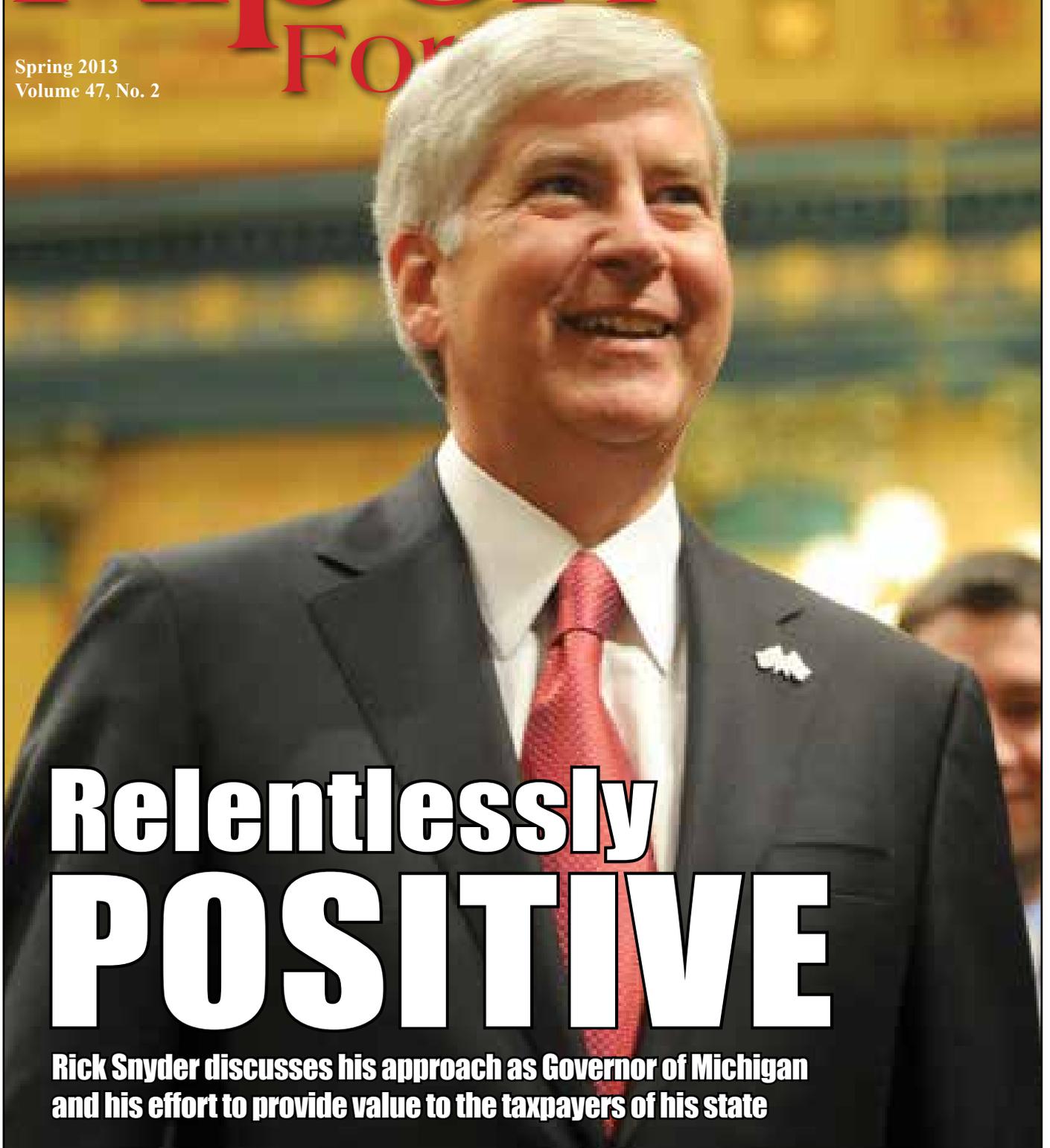


A TRIBUTE TO  
MARGARET THATCHER  
by Mac Thornberry



# The Rippon FOR

Spring 2013  
Volume 47, No. 2



**Relentlessly  
POSITIVE**

**Rick Snyder discusses his approach as Governor of Michigan  
and his effort to provide value to the taxpayers of his state**

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# The Ripon Forum

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Volume 47, Number 2

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# In this Edition

According to political experts, one of the key constituencies of the past few elections has been “Walmart moms.”

These are the moms, these same experts tell us, who have at least one child at home and shop at Walmart at least once a month. In all likelihood, they are also moms who shop at Walmart because they are looking for a good product at a fair price. In other words, they are looking for value.

Now there’s a word you don’t hear much about in Washington these days. In fact, it seems like the only time value is ever mentioned in politics is when there’s an “s” at the end of the word. And yet one could argue that Washington’s perceived inability to provide taxpayers with something of value is the reason confidence in government is at an all-time low.

The IRS scandal is just the latest in a string of federal failures over the past decade that have left people fuming about the taxes they pay and what they are getting in return. What makes people even angrier is that neither political party seems to care about this concern. It seems that all Democrats want to do is make government bigger, while all Republicans want to do is get government out of our lives. And yet there are millions of hardworking people in this country who simply want government to work.

In this edition of THE RIPON FORUM, we focus on a Republican Governor who is trying to do just that. His name is Rick Snyder, and he is the Chief Executive of Michigan. We talked to him recently about his efforts to turn around Michigan’s economy and provide value for the taxpayers of his state. This edition also features an article by Joseph Lehman, the President of the Mackinac Center for Public Policy, who looks at the Governor’s actions in this regard, and how he is using an online dashboard to measure state performance and achieve this goal.

No examination of Michigan would be complete without also looking at one of Governor Snyder’s biggest challenges – the fiscal crisis in Detroit and his decision to appoint an emergency manager to pull the city out of the red. For analysis, Detroit Regional Chamber President & CEO Sandy Baruah tells us why the manager is needed, and why it is critical that he be successful in his job.

This edition of the FORUM also includes a tribute to the late Margaret Thatcher written by House Armed Services Committee Vice Chairman Mac Thornberry, who talks about the evening he was called upon to introduce the Baroness at a speech she was delivering in his Texas District, and the principles she spoke of that night.

And in our latest Ripon Profile, we shine a light on Deb Fischer, who is not only Nebraska’s newest Member of the United States Senate, but the first female Senator from the state since 1954.

As always, we hope you find this and other essays in the FORUM interesting, and encourage you to contact us with any questions or comments you may have.

Lou Zickar  
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*Margaret Thatcher, 1925-2013: A Tribute*

# Leaning on Principle to Set an Example

by MAC THORNBERRY

I have to admit that, at the time, I was disappointed.

I had been given the honor of introducing Margaret Thatcher at a large charity event in Amarillo, Texas, several years after she left office. I worked harder on that introduction than on any other speech I had ever given, trying to get each word just right. My goal was not really to impress her or even the audience, but just to try to be adequate to the occasion of presenting this truly historic figure.

I gave my introduction; she said a few gracious words in reply and then proceeded into her remarks. Like most of the audience, I eagerly awaited stories of standing up to British labor unions, sending the military to reclaim the Falklands, or consulting with President Reagan on overcoming communism. I also wanted to hear some of her personal story -- how she fought against the odds to rise to the top of the British political system and become a world statesman.

Instead, we got a very different kind of speech. It revolved mostly around the importance of the rule of law and the reasons that nourishing and protecting the rule of law is fundamental to our civilization. It seemed closer to a law professor's lecture than the reminiscences of a statesman. But as I think back, it was very much in keeping with her character.

Margaret Thatcher was not one to live in the past. She had a relentless drive forward, toward what ought to be. And she was pressing upon that Texas audience the necessity of maintaining and nourishing part of the foundation of Western society for the future. Her career was grounded in certain bedrock principles, one of which was the importance of the rule of law. In fact, her authorized biographer, Charles Moore, has written, "In private political conversation, I think she used the phrase 'the rule of law' more often than any other."

Her faith in the rule of law reflected her confidence that ordinary citizens could, if given the opportunity, do remarkable things for themselves and for their country. The rule of law, rather than the arbitrary, capricious rule of men, was necessary to give them that opportunity to make of their lives what their energy and talents allowed.

And she was relentless in fighting against those forms of government that squashed opportunity, like communism and socialism. One biographer contends that "what she managed to do, more effectively than any other politician in history," is argue that socialism is not only inefficient but immoral.

It was that drive forward and the principles she espoused that make Margaret Thatcher more than an historic figure. Her personal qualities and the principles she advocated enhance and enlarge the legacy she leaves, beyond even her considerable achievements. And her character and her conviction will inspire generations to come as they struggle with the latest manifestations of attempts to limit human freedom.

Speaking to a Conservative Party Conference in 1976, she said: "As I look to our great history and then at our dismal present, I draw strength from the great and brave things this nation has achieved. I seem to see

clearly, as a bright new day, the future that we can and must win back. As was said before another famous battle: 'It is true that we are in great danger; the greater therefore should our courage be.'"

Many generations will draw strength from the great and brave things Margaret Thatcher achieved, and they will also be lifted by the principles by which she stood and by the example that she set. **RF**

*Mac Thornberry represents the 13<sup>th</sup> Congressional District of Texas in the U.S. House of Representatives.*



Mac Thornberry shakes hands with Margaret Thatcher after introducing her at a speech she delivered in his Texas District in 1998.

**Margaret Thatcher was not one to live in the past. She had a relentless drive forward, toward what ought to be.**

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# The Housing Rebound and the Continuing Need for Reform

KIT BOND and  
HENRY CISNEROS

A 1996 *Wall Street Journal* article once described us as the “odd couple” of federal housing policy. While hailing from different backgrounds and holding divergent political views, we remain united -- some 17 years later -- in our belief that ensuring broad access to decent and affordable housing is a goal our country must never abandon. This sentiment has guided the work of the Bipartisan Policy Center’s Housing Commission and is a key principle of the commission’s report, *Housing America’s Future: New Directions for National Policy*. We are privileged to serve as co-chairs of the commission, along with former Senators George Mitchell and Mel Martinez.

Meeting our nation’s diverse housing needs requires a strong and stable system of housing finance. That’s why a major focus of the commission’s work has been, and will continue to be, housing finance reform. While hard to believe, we are approaching the fifth anniversary of the government’s decision to place Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac under conservatorship. Yet, today, our nation’s policymakers are still pondering the fate of the two mortgage giants and there is no consensus on what the future of our nation’s \$11 trillion housing finance system should look like.

Today, Uncle Sam dominates the housing market in a way never seen before in our nation’s history, with the government supporting nearly 83 percent of single-family mortgages. Private capital flows into the housing finance system but assumes little of the credit risk

associated with mortgage lending, which is ultimately borne by the American taxpayer through government insurance and guarantees.

The commission believes that a housing finance system so overwhelmingly dominated by the government is unsustainable over the long term. We therefore recommend the elimination of Fannie Mae and Freddie

Mac over a multiyear transition period and the use of various “policy dials” during this transition to encourage the introduction of more risk-bearing private capital into the system. Reducing the government footprint and encouraging more private participation will protect taxpayers while providing for a greater diversity of funding sources.

At the same time, the commission recognizes we cannot meet America’s mortgage credit needs exclusively through bank balance-sheet lending. The secondary market for mortgage-backed securities will continue

to be a vital source of funding, but many investors in this market require a government guarantee protecting against catastrophic credit risk as a condition of their investment. In the absence of such a guarantee, investor interest would wane and widespread access to long-term, affordable, fixed-rate mortgage financing would likely disappear.

So the commission has concluded that the government must provide a limited catastrophic backstop in the secondary market to ensure mortgage liquidity. Unlike in the past, this guarantee would be explicit,



**Meeting our nation’s  
diverse housing needs requires a  
strong and stable system of  
housing finance.**

apply only to the mortgage-backed securities, and kick in only after multiple layers of what we call “private credit enhancers” had depleted their resources. Even then, any losses would be paid for through a catastrophic risk fund capitalized by insurance premiums charged to mortgage borrowers.

We know what you’re thinking: The housing market is on the rebound. Home prices are going up in many regions of the country. Fannie and Freddie even made a sizable profit last year. So why rock the boat?

These positive developments, while welcome, must not lull us into forgetting that the housing market is cyclical: Periods of modest growth and home-price appreciation are inevitably followed by periods of contraction and price depreciation. Last year’s profits by the two government-sponsored enterprises are also no guarantee of future performance. What we need is a new housing finance architecture that will be sustainable over the long term, one resilient enough to weather even those periods of market decline and even turmoil.

As we design a new finance system to support homeownership, let’s not forget that more than one-third of U.S. households are renters. Unfortunately, our nation suffers from a paucity of affordable rental housing, a situation that will be exacerbated in the coming years as some six million Echo Boomers enter the rental market for the first time. For renters at the bottom of the income ladder -- that is, those making 30 percent or less of their area’s median income -- the supply shortfall is particularly large. Not surprisingly, nearly two-thirds of these extremely low-income renters report spending more than one-half of their income just on housing costs. Rising rents will continue to be a major challenge for them.

In response, the commission offers a number of far-reaching recommendations: a reformed Housing Choice Voucher program that more effectively targets assistance to the most vulnerable households; greater utilization of the tax code to support the production and

preservation of affordable rental units; and the adoption of a new performance-based system for federal rental assistance that focuses less on process and more on achieving positive results for those assisted.

We are gratified by the very positive reaction to the commission’s report from across the political spectrum. Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) has described the report as a good foundation for a discussion of our nation’s future housing policy. The Senate Banking Committee has already convened a hearing on the commission’s housing finance reform recommendations. Republicans and Democrats in both houses of Congress have expressed a strong interest in learning more about our approach.

Our nation’s housing challenges are severe and growing in both intensity and scope. We believe the commission’s recommendations offer a viable path forward and can serve as a solid basis for bipartisan action. **RF**



**What we need is a new housing finance architecture that will be sustainable over the long term, one resilient enough to weather even those periods of market decline and even turmoil.**

*Kit Bond served as U.S. Senator from the State of Missouri from 1987-2011. Henry Cisneros served as Secretary of Housing and Urban Development from 1993-1997. To download a copy of the BPC Housing Commission Report (shown below), please visit <http://bipartisanpolicy.org/library/report/housing-america's-future-new-directions-national-policy>.*



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*Is this fair?*

## Union Work on the Taxpayers' Dime

DENNIS ROSS

Each day, our taxpayer dollars are wasted. They are wasted on countless projects and activities including failed energy programs that are propped up by our administration, on government bailouts of billion-dollar private companies, and on federal employees conducting union business on official taxpayer time.

In November 2012, I, along with my colleagues, requested a report on union activities by federal employees on work time. In February of this year, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) complied and provided us with the data.

Did you know that in 2011 (the most recent year for which they had data), federal employees spent roughly 3.4 million hours — at a cost of \$155 million— conducting union business while on duty? This is an almost 10 percent increase from 2010 in time spent on representational duties. If the average employee works 40 hours a week for 50 weeks a year, there would be 1,700 federal employees whose sole job is to conduct union business.

We are almost \$17 trillion in debt. I believe in fair representation; however, we must ensure that we are spending the people's hard-earned money wisely. If employees who are paid by taxpayer dollars want to conduct union activities, they should do it on their own time; not during their 40-hour work week paid for by American taxpayers.

Last Congress, Rep. Phil Gingrey (GA-11) and I started working together on two pieces of legislation that would address the use of work time by federal employees, specifically as it pertains to union activities.

The purpose of our efforts was two-fold: to determine how much time federal employees spend on union activities; and to eliminate the use of these employees being allowed to conduct union activities on work time.

I introduced H.R. 568, The Official Time Reporting Act. This bill would require OPM to submit an annual report to Congress on the use of official time by federal employees. Official time is defined as any period of time given to a federal employee to perform representational or consultative functions and during which the employee would otherwise be in a duty status.

According to OPM, union representatives could participate in a number of activities while on official time, including “representing bargaining unit employees in meetings,” and “assisting the agency in communicating important information about workplace matters to employees.” While these sound like noble causes, there are legitimate concerns that they are applied very broadly.

The sole job of some employees is to serve as a union representative. These employees are paid for by the federal government.

The goal of my legislation is keep track of the time spent by federal employees on union duties. I am also an original cosponsor of H.R. 107. This bill would end the practice of union members using taxpayer dollars to conduct union activities. It is estimated that this wasted time costs taxpayers \$1.3 billion over 10 years. Now that we know how many work hours are spent, we must work to eliminate this waste. Federal employees shouldn't be working to advance policies that don't necessarily square with the policy preferences of those same taxpayers. At a time when we are almost \$17 trillion in debt, we need to ensure that we are cutting all wasteful and excessive government spending.

These bills go hand-in-hand. In order to provide greater government transparency and know how federal employees spend their time, we would need to track it, and Congress, which has oversight, should be able to review that time used. Now that we know how much time is spent, we must protect the American taxpayer and eliminate the use of federal

employees conducting union activities during work hours.

Taxpayers should not foot the bill for union activities. If federal employees want to engage in union activities, they should do it on their own dime. We must work to end this wasteful spending habit and save money. **RF**

*Dennis Ross represents the 15<sup>th</sup> District of Florida in the U.S. House of Representatives.*



**Did you know that in 2011 (the most recent year for which they had data), federal employees spent roughly 3.4 million hours — at a cost of \$155 million — conducting union business while on duty?**

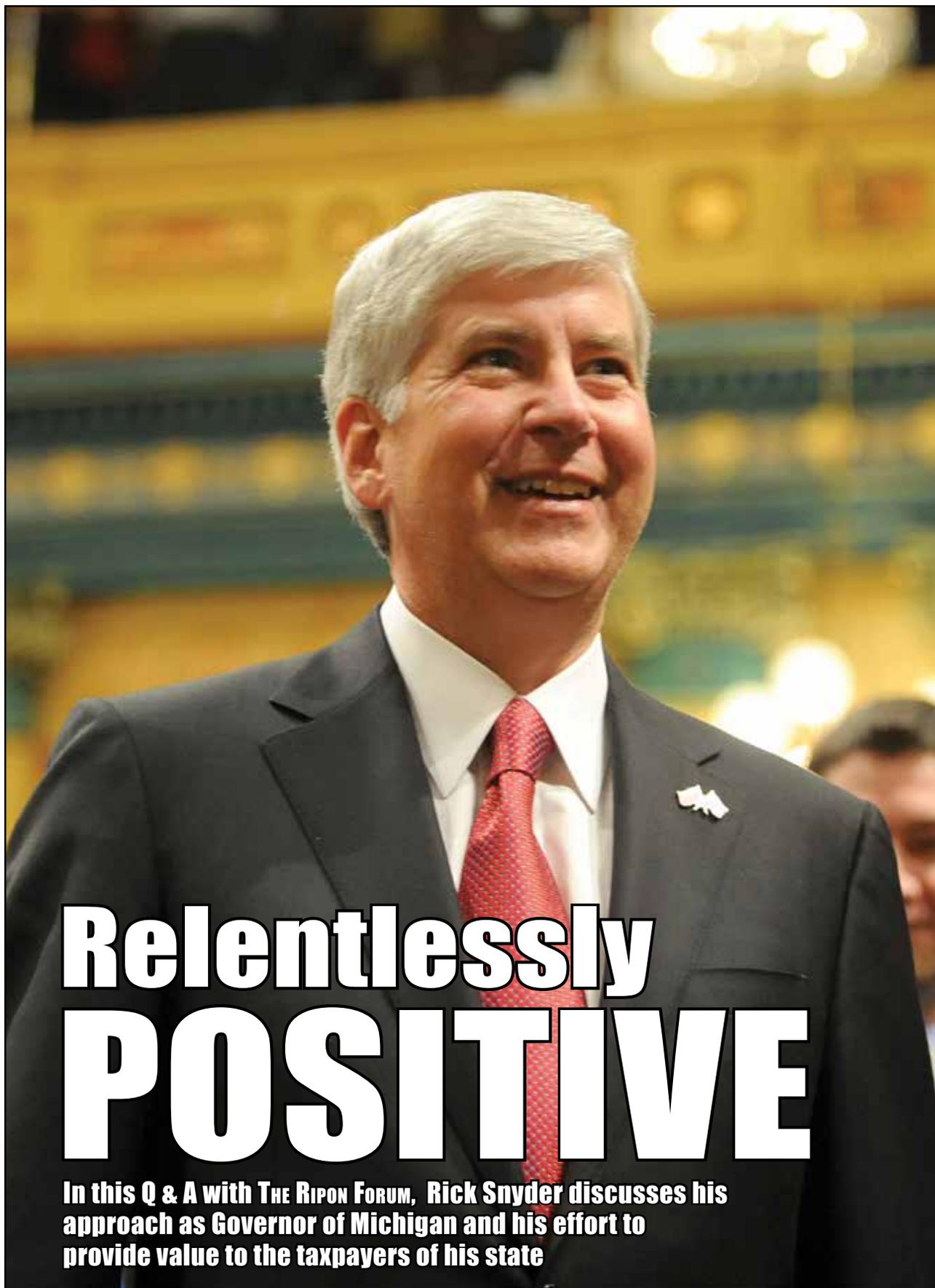


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# Relentlessly **POSITIVE**

**In this Q & A with THE RIPON FORUM, Rick Snyder discusses his approach as Governor of Michigan and his effort to provide value to the taxpayers of his state**

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Three years ago, businessman Rick Snyder was a virtual unknown in the political world. When he first decided to run for governor, his standing in the polls was so low that taking the margin of error into account, he theoretically could have had negative numbers. Political pundits said there was no way he could compete against the better known field of experienced political rivals.

The pundits were wrong.

Snyder – who built Gateway Computer into a Fortune 500 company as its CEO -- won in a landslide victory after running as “One Tough Nerd” ready to make the tough decisions career politicians refused to make. The tactic led one particularly snarky pundit to quip, “I guess nerd tested better in the focus groups than dork.”

As a candidate, Gov. Snyder pledged to eliminate the job-killing Michigan Business Tax and replace it with a flat, 6-percent corporate income tax that is simple, fair and efficient. He pledged to structurally balance the budget without using accounting gimmicks or quick fixes. He pledged to create an environment where small businesses can grow and create jobs.

The businessman-turned-politician has delivered. Working together with lawmakers, the governor eliminated the state’s \$1.5 billion deficit and produced a budget surplus. And in stark contrast to the partisan fighting that led to two government shutdowns under his predecessor, Gov. Snyder got the budget done by the earliest date it has been completed in 30 years.

The FORUM spoke with the Governor recently about his record, and how the lessons he learned as the Chief Executive Officer in the private sector apply to his current role as the Chief Executive of Michigan.

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**RF: You’ve talked a lot about applying business principles to government. As you approach your 30th month as Governor of the State of Michigan, which principles do you find are most applicable to the job you are doing today, and which if any have you found are not applicable at all?**

**Governor Snyder:** I’d start with the second piece because that’s relatively straightforward. The part that’s not applicable is that profit is not a motive. When you’re in a business, profit is a motive and it needs to be, because that ensures the sustainability of the organization. In the context of the government or the public sector, that is not applicable.

The other principles apply, with probably one of the most important principles being the whole concept of customer service. I think that’s something I emphasized when I spoke to The Ripon Society, but that’s something I do in almost every speech. When was the last time we had a thoughtful, broader discussion about why does government exist? And when you get down to it, the purpose of having government -- and there is reason to have government -- in many respects, is to give great service to our customers.

The way I like to view it is that if you step back and look at it from an individual’s point of view -- a citizen-customer point of view -- is that I want people to feel like

they bought the right amount of government. Because we’re a unique provider.

**RF: With government approval ratings at or near an all-time low, how much do you think these ratings are driven by one of the principles you’ve also talked about quite a bit – and that’s value, and the fact that people increasingly do not think they are getting much in return for their hard-earned tax dollars.**

**Governor Snyder:** I think there are two parts to that. I think you said it well. I think a lot of it is that people don’t make the connection to the value they are receiving, and that makes it more challenging. A couple of other pieces I would add to that, though, that tie into some of the other principles we work under, is that I think things have gotten too much about people simply fighting and blaming one another as opposed

to simply solving problems.

After customer service, one of the other basic principles we operate under here is relentless positive action -- no blame, no credit, simply solving problems. And that’s made a huge difference here in Michigan, because we don’t waste time on the blame game. Think about Washington – if people stepped back and said no one would blame anyone and no one would take credit. The press might have to find something else to write

**When you get down to it, the purpose of having government ... is to give great service to our customers.**

about, but they'd have a whole lot more time where they'd actually be solving problems. And I think people are fed up with that.

The third thing I would add to you, though, is that when you do get to solving those tough problems, if you look at polling numbers in Michigan, people would say that your polling numbers are not so high. My response is that asking people to change is difficult. Everyone likes change until it involves them. That's just part of human nature. But what you find is that you get it in place and you move forward and you try to be articulate about the rationale for why you make it and you find that after some period of time people do come around and say "Yeah, we really did need to do that."

**RF: How have you tried to provide the people of Michigan with value for the tax dollars they pay to your state?**

**Governor Snyder:** Well, I'll give you a great illustration of that -- and I can give you several. It's called "Pure Michigan Business Connect." It's one of our economic development programs. The traditional model for government in our country is to give out tax cuts. They give huge tax credit deals to somebody who comes out to do business to have jobs created in their state.

We wiped out basically our tax credit programs. We kept some strategic dollars to have some ability to participate. But one of the other alternatives we created is Pure Michigan Business Connect, which is the concept of basically a good neighbor policy. It's about being a facilitator, where we bring Michigan businesses together to find out how they can buy and sell more from each other.

We started with our two big utilities in the state -- BPE and Consumers. Just over the last couple of years, they've bought over a billion dollars in additional goods and services from Michigan companies incrementally more than they bought before. That accounts for

thousands of new jobs in our state. And it was really just getting people together to talk. It's gone so well that we're getting a number of the big automotive companies and the tier one suppliers participating. Ford just did an event recently with their suppliers and they came up with over three hundred proposals they can bid on. And there were over six hundred and some meetings done in one day with Michigan companies on bidding on those. That's just great stuff.

**RF: Talk about your dashboard for a moment. Why did you create it, and what role does it play in providing taxpayers with a sense of value and a better understanding of how their tax dollars are being spent?**

**Governor Snyder:** Well, it's critically important. If you can't measure, how do you know how you're doing? Politicians in general run from measurements and dashboards and metrics because they figure it's a way they can get in trouble.

My view is how do you celebrate success -- to know you achieved goals and made progress, and how do you share that and communicate that if you don't have a dashboard with good metrics to use?

**RF: You've required local governments in Michigan to also establish dashboards as a condition of receiving assistance from the state. How has this worked? Have you received much pushback, or have most local governments largely complied?**

**Governor Snyder:** The answer is yes -- people have complied. It's been successful, but we've gotten pushback too. Again, you're asking for change, and some people just don't like the whole measurement concept. My view is you shouldn't look at it as a way to not show how you're failing, but how you're succeeding.

What I would say, too, is that we're still in the first



Governor Snyder signs the Fiscal Year 2011-12 budget into law as lawmakers look on.

**After customer service, one of the other basic principles we operate under here is relentless positive action -- no blame, no credit, simply solving problems.**

stages of doing this. We've got all kinds of dashboards and scorecards, but we're going to go through and clean them up. My first view was to get a whole bunch out there and see which are the most important ones as we go through the process. So it's continuous improvement.

**RF: What about Detroit? What kind of dashboard or system of metrics are you using there?**

**Governor Snyder:** We're still working on establishing that. We have an emergency manager there now, and that will be part of the planning process. But we will have metrics and a dashboard to judge progress. Because that's fundamentally the issue -- one of the major failure points, in addition to financial management challenges and the balance sheet issues, is that we need to provide better services to citizens. And those are things that you can use dashboards to measure effectively.

**RF: One of the other principles you talk about is accountability. In some respects, it is a principle that goes hand in hand with value because it is based on doing what is needed and what is right. How do you**

**enforce that principle in government when, in some cases, union rules make it difficult -- if not impossible -- to fire government employees for poor performance and hold government employees accountable for their work?**

**Governor Snyder:** I view it as, fundamentally, most people want to do the right thing. It really gives you an opportunity if you're measuring to sit down with them and say, "Here's the problem." I don't view it as union versus management. I view it as, "Let's define the problem."

What metrics and dashboards are good at are identifying successes or problem areas. You don't do it in the context of saying "I have a disagreement with you, here's how I want to argue." It's more stepping back to say, let's put it in the context

to say "hey, we're succeeding so let's celebrate together and set new goals." Or if we're not succeeding together, "What is the problem?"

Let's not talk about what differences we have, but how we can collectively solve that problem. And if you're not part of the solution, we need to talk about how we get something in place to solve that problem. **RF**

**Let's not talk about what differences we have, but how we can collectively solve that problem.**

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# Rick Snyder's Performance Dashboards: *Are they driving accountability in Michigan?*

JOSEPH G. LEHMAN

It's been said that Michigan Governor Rick Snyder is no ideologue. That may be true in the sense that he has largely avoided becoming a "lightning rod" reformer in the style of other GOP governors. But it's not true in the sense that he brings no core beliefs to governance.

Governor Snyder has largely demonstrated that he believes that free enterprise is the key to Michigan's prosperity. He has also doggedly viewed state government through the lens of the CPA that he once was -- which is not a bad place to start for a governor inheriting a state in crisis like Michigan was when he took office in January 2011.

Snyder gave his marching orders early on, effectively saying that he wanted to balance the budget and lower taxes, even if some sacred cows had to be sacrificed along the way. In response to this mandate, policymakers went to work. They cleaned up the income tax, started getting rid of those hideously complex corporate tax loopholes and some of the most egregious business subsidies, and saw to it that people got to keep more of their own money in the end. The governor also signed legislation that offended pensioners by raising their taxes to the level others paid, shocked big business by severely pruning corporate welfare and tax favors, and helped the economy by lowering taxes \$700 million overall, thereby allowing the first state budget surplus in years.

These policies and others have coincided with an economic reversal in the state. As Mackinac Center for Public Policy analyst James Hohman wrote, "Michigan's economy added 166,400 private-sector jobs since the beginning of

Snyder's term, a five percent gain. Michigan's personal income increased 9.3 percent from 2010 to 2011, placing it 19th among the states. That might not sound like much, but Michigan's hasn't beaten the national average since 2003 and before that one-year blip, since 1994."

University of Michigan economist Don Grimes also found that Michigan ranked second behind North Dakota in private sector job gains in 2011. "How much of this can you credit Snyder with?" Grimes asked in a column he wrote for *Michigan Capitol Confidential*, which is published by my organization. "I don't know," he continued, "but I do know the state is now on the right track."

Grimes also cautioned against attributing too much of the turnaround to the federal auto bailouts.

## Measuring Results

Modern politics produces a strain of outsider politician whose reform mantra is, "We have to run government like a business." Governor Snyder has an impressive and extensive business background, and he is sympathetic to that cry.

Citing former Indiana Governor Mitch Daniels as his role model, he has tried to make "customer service" a government reform rallying call. He created a series of public, government performance "dashboards" whose format would look at home in any corporate boardroom. Dashboards are common in corporate culture but

comparatively rare in government.

Like the displays of key variables constantly before drivers' eyes -- speed, oil pressure, fuel level, etc. -- Snyder's



Joseph G. Lehman

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web-based dashboards display measurements of the state's economy, finances, education system, public safety, health and wellness, infrastructure, environment, and quality of life in a way that allows easy year-by-year comparisons.

Users can drill down to reveal a total of 165 metrics (by my count). Numbers trending the "right" way get a green thumbs up. The others get a red thumbs down. It doesn't look like a government website.

Two things are notable about the dashboards. The first is that they exist at all. It's bold and admirable for a governor to publicly declare, shortly after election, the precise measurements by which he invites voters to judge his performance, and then to make it easy for voters to

monitor those measurements. But it is the kind of thing a CPA-cum-businessman might suggest.

The second is the broad scope of the measurements Snyder chose. As governor, he has some direct control over a few of those measurements such as state deficits, surpluses and reserves, but only slight influence at best over many more such as obesity and excessive alcohol consumption. Other measurements are only questionable contributors to the state's overall well-being, such as annual state park visits per capita.

Some measurements make only a bit more sense than would a measurement of the number of sunny days. These create an incentive for the governor to try to control

## Snyder's web-based dashboards display measurements of the state's economy, finances, education system, public safety, health and wellness, infrastructure, environment, and quality of life in a way that allows easy year-by-year comparisons.



- Top 10 States
- Middle 30 States
- Bottom 10 States
- ↑ Performance improving
- ↔ Performance staying about the same
- ↓ Performance declining

Economic Strength				
	Prior	Current	Rank	Progress
Unemployment	10.5%	10.9%	●	↓
Gross Domestic Product (GDP)	(5.2)%	2.9%	●	↑
Percent of structurally deficient bridges	13.5%	13.2%	●	↑
Real personal income per capita	\$28,250	\$27,558	●	↓
Children living in poverty	19%	23%	●	↓

Health and Education				
	Prior	Current	Rank	Progress
Infant mortality (Per 1,000 births)	7.6	7.7	●	↓
Obesity in the population	30.3%	31.7%	●	↓
3rd graders reading at grade level	89.8%	86.8%		↓
ACT college readiness benchmarks	16.0%	17.3%		↑
Population with bachelor's degree or higher (25+ years old)	24.7%	24.6%	●	↓

Value for Money Government				
	Prior	Current	Rank	Progress
Bond rating (Standard & Poor's)	AA-	AA-		↔
Government debt burden per capita	\$748	\$762	●	↓
State government operating cost as a percent of GDP	11.9%	12.5%		↓
State and local government operating cost as a percent of GDP	20.9%	21.9%		↓
Access to state government – number of online services	325	357		↑

Quality of Life				
	Prior	Current	Rank	Progress
State park popularity – annual visits per citizen	2.1	2.1		↔
Population growth (Ages 25 – 34)	(1.9) %	(1.6)%		↑
Clean and safe water resources – water quality index	83	88		↑

Public Safety				
	Prior	Current	Rank	Progress
Violent crimes per 100,000	502	497	●	↑
Property crimes per 100,000	2,935	2,838	●	↑
Individuals fatally or seriously injured in traffic accidents	7,382	6,917		↑

[www.michigan.gov/MiDashboard](http://www.michigan.gov/MiDashboard)

Revision 8/25/2011

things which may be beyond the scope of government's legitimate powers. A business world dictum is that one cannot control what one does not measure. Measurement is therefore often the first step for changing something that actually can be controlled but needs to be better, such as reducing workplace injuries. But does Governor Snyder really want a government powerful enough to control obesity and excessive alcohol consumption?

A dashboard can't measure everything that's important; in particular, a dashboard provides no feedback on the destination of the driver. Perhaps the trip is headed in entirely the wrong direction, such as the potential Medicaid expansion on which the Obamacare implementation hinges. Further, a dashboard is inherently a reflection of what the car's designer thinks is important, not necessarily what everyone thinks is most important. Perhaps instead of state park visits, the dashboard could measure the average time to issue an industrial permit, or any permit for that matter. Or obesity measures could be replaced with the average amount of time it takes to

adjudicate state court cases. These are much more directly related to the governor's authority, and vitally important to the health of the state.

While these and other measurements do not appear often in the daily headlines, that may change as the election season grows nearer and his opponents seize upon some of the weaker metrics of the past two years. Still, his critics will not be able to find fault with this basic fact – namely, that Governor Snyder's Michigan performance dashboards represent an arresting honesty, transparency and sincerity in the state's chief executive.

Perhaps most importantly, they add confidence in the character of the governor -- which is critical not only at a time when trust in government is at or near an all-time low, but when people are demanding value for their tax dollars they entrust to the state. **RF**

*Joseph G. Lehman is the President of the Mackinac Center for Public Policy, a nonpartisan, nonprofit research and educational institute in Midland, Michigan.*

**A dashboard can't measure everything that's important; in particular, a dashboard provides no feedback on the destination of the driver.**

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# In Case of Emergency

*Detroit and Michigan to benefit from  
Governor Snyder's bold leadership*

SANDY K. BARUAH

When I moved to Detroit three years ago, one of the most frequent questions asked was if I planned to run an aggressive marketing campaign to “sell” the Detroit region. I felt then, as I do today, that the best way to fix Detroit’s public relations problem was to fix Detroit’s problems. Fortunately, there has been real and meaningful progress in fixing Detroit’s problems – led primarily by a Republican governor and an engaged private sector with strong partnership from philanthropy.

Michigan needs Detroit. It’s that simple. While there are vocal critics of Governor Rick Snyder’s decision to appoint an emergency manager, there is no denying the fact that the future prosperity of Michigan depends in large part on the Motor City. There is no such thing as a growing, prosperous economic region without a strong vibrant urban core and healthy suburbs. While the Detroit region has some of the best suburban areas in the nation, the health of the city has been an impediment to more robust economic growth.

From a business perspective, the declaration of a financial emergency and the naming of Kevyn Orr as emergency manager was overdue. My message to

Governor Snyder in regard to the emergency manager was simple: “Bring it on.” With tremendous private sector growth underway in Detroit, the city’s economic uncertainty and instability stands as the final barrier to robust sustained economic growth.

Detroit is a tale of two cities. One with a thriving private sector and another with neighborhoods that bear the scars of unemployment and depopulation. A city challenged to provide basic services to many of its residents. It became clear to the business community that the bold step of an emergency manager was necessary to move the city, region and state forward.

The momentum in Detroit is remarkable. Consider that about \$10 billion has been invested in commercial, industrial and residential properties in the city in the past five years. Detroit remains one of the fastest growing regions for technology jobs in the U.S., its signature auto industry is thriving, and approximately 97 percent of downtown Detroit’s rental apartments are

occupied while the fastest growing demographic in the city is young professionals with a bachelor’s degree.

Yet, all this progress is occurring with the city’s finances in crisis. The city faces a reported long-term debt of \$14 billion and a serious short-term cash shortfall



Sandy K. Baruah

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with an annual budget deficit approaching \$100 million. The juxtaposition of Detroit's emerging strengths with its long-term fiscal crisis begs one to wonder about the immense potential of Detroit if it gets its fiscal house in order. Investors from Wall Street to Shanghai are watching with interest and wondering if the Motor City has finally stepped toward fiscal solvency.

Unfortunately, recent efforts by the city council to address the situation did not offer the long-term solutions to put the city on a fiscally sound path. To be fair to the Mayor and city council, they were working to tackle structural problems that stretch back decades.

While Mayor Dave Bing made progress and restored integrity to City Hall and brought transparency and ethics to city government, he and the city council were not able to agree on necessary long-term reforms.

As an emergency manager, Orr has the power to make the swift decisions that eluded existing city government. With the powers granted to him under Michigan law, he will be better suited to navigate the some 48 agreements the city has with unions and reform city government processes and structures without having to play political games.

An emergency manager is a prudent step before considering municipal bankruptcy, which would be uncharted territory for a city of this size with potential consequences to regional assets. An emergency manager in Detroit also staves off the slash and burn approach typically associated with municipal bankruptcy. The emergency manager has to answer to the Governor, so the person restructuring Detroit's finances is held

accountable by a duly elected official. That's not the case when dealing with a bankruptcy judge. Orr can approach the fiscal crisis with the city's long-term future in mind. The goal here is to fix the problems. Having an emergency manager is the best option available at this point.

From a political standpoint, Governor Snyder has little to gain by aggressively tackling Detroit's problems. The fruits of this heavy lift will likely not become apparent until after his 2014 reelection battle is a distant memory. Furthermore, even as Detroit grows more stable and prosperous, it is not likely to

be a target rich opportunity for Republicans anytime soon.

But that is not what's driving our Governor. True to his background as a businessman and his training as a CPA, Rick Snyder is doing what he thinks will work without regard for the electoral consequences. In doing so, he is providing us with an example of what a public servant should be – a person doing his or her best to do the right thing for the right reason.

That's what bold leadership is all about.

It's also the type of leadership that is needed to save Detroit. **RF**



Detroit Mayor Dave Bing, Governor Rick Snyder, and Kevyn Orr at the Governor's news conference announcing his appointment of Orr as emergency manager of Detroit.

**An emergency manager is a prudent step before considering municipal bankruptcy, which would be uncharted territory for a city of this size with potential consequences to regional assets.**

*Sandy K. Baruah is the President & CEO of the Detroit Regional Chamber and previously served as the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development and the head of the Small Business Administration under President George W. Bush.*



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# A New Model for Local Governance

BENITA M. DODD

What if you created a city that improved services for residents yet avoided the bloat of government bureaucracy and the long-term liability of government pensions? That's just what happened in 2005 to Sandy Springs, when it became Georgia's first new city in 50 years.

Before it became a city in December 2005, residents of unincorporated Sandy Springs spent three decades complaining about "substandard" county government services despite the high taxes they paid to an inefficient Fulton County government. Their campaign for cityhood followed unsuccessful attempts to annex Sandy Springs into the City of Atlanta. But Sandy Springs' own efforts to incorporate were repeatedly resisted by the Democrat-controlled Legislature, which rejected a referendum because Fulton County resisted the loss of taxpayer revenue.

When Republicans took control of the General Assembly in 2005, they voted to allow the referendum on cityhood. The move was promptly approved by 94 percent of Sandy Springs voters in June 2005; a mayor and six councilmembers were elected in November and, in the blink of an eye, the new city of Sandy Springs was born on December 1, 2005. And this was a city with a twist: It opened business with just two city employees: the city manager and city clerk; after a bidding process, everything except police and fire services was contracted out to a private company through a public-private partnership (PPP).

Why is this so important to the city's success? When local governments all around were in the economic

doldrums, Sandy Springs was sailing forward. That's thanks to the efficiencies involved in handing over operations to the private sector, according to Oliver Porter, one of the architects of cityhood who became interim city manager and is now considered an international expert on privatizing

local governments.

"One of the great benefits of the public-private partnership is the breaking down of the budgetary process," Porter maintains.

"The typical government builds departmental budgets. What is the incentive the department head has? To provide more services. Each one builds a budget and it goes to the top, then you have to arbitrarily whack it. That's broken down in the PPP model by the profit incentive."

Another advantage was that, by outsourcing all services except public safety, the fledgling city's management company could move resources around as needed.

Third, when there are no government employees, there are no long-term liabilities, such as public employee pensions, or union negotiations. Until Sandy Springs set up its own police and fire departments in 2006, it contracted with Fulton County for those services. By law, the county can bill no more than the

actual cost of providing services to the new city, but when unhappy county governments lose revenue as new cities are formed by pockets of higher-income residents, "costs" of services contracted can be high: "We were killed in Sandy Springs for police and fire until we could get out of it," Porter recalls.



Benita M. Dodd

**Before it became a city in December 2005, residents of unincorporated Sandy Springs spent three decades complaining about "substandard" county government services despite the high taxes they paid to an inefficient Fulton County government.**

Today, apart from police and firefighters, Sandy Springs has fewer than 10 employees, including the city manager, the city clerk, court clerk and finance director. The city receives about 15 percent of taxes for local services; 52 percent goes to the county for schools. Porter, who modestly attributes Sandy Springs' success to being "lucky," has one regret in hindsight: "We should've taken welfare services, too."

"I'm not sure if there are constitutional prohibitions, but I bet we could take that remaining 33 percent – twice what we spend on local services, mind you! – then do the same job with welfare for 15 percent."

In 2011, the city switched from managing company CH2MHill, which had succeeded in getting Sandy Springs up and running in three months, to service contracts with several companies with lower bids. The move is expected to save \$35 million over five years.

Has the city's PPP model met with satisfaction? Yes, according to citizen surveys. Yes, according to the first election after incorporation: 84 percent was the lowest vote for an incumbent. That's no surprise, considering the

millage rate and taxes haven't increased, parks and roads are improved, the city boasts a \$35 million reserve against a budget of \$85 million and there are no unfunded liabilities, all despite the economic downturn. Sandy Springs' success has spurred six new cities in Georgia alone, and the Sandy Springs model is trumpeted as efficient, effective and closer to the people.

Sandy Springs is not perfect. Residents do complain, but rarely about operations. Most complaints arise with City Council decisions, such as when residents are unhappy with zoning.

"I say to people, look at this: You actually went in and you were heard," Porter says "How much chance did you get of

being heard in Fulton County? The very fact that there was discussion and debate – even an argument – is a plus for our side." **RF**

*Benita Dodd is the Vice President at the Georgia Public Policy Foundation, a former editorial writer and columnist for The Atlanta Journal Editorial Board, and an editorial writer for The Atlanta Journal-Constitution Editorial Board.*

**Today, apart from police and firefighters, Sandy Springs has fewer than 10 employees, including the city manager, the city clerk, court clerk and finance director.**

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# The Texas Model for Prosperity

## *How the American Dream is Fueling Economic Growth*

BILL PEACOCK

Back in the depths of the Great Recession, Texas became the target of liberal commentators across the nation, just as the Lone Star State was in the midst of creating more new jobs than the rest of the nation combined. *The New York Times*' Paul Krugman led the chorus claiming, "the Texas miracle is a myth, and ... offers no useful lessons on how to restore national full employment." Of course, it wasn't the new jobs they minded: it was the fact that the Texas miracle was brought to pass by the Texas model of lower taxes, less regulation, and a sound civil justice system.

Though there is nothing miraculous about the Texas model, it appears so to many because it flies in the face of today's prevailing approach to economic development, which mainly involves subsidizing business using taxpayer money. In other words, it is government centric — and that's why liberals like it. Nevertheless, the support for this approach is quite bipartisan. Businesses like it because they don't have to compete for money through the market, and policymakers like it because they can claim that they did something to improve the economy.

Texas hasn't entirely eschewed this model. The Texas Enterprise Fund uses corporate subsidies to attract new businesses; and the Texas Emerging Technology Fund actually takes an ownership interest in startups. These along with other economic development programs will receive close to \$300 million in the state's current two year budget.

Additionally, the Texas Legislature just passed legislation that would renew targeted economic development property tax cuts at the local level. The cost of that bill is expected to rise to close to \$500 million a year.

Despite these programs, Texas devotes relatively few resources — comparatively — to these ends. Our research shows that in 2010, Texas ranked 37th in per capita spending on economic development. Texans simply don't believe that government is the way to grow the economy. Instead, businesses in Texas are allowed to earn profits in the marketplace that they can then invest in jobs for hard-working Texans. How is Texas doing with this counter-cultural approach? Pretty darned well. Texas has 52 companies on the Fortune 500, second only to California's

53. Its ten-year gross state product growth is 57.7 percent, compared to the national average of 46.6 percent.

Nowhere can the effects of the Texas model be seen more clearly than in job growth. During the ten years through 2011, the rest of the United States lost over 700,000 jobs while Texas alone gained 1.2 million. More recently, Texas added 326,100 jobs from April 2012 to April 2013, the largest year-over-year job growth of any state. In times of feast and famine, the Texas model is working.

It's working in other states as well. States with low economic development spending top those with high economic development spending in job growth, income growth, and population growth. The low spending states also spend less on government overall, again proving the success of the Texas model.

Of course, the Texas model didn't begin in Texas. What we've really done is try to live out the American Dream. The problem is that most other large states have abandoned the Dream and seem satisfied with living in the nightmare of anemic job growth, population loss, and recurrent poverty.

Texas Governor Rick Perry recognizes these advantages. So while he can tout Texas' economic development programs when reaching out to businesses in other states, he mainly focuses on the Texas model. This can be seen in a recent radio ad in California where he noted that "[b]uilding a business is tough, but I hear building a business in California is next to impossible." He then invited California businesses to "come check out Texas ... and see why our low taxes, sensible regulations and fair legal system are just the thing to get your business moving to Texas."

The Texas model is based on the simple premise that freedom begets prosperity. Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness are still honored in the Lone Star State. Not perfectly, of course. But the American Dream still has a fighting chance in Texas. **RF**

*Bill Peacock is the Vice President of Research and Director of the Center for Economic Freedom at the Texas Public Policy Foundation.*

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# Preventing Another Fast and Furious

STEPHEN JACKSON

Although mass shootings have recently dominated the media and our public psyche, they only represent one facet of contemporary U.S. gun tragedies.

From 2009 until the end of 2010, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives conducted “Operation Fast and Furious,” a “gun walking” scheme in Arizona. In this instance, “gun walking” involved intentionally permitting firearms to be purchased by individuals intending to illegally transfer ownership or to illicitly transport them elsewhere, including Mexico.

ATF agents instructed federally licensed firearms dealers to sell to known traffickers in order to allow agents to track these weapons, the theory being that by following these firearms, they could discover and take down larger illicit operations. With around 2000 weapons allowed to walk and their tracking proving unwieldy, one of the walked guns, perhaps unsurprisingly, was found to be the weapon used by a Mexican drug cartel member on December 14, 2010, to gun down U.S. Border Patrol agent Brian Terry in Arizona.

Congress, and particularly House Republicans, have thoroughly probed Fast and Furious and the tragic death of Brian Terry. Their investigation focused on identifying and holding accountable those who green-lit the program which Government and Oversight Committee Chairman Darrell Issa called “felony stupid.” Their efforts have been vast and are important. However, they seemed to avoid examining the ATF’s justifications for Fast and Furious and to determine what Congress can do to ensure

it does not happen again.

As documented by congressional reports, the reasons for ATF’s failures with Fast and Furious are myriad. Nevertheless, while the plan’s execution faltered and its premise remains convoluted, the ATF did surmise this was their best available tactic to thwart illegal firearms activity in the Southwest.

As outlined in an excellent *Fortune* feature by Katherine Eban, the ATF in Arizona was effectively incapable of arresting known firearms traffickers and straw purchasers – those who illegally purchase on behalf of someone else. Probable cause and admissible evidence proved near impossible to obtain due to an excessively stringent interpretation of law by the U.S. Attorney’s Office. In fact, from 2009 to mid-2010, Arizona ATF agents submitted 46 pages of illegal firearms purchase details on 31 suspects to the U.S. Attorney’s office. Not one of these was indicted before the December killing of Terry. While briefly mentioned, yet dismissed out of hand by the congressional reports, the ATF was indeed judicially constrained in preventing illegal firearms purchases and trafficking.

The ATF presently has around 2,500 law enforcement agents, fewer than it had in 1970 – yet the number of U.S. firearms has risen from one gun per two

people to more than one per person. This short-handedness has been compounded by the ATF operating without a permanent director since 2006 – the same year Congress decided the position should require a Senate confirmation.



Stephen Jackson

**With limited resources, the ATF determined their best prospect to stop illegal firearms in the Southwest was Fast and Furious. “Felony stupid,” yes – but perhaps, it was the only option.**

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seemingly working against them, the ATF could not afford to strike out on cases. With limited resources, the ATF determined their best prospect to stop illegal firearms in the Southwest was Fast and Furious. "Felony stupid," yes – but perhaps, it was the only option. After all, when fighting blindfolded and with one hand tied behind your back, your best hope is to land a haymaker.

Fortunately, there are Congressional actions which can be taken to aid the ATF in their charge going forward. Increasing funds to the ATF should be a top priority. Its 2012 budget of \$1.15 billion is only negligibly larger than the \$900 million they received in 2000. Additionally, Congress should either immediately confirm a permanent ATF director, or undo this onerous requirement. The Senate confirmation process has become almost nonexistent, yet the number of federal positions currently filled by acting directors is staggering.

Congress is right in their oversight and their quest to hold individuals accountable. However, they must also expose and correct shortcomings in the law. Common sense bipartisan pieces of legislation such as H.R. 452, the Gun Trafficking

Prevention Act, will address some of these shortcomings and also strengthen illegal firearms penalties to aid law enforcement. Introduced by Democrat Carolyn Maloney, with three original co-sponsors including two Republicans, Scott Rigell and Patrick Meehan, the legislation would finally make firearms trafficking a federal offense. It will also increase the

sentence for a straw purchaser, a change which law enforcement officials have encouraged to provide them more leverage to turn suspects into informants.

Those opposed to new gun restrictions frequently contend that our Nation has enough firearms laws -- they simply are not properly enforced. Indeed, this is partially the case, and with a few legislative tweaks, Congress can allow for true enforcement of these laws. Although the media

has focused on different aspects of the gun control debate, there exist non-controversial changes which Congress should make to aid the ATF in their mission to thwart illicit firearms. **RF**

**Fortunately, there are Congressional actions which can be taken to aid the ATF in their charge going forward. Increasing funds to the ATF should be a top priority.**

*Stephen Jackson is Director of Policy for The Ripon Society.*



## In Speech to The Ripon Society, Cantor Touts the Importance of Making Conservative Principles Relevant to People's Lives

WASHINGTON, DC – House Majority Leader Eric Cantor appeared before a breakfast meeting of The Ripon Society on May 7th, delivering a speech about common sense conservative principles and why it is critical for Republicans to apply those principles in a way that not only inspires people, but is also relevant to their lives.

“We as conservative Republicans don’t stand for a big government,” Cantor stated. “But we do stand for a big America. I shudder to think what this world is going to be without a big America. It is that optimism -- it is that inspiration -- which I believe our party is about. We’re having a challenge in conveying that kind of optimistic, inspirational message of who we are as conservatives and Republicans.

“The media has done a great job of sort of shoving us in the corner, because all they say we are concerned with is somehow balancing the budget and cutting spending and taking things away from people. What we’re trying to say is that we need to do those things in order to reenergize the opportunity machine of America. We’re about giving people opportunity. And that’s really what our agenda this year is about.”

Cantor, who was first elected to Congress in 2000, represents the 7th Congressional District of Virginia. Re-elected by his colleagues to serve as Majority Leader for the second consecutive Congress, he also spoke about the legislative agenda Republicans are pursuing and the message he hoped

the American people would hear.

“We’ve committed ourselves over the last couple months to try to set in place a plan to get this economy back on track,” the Majority Leader stated. “We have taken the steps necessary. We have stood by the sequester. And we’ve said we’re going to maintain our

their kids, let alone get an education?”

“It has to do with applying conservative philosophies to the challenges that every day people are facing. This week on the floor, we have a bill that Martha Roby has put in. It’s a bill that came out of the Education and Workforce Committee on a party line vote. It’s a bill that says if you work overtime -- more than 40 hours per week -- you ought to be given the choice of whether you get time and a half or get comp time.

“Why? First of all, all government employees have this flexibility. Secondly, if you’re a working parent -- and believe me I know with three kids of my own -- one of the things all working parents want is more time. How do you juggle getting to the pediatrician’s office, going to a parent-teacher conference, going to a soccer game after school if you’re an hourly wage earner and you’ve got to be able to go to work to get your paycheck? Who wants that kind of choice?”

“We’ve also got some education issues that we are taking a look at. Educational reform is something we conservatives have always believed in. If we’re going to be about advancement, we need to allow parents the opportunity to get younger kids out of these really bad schools and put them into a life where they actually have a shot at a successful future. It’s about dollars following the kids, because if you let the dollars follow the bureaucratic maze, you get what you’ve got now. And that’s not good enough for us.” **RF**



**“We as conservative Republicans  
don’t stand for a big government.  
But we do stand for a big America.”**

commitment to fiscal discipline. No one can convince us that that’s not vital to economic growth.

“But we also want to speak to the people who, frankly, have begun to turn us off because they don’t feel we have an agenda that speaks to them ... What are we doing for that assistant manager of a fast food restaurant? What are we doing for single moms who are waking up in the District of Columbia this morning and facing the fact that their kids are going to schools that can’t even provide a safe place for these mothers to leave

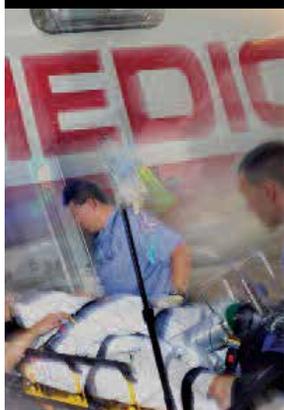
provide  
emergency  
care to  
**2.5 million  
Americans**

deliver  
**71,700  
babies**

perform  
**517,000  
surgeries**

health care  
safety net for  
**50 million  
uninsured**

and care for  
**670,000  
Americans  
admitted to  
hospitals**



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# Ripon

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## Profile

**Name:** Deb Fischer

**Occupation:** United States Senator for the State of Nebraska

**How much has your background as a rancher shaped your political career?** I think it's maybe not so much my background as a rancher, but I was born and raised in Lincoln. I met my husband at the University. I fell in love with a rancher, married a rancher, and that's how I've ended up in the Nebraska Sandhills for the last 41 years. But I think it's more a combination of things that influence us and make us who we are. Part of it is being in agriculture. Part of it is living in rural Nebraska and being a mother to three sons who are now back on the ranch. You have a connection and a sense of community when you're living in a rural setting, a small town.

**You've gone from serving in a unicameral legislature to a bicameral legislature that is plagued with stalemate.**

**What has been the hardest thing to adjust to?** I think it's an interesting process here in Washington. I find it frustrating that so much of what happens here is scripted. I'm used to -- as you said -- being in a unicameral legislature. We didn't caucus. We were on the floor every day. We had an agenda. We went through the bills that were on the agenda. Anybody could hit their light, get in the queue and be able to stand up and debate. Anyone could file an amendment, either right there on the floor or write one up ahead of time to be taken up. It was a little more impromptu at times in Nebraska -- it's how we operated. It's just more scripted here.

**Democrats tried to paint you as a Tea Party candidate, yet you were the only Republican in your primary not to receive the Tea Party endorsement.**

**How would you characterize your political ideology?** Well, you are exactly right -- I did not receive the Tea Party endorsement. As I said, I served in the legislature. I was chair of an important committee -- the Transportation and Telecommunications Committee. I was chair of that for six of my eight elected years in the legislature. I think everyone knows that I'm conservative. I believe in limited government. I believe in government -- you must set priorities, and then make tough decisions on how to fund those priorities.

**You have been an outspoken supporter of the Keystone Pipeline. Why is it so important to the people of your state?** Well, I think the Pipeline is important for our country. In Nebraska, we set up a process during a special legislative session that we had that put in place -- a siting process. We followed that at the state level; the Department of Environmental Quality had public hearings. They issued a report, the Governor made a decision, and it is now up to the President and his administration to decide if they're going to approve the Pipeline. All of the reports that have been put out there so far, whether at the state or federal level, have shown that there is limited environmental impact -- which I think is very important. It's time for the President to make a decision.

**And finally, a question unrelated to politics. The Cornhuskers have one of the richest traditions in college football. What has been the secret of their success?** At Nebraska, we honor tradition. We of course have huge support for the team across the state. And I think it's that feeling of family and the feeling of community and support for that team. Go Big Red!





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