sessions echoed Trump's sentiments, arguing for U.S. immigration policy to be changed to a merit-based system. Sessions said, "The 20-year-old son of the sister of a U.S. citizen should not get priority to come to this country ahead of someone who is high-skilled, well-educated, has learned English, and is likely to assimilate and flourish here."

Giving further credence to Trump's argument, Ullah is now the fifth individual to engage in a domestic terror attack who was able to immigrate to the U.S. under the current visa lottery or chain migration system. His family had the gall to [complain](#) about being "held out in the cold" while authorities searched Ullah's home. And leftists want to maintain the status quo at all costs.

California's 'New Normal' Has Always Been Normal

By Jordan Candler

The Los Angeles Times [reports](#) that "Gov. Jerry Brown surveyed the devastation Saturday in Ventura —

the area hardest hit by firestorms that have displaced nearly 90,000 people in Southern California — calling it 'the new normal.' " He cited man-made global warming as the catalyst for the travesty and suggested that large-scale wildfires "could be something that happens every year or every few years." The wildfire situation in California is indeed a highly debilitating and challenging one. But it's easy to lose sight of the facts in the heat of the moment, if you will.

Left-media outlets are pointing to evidence of bigger wildfires in recent years, which they unequivocally and prematurely link to fossil fuels. In October, for example, Time magazine [reported](#), "Climate change has helped make California's wildfires more intense." Another publication, The Conversation, [wrote](#) in May 2016, "Wildfires in West have gotten bigger, more frequent and longer since the 1980s."

Now for an alternative perspective. According to the [National Interagency Fire Center](#), a total of 67,743 fires occurred in the U.S. in 2016, burning 5,509,995 acres. In 2015, there were 68,151 fires that scorched 10,125,149 acres. However, in 1980 and 1981, there were a whopping 234,892 and 249,370 fires, respectively, and in those back-to-back years 5,260,825 and 4,814,206 acres were burned. In this regard, there would appear to be an inverse relation. Between 1960 and 1982, there was only *one* year with fewer than 100,000 fires (1961), whereas between 1983 and 2016, not a single year has reached 100,000 fires annually.

That said, some recent years have seen a noteworthy increase in the number of acres burned, yet compared to parts of the 20th century, there are significantly fewer fires overall. Why? It's not as simple as blaming man-made global warming. California is home to nearly 40 million people. Many of them are expanding to areas that are historically prone to forest fires. The results are the equivalent of adding millions of people to Florida's shorelines — a bigger population means bigger impact from natural disasters. Moreover, last winter California experienced a [deluge of rain](#). Oddly enough, this worsens the wildfire outlook. As newly lush undergrowth dries out, it serves as additional fuel. Policymakers consider the repercussions unexpected, but most meteorologists saw the writing on the wall.

Speaking of policymakers, they share some (a lot?) of the blame. For too long they have failed to erect needed dams and routinely waste precious water in the name of preserving [Delta] smelt (a small fish). And other areas of the West suffer from [irresponsible logging practices](#). While Gov. Brown debates wildfire semantics and blames man-made global warming, the fact of the matter is that infernos are recurrent and always will be. And while natural *climate change* and population trends may change the overall scope and impact, what's clear too is that leftist policies have become the "new normal," as Brown would say. And they deserve at least as much attention, if not more, as any climate finger-pointing.

New pentagon policy on transsexuals: Those privates' privates are private, private!!

[Back in July](#), President Donald Trump reversed one of Barack Obama's [most odious military policy decisions](#) — opening the doors for transgender individuals to serve openly in the military. In seeking to undo the damage, Trump rightly said, "Our military must be focused on decisive and overwhelming victory and cannot be burdened with the tremendous medical costs and disruption that transgender in the military would entail."

Then the judges stepped in, ordering the commander in chief to allow transgenders anyway, and to do so by Jan. 1. On Monday, U.S. District Judge Colleen Kollar-Kotelly, a Bill Clinton appointee, denied the Trump administration's request to delay that order. Kollar-Kotelly had initially ruled that Trump's order violates the Constitution's equal protection guarantees. Moreover, back in November, U.S. District Judge Marvin J. Garbis, a George H.W. Bush nominee, ruled that the administration can't stop *taxpayer funding* for sex-reassignment surgery for these military members.

The Pentagon announced Monday it will comply with all the court rulings. However, Maj. David Eastburn, a DOD spokesman, [told the Associated Press](#) "that the new guidelines mean the Pentagon can disqualify potential recruits with gender dysphoria, a history of medical treatments associated with gender transition and those who underwent reconstruction. But such recruits are allowed in if a medical provider certifies they've been clinically stable in their preferred sex for 18 months and are free of significant distress

or impairment in social, occupational or other important areas."

The whole point of this debate is that transgendered individuals are by definition *not* clinically stable or free of significant distress. Indeed, gender dysphoria is still classified as a mental disorder according to the World Health Organization. And as we've discussed before when it comes to traitor Bradley Manning, transgendered people are at a drastically higher [risk of suicide attempts](#) than the general population. How does that serve military readiness? How does outfitting mentally ill people with military weaponry uphold constitutional equal protection? This is why wearing a black robe in a courtroom does not qualify one to set military standards.

Commentary by Tony Perkins, president of the [Family Research Council](#).

There've been a lot of wise men in the White House. But this Christmas, there are three more in the East Room, where the Trumps are highlighting a [Nativity scene](#).

That's just one of the ways the first family is separating itself from the Obamas, who came dangerously close to ditching the 50-year-old display in 2009. There wasn't room for Jesus at the inn — and for eight years, there wasn't much room for him at 1600 Pennsylvania either.

The Obamas famously wanted a **"nonreligious Christmas" (which makes about as much sense as a vegetarian barbecue)**. But they were outed by their social secretary, Desiree Rogers, in an eye-opening [profile piece for The New York Times](#).

The lunch conversation inevitably turned to whether the White House would display its crèche, customarily placed in a prominent spot in the East Room. Ms. Rogers, this participant said, replied that the Obamas did not intend to put the manger scene on display — a remark that drew an audible gasp from the tight-knit social secretary sisterhood. (A White House official confirmed that there had been internal discussions about making Christmas more inclusive and whether to display the crèche.)

Ultimately, the Obamas caved to pressure and included a Nativity scene in their décor. For two terms, that was the extent of Christmas in the White House. There were no mentions of Christmas on official cards — and only a smattering of references in eight years of greetings and special events. After eight years of making political correctness a state religion, it's really no wonder Americans flocked to a man who isn't afraid to call the season what it is.

"You go to stores, you don't see the word Christmas," then-candidate Donald Trump argued on the campaign trail. "It says 'Happy Holidays' all over. I say, 'Where's Christmas? I tell my wife, 'Don't go to those stores'... I want to see Christmas."

Thanks to the president and first lady, Americans are seeing Christmas. The White House is alive with tradition, from the "Merry Christmas" on the White House card to its official hashtag **#WHChristmas**. To the Trumps, it's just another way of keeping their promise.

"Something I said so much during the last two years, but I'll say it again, as we approach the end of the year, you know we're getting near that beautiful Christmas season that people don't talk about anymore," [the president said at last month's Values Voter Summit](#). "They don't use the word Christmas because it's not politically correct. You go to department stores, and they'll say, 'Happy New Year,' and they'll say other things. It'll be red. They'll have it painted. Well, guess what? We're saying Merry Christmas again."

The crowd erupted in cheers — completely baffling the media. Like most liberals, they couldn't understand why the issue resonated so much with conservatives. Other reporters almost mocked the line, latching on to it as another silly soundbite on an issue they consider so trivial. But to every Christian in that room, the president was talking about a lot more than the war on Christmas. He was speaking directly into the fight for religious liberty in America.

Maybe the mainstream media didn't notice how stifled Christians were under President Barack Obama's government — how everything they [said](#) or [wore](#) or [posted](#) was scrutinized (or worse, punished). After two terms of the most hostile administration to faith the country has ever seen, I guarantee no one takes the simplest expression — "Merry Christmas" — for granted.

To the people who elected Trump, this isn't just about putting Christ in a day. It's about putting faith back in American life.

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You may, or may not, see the new tax law's changes in your February paycheck

Don't Mess With Taxes – Translating taxes into money-saving English | Wednesday, December 20, 2017
<http://www.dontmesswithtaxes.com/2017/08/adjust-payroll-income-tax-withholding-why-how.html>

Now that the Republican-sponsored massive [tax bill](#) is on its way to the Oval Office, taxpayers have two questions.

The first is, "Will it help or hurt me when I get around to filing my federal tax return in 2019?" A variety of [calculators](#) offer some very broad hints as to that answer.

The second is, "Will I see any benefits before the annual tax-filing time?"

GOP members of Congress and the White House say yes. You should see the effect of the new tax rates, specifically more spending money, reflected in your February paychecks, promise Donald J. Trump and his Republican colleagues.

But the actual timing of those increased-for-some paycheck amounts relies on how quickly the Internal Revenue Service can make that happen.

Yep, it's now up to Uncle Sam's tax collector to take the legislative language and turn it into new forms and documents. In this case, this means new W-4 withholding forms for employees to fill out and payroll withholding tables for businesses to use.

Contemplating the payroll challenge: Payroll withholding instructions from the IRS are what companies — or, in many cases nowadays, the payroll firms to whom businesses outsource this task — use to calculate how much income tax to take from each worker's paycheck each pay period.

When the tax reform bill started picking up steam this month, many folks started worrying about the increasingly shorter time frame for the IRS to collect this data and get it to employers to make payroll changes.

That's why the American Payroll Association (APA) on Dec. 11 sent a [letter](#) to the chair of the Senate Finance Committee expressing its concern about potential payroll problems and offering some ideas on how to ease possible problems.

The APA said in that letter to Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) that its 21,000 members representing 17,000 employers were already starting to panic about the tax bill's effect on payroll withholding since the new law's changes will take effect essentially a week after its enactment.

More precisely, payroll officials are freaking out over how they can realistically obtain and process the more than 40 million revised employee W-4 forms needed to make the necessary withholding changes.

This is a herculean task, says the APA, especially given that many companies shut down between Christmas and New Year's Day and even where businesses are open, many employees are using the last of their annual vacation time.

New W-4 data critical: Without the correct W-4 data, under the new tax law many workers will have too much tax taken out of their early 2018 paychecks.

While many people are fine with over withholding — millions intentionally have too much withheld every tax year so they can get a bigger tax refund when they file their returns — that's really not what the GOP or the APA want.

For the GOP, wrong withholding could undercut the promise that workers will see more money in their paychecks thanks to the new tax law.

For the APA, the situation is much direr, according to the letter that APA representatives Michael O'Toole and Alice Jacobsohn sent to Hatch:

"It will turn much of the system, especially the payroll withholding infrastructure that is the underpinning of our entire economy, upside down. With the elimination of personal exemptions under the tax code in favor of doubling the standard deduction, while at the same time providing an "as if there were an exemption" amount to use in determining employee withholding allowances, the bill would make it nearly impossible for employees to complete their Forms W-4 so they could properly calculate their annual federal tax liabilities."

To solve that problem, APA suggests that employers be allowed to continue to apply the 2017 versions of W-4 forms already in payroll systems nationwide throughout next year even though they reflect the use of [personal exemptions that are no longer allowed](#).

For this and other payroll concerns, such as the supplemental withholding rate that applies to compensation such as bonuses, commissions and stock options, the APA argues that employers deserve transition relief throughout 2018 from any penalties for failing to properly withhold or deposit federal income tax.

"Employers and payroll professionals are the main reason that the tax withholding system works in the first place, and making massive changes to the system with an unconscionably short lead time is a recipe for disaster," write the APA reps. "Give the payroll system time to adjust, and America will get what it has gotten ever since withholding began on a regular basis in 1943 – a voluntary tax compliance rate that has increased to over 90%."

The IRS says it's working on it: From prior experience, the IRS knows all too well that it needs to wait for Congress to finally act before the tax agency makes any changes.

Bill changes often are made at the last minute. That indeed happened with the tax bill as it went before the Senate on Dec. 19. Rules used by that body forced some final tweaks and a second vote by the House before the bill could go to the White House for signature.

Still, two days after the APA sent its letter to Hatch, the IRS made it clear that it was monitoring the pending tax legislation's Congressional progress and taking initial steps to prepare guidance on withholding for 2018.

"We anticipate issuing the initial withholding guidance (Notice 1036) in January reflecting the new legislation, which would allow taxpayers to begin seeing the benefits of the change as early as February," the IRS said in a [Dec. 13 announcement](#).

As part of that guidance, the IRS added that it "will be working closely with the nation's payroll and tax professional community during this process."

The workers' role: So what do workers do? Wait.

Wait for a new Form W-4 from the IRS.

Wait for word from your employer about what to do before then and then, once the W-4 is ready, how to submit it to the payroll office.

Then when your new payroll withholding takes effect, take a look at just how close that will be to your final tax bill.

While the tax law has changed dramatically, one tax planning rule remains the same. Your withholding tax goal should be to have enough — no more, no less — to cover your eventual tax bill.

That way you, not Uncle Sam, will have control over your cash throughout the year.

You also won't have to wait for any tax refund — remember, another tax law demands that some returns that claim certain tax credits be held until mid-February — or worry about it being stolen by tax identity thieves.

So as we get deeper into 2018, run your tax numbers under the new law and, if necessary, [adjust your withholding](#) by filing yet another W-4 with your employer.



Merry Christmas, everyone!!!

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