

the Messenger

April/May 2003

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Founding Chairman J. Stanley Marshall, Executive Vice President Curt Leonard, and I were privileged to attend a briefing at the White House in Washington, D.C., on Thursday, March 13. Our attendance was part of a larger effort sponsored and coordinated by the Washington-based Frontiers of Freedom Institute. The James Madison Institute and 36 other state policy organizations attended.

The briefing was provided by Senior White House staff and we were asked to not provide names, faces, and quotes for attribution. However, we could provide a general outline without violating protocol.

As would be expected, the then-prospective war in Iraq was heavy on the minds of everyone. The staff briefed the attendees on the Iraq situation, the broader war against terrorism, and other foreign policy hotspots.

The White House wanted to emphasize that U.S. foreign policy and, by extension, the successful spread of democratic freedom throughout the world depended upon a growing and prosperous home front. As a result, speakers for the administration spent

a great deal of time explaining the President's Tax Plan and how it would ignite economic growth. They also updated

attendees on the status of judicial nominees and medical malpractice reform.

For 25 years now, both the national and state conservative think tanks have provided the White House, the Congress, and state capitols with a flurry of compelling and innovative policy recommendations coupled with passion and conviction.

Sometimes our efforts have been openly appreciated, sometimes they have not. I, for one, deeply appreciate the invitation to participate in the event and the obvious time and energy the White House staff expended on our behalf. Their efforts to keep policy organizations such as ours "in the loop" is an encouragement to fight the good fight in promoting the ideals of James Madison; limited government, economic freedom, federalism, traditional values, and individual liberty coupled with individual responsibility.

Their efforts...promoting the ideals of James Madison; limited government, economic freedom, federalism, traditional values, and individual liberty coupled with individual responsibility.



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Bailey Recommends Reform

Forty-five years ago, Nevada voters approved a constitutional amendment requiring that an initiative constitutional amendment be approved by voters twice before taking effect. When voters first approve a ballot initiative, the state has nearly two years to analyze the initiative's impact before it becomes eligible for a second vote.



Douglas S. Bailey
The Windsor Group

Douglas S. Bailey, executive vice president of The Windsor Group and author of JMI's latest study on direct democracy reform, will discuss the success of Nevada's two-election system and its application to Florida's constitution amendment process at a Tallahassee luncheon this summer. Watch for an announcement of the date and time. *

Fighting for School Choice ... and Winning

Clint Bolick, a central figure in the legal battle over school choice and co-founder of the Institute for Justice in Washington, D.C., addressed JMI members and guests at an April 29 luncheon meeting in Tallahassee. Bolick served as chief counsel of the landmark *Zelman v. Simmons-Harris*, in which the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of Cleveland's school choice scholarship program.

He recounted the drama of the 12-year legal battle for educational freedom, of Florida's emergence as a key battleground, and of the serious obstacle Blaine amendments in state constitutions



Clint Bolick, The Institute for Justice

still pose. "It's not about ideas," Bolick said, "but about real lives of real people," affirming his core argument that parents, not government, should have primary responsibility and power to determine where and how their children should be educated. He said, "We're fighting for kids."*

Initiative Reform and Intangibles Tax Reports Ready

Two policy reports will be distributed to Institute members in the next few weeks.

"Florida's Constitutional Ballot Initiatives: Is This Any Way to Run a Government?" by Douglas S. Bailey outlines reform measures designed to protect the sanctity of the constitution and to make citizen initiatives more fiscally and socially responsible. "The Florida legislature," he writes in *Backgrounder #39*, "should propose a constitutional amendment requiring that a proposed initiative pass two subsequent general elections before it becomes enacted." Doing so would

help transfer the wisdom of the Founding Fathers to the process, according to Bailey.

Florida State University economist Randall G. Holcombe, chairman of JMI's Research Advisory Council, has authored "Florida's Intangibles Tax: The Case for Repeal." He argues in *Backgrounder #40* for the complete repeal of the intangibles tax, which he says Gov. Jeb Bush referred to as a tax on seniors and savers. Holcombe points out that eliminating the tax now would create a stronger economy with higher growth in the future and faster state revenue growth.*

Events Recap

February 27 – Luncheon and evening reception in Tallahassee with SimpleCare founder Dr. David MacDonald addressing his audience on **“SimpleCare: Cutting Red Tape for Doctors, Patients, and Employers.”** Seattle-area physician MacDonald and JMI members discussed the bureaucracy of HMOs and alternatives to better health care. MacDonald also discussed the finer points of SimpleCare, a revolutionary cash-for-service health care plan, with 60 Tallahassee-area physicians.

March 20 – **“Liberals on Drugs: Lies about the Prescription Drug Industry”** with Institute for Policy Innovation Vice President Merrill Matthews, guest speaker at the Tallahassee luncheon series. Matthews and JMI members discussed common misconceptions about pharmaceutical companies, including the harmful effects of prescription drug ads and the charge that drug companies “profit from pain.”

March 24 – The Meninak Club of Jacksonville heard President Jim McDowell’s address on **“Florida’s Conservative Agenda.”**

March 25 – **“The 10-Minute Citizen: How You Can Make a Difference to Preserve Freedom”** workshop with Evergreen Freedom Foundation President Bob Williams. Williams and residents of The Villages, Fla., discussed freedom and how to preserve it through citizen activism. Special thanks to Mike Francis, Jim Corcoran, Dick and Saralee Vaughn, and Joel Fox for putting together the event.

April 2 – This Speakers Bureau event, **“Defending President Bush’s Tax Plan,”** was held at the Tower Forum Club in Fort Lauderdale and featured JMI Executive Vice President Curt Leonard. He debated Peggy Golden of Florida Atlantic University on **“Will Tax Relief Bring the Country out of Recession?”** Leonard argued for an aggressive plan of reduced taxes to provide short-term tonic to the economy and long-term steady growth for the nation.

April 10 – Speakers Bureau event at the Republican Women’s Club of Winter Haven, featured JMI President Jim McDowell speaking on **“Florida’s Medical Malpractice Crisis.”**

April 14 – An evening workshop at the Riverside Hotel in Fort Lauderdale. Entitled **“How You Can Fight the Trial Lawyers and Win: Winning Florida’s Healthcare Liability Battle,”** it featured healthcare liability expert Andy Taggart.

April 16 – A Speakers Bureau/Gulf Coast Economic Club Luncheon at New World Landing in Pensacola featured President Jim McDowell speaking on **“The Tort Reform Effort in Florida.”** *



McDowell (on left) speaks with Meninak Club guests.

Meet JMI’s Intern

Interns have been an important part of JMI’s growth since its beginning in 1987. Our current intern, James W. Elliott, a student in the international affairs masters’ program at Florida State University, makes time to volunteer several days each week. Since February, he has provided research assistance for JMI policy experts, has helped with events coordination, and has even provided some clerical support with the Institute’s data base.



James W. Elliott

After graduating from the University of Florida, James spent the 2001 fall semester in Washington, D.C., as an intern at The Cato Institute. He told *The Messenger*, “Whether working in Washington or Tallahassee, the dynamic nature of public policy has always interested me. I’m thrilled to be here with The James Madison Institute, which shares my commitment to individual liberty.”

If you are an undergraduate student interested in an internship, call Christie Raniszewski at the JMI office or e-mail Christie@jamesmadison.org.*

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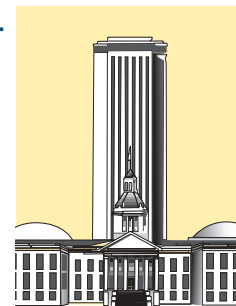
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