

2019 POLICY PRIORITIES



The James Madison Institute exists because economic freedom, free-enterprise systems and free-market principles possess the best hope for Florida and its citizens to succeed, thrive and prosper.

These principles deserve a champion.

We take up that mantle.



Paths to Prosperity

On November 6, 2018, more than eight million Floridians cast their ballots and decided the future direction of our great state. And while the results of 2018 were among the tightest we have ever experienced, our new governor and cabinet take the reins of a one trillion dollar economy and guide 21 million Floridians into the 2020s at one of the most dynamic times in our state's history.

Florida's story is one that we offer to the rest of the country as an example of how our principles are improving lives and creating generations of prosperity. In its 2018 "Freedom in the 50 States" report, the Cato Institute ranked the Sunshine State number 1 – the most free state in the nation, overall. Quoting from the report:



"Lacking an individual income tax and featuring a hot climate, Florida has long enjoyed substantial migration of well-off retirees. But as we've noted in the past, the state attracts more than seniors, as others vote with their feet for good weather and the increased opportunity afforded by Florida's freer society. Florida does especially well on economic freedom, especially on fiscal policy. Indeed, it is our top state on both. Regulatory policy is improved but mediocre in comparison to the fiscal side. Florida's personal freedom has lagged in the past; however, it has improved a lot over the past two years."

The Florida Story needs to be exported and we are heeding the call.

The policy team at JMI continues to engage with policymakers in Tallahassee and in the halls of D.C. to ensure that the paths to prosperity are followed. We have briefed the White House, Cabinet Secretaries, and the United States Congress on a host of issues, and we have submitted amicus briefs for Supreme Court cases that have altered the course of worker choice. Our team continues to be the go-to resource for practical, objective, and conservative analysis of policy.

But there remains much to be done.

We will continue to press for common sense, practical policy concepts that place Florida on a trajectory to be the model for the entire U.S. to follow. To that end, we have compiled a robust and visionary set of policy priorities for 2019 that advance the cause of liberty and conservative principles. We remain steadfast in the belief that an ongoing commitment to limiting the footprint of government control in our lives, pursuing free markets through competition, protecting private property, and expanding the ability of parents to choose the best educational settings for their children will continue to make the Sunshine State a beacon of liberty and prosperity for the rest of the world.

It is our pleasure to provide our policy priorities for 2019.

The 2019 Priorities for The James Madison Institute

1. Champion market-based healthcare solutions

- a. Promote innovation in Florida's Medicaid program to ensure that it serves our most needy appropriately, while providing opportunities and incentives for individuals to become self-sufficient
- b. Encourage the expansion of scope of practice to include innovative and reasonable reforms such as dental therapists
- c. Reform Florida's antiquated, inefficient, and anti-competitive certificate of need laws for health care facilities

2. Expand educational opportunity

- a. Promote increases in the availability of the Florida Tax Credit Scholarship Program, allowing it to serve greater numbers of our most needy students
- b. Work to increase the availability of the Hope, Gardiner, and McKay Scholarships for students with special needs and/or safety-related concerns
- c. Strengthen civics education by requiring Florida students to pass the U.S. Citizenship test (given to immigrants seeking to become naturalized citizens) prior to high school graduation
- d. Continue to push for higher education reforms that protect free speech and encourage greater intellectual diversity at Florida's state universities

3. Promote innovation and entrepreneurialism

- a. Reform Florida's job-constraining occupational licensing system and promote market-based alternatives
- b. Oppose onerous regulations that seek only to restrict competition in the marketplace
- c. Advance the innovations of the sharing economy and promote free-market policies to discourage anti-competitive regulations
- d. Oppose encroachment by local governments into areas that are best served by private markets

4. Support sensible criminal justice reforms

- a. Restore judicial discretion in sentencing policies to ensure that individuals are provided with appropriate due process protections
- b. Work to address outdated threshold policies that will both increase public safety and better steward taxpayer dollars

5. Advance free-market insurance policies

- a. Promote sensible tort reforms to stem abuse of Florida's Assignment of Benefits rules
- b. Modernize Florida's Personal Injury Protection (PIP) rules to encourage greater transparency and consistency

6. Expand worker choice and freedom

- a. Expand recertification requirements to ensure public sector unions are truly representing workers
- b. Bring the message of worker choice to public sector union members in a post-Janus Florida

In an election year that saw progressives win control of the U.S. House and several governorships throughout the United States, Florida continued to be a beacon of limited government and conservative leadership, which resulted in voters returning conservatives to both Tallahassee and Washington, D.C.

The team at The James Madison Institute strongly affirms our commitment to working both with those who share our philosophy and those who believe differently. It will be through effective vigorous debate and productive civil discourse that we will all reap the rewards of a better Florida.

We invite you to join us on the journey ahead in 2019.



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