

THE DEWEESE REPORT

Volume 20 - Issue 5

May 2014

In February, 2014, I was invited to present the keynote address to the annual Clouds Over America conference in Oklahoma City, OK. Part of the program that evening was the presentation of awards to members of the Oklahoma state legislature who had distinguished themselves as defenders of freedom during the legislative session. I then had the privilege of speaking to this esteemed audience. Though some of this material has been published in a recent issue of the DeWeese Report, many in that audience asked for copies of this presentation. So I decided to reprint it here in its entirety.
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The Principles of Freedom VS Agenda 21

A presentation by
Tom DeWeese

“Freedom.” We use that word a lot. Do we all really know what that word means? It’s used in so many different ways. Do we understand how it is attained? Most importantly, do we understand how it is used by some to actually take freedom away?

Simply put, freedom is the ability to act without hindrance or restraint. Freedom is owning your life, your actions, your labor. We say we support the “principles” of freedom. But what are those principles and where did they come from?

First of all, we must understand principles are not legislated or invented. Principles are discovered. Someone doesn’t just come up with an idea and start to sell it as a principle. A principle exists and you are subject to it, whether or not you know it.

For example, for centuries men were ignorant of the laws of physics but they were subject to them nonetheless. Man couldn’t fly or fit two objects in the same space, no matter how hard he tried because the laws (or principles) of physics are fact, whether known or unknown.

The same is true with the principles of freedom. The basic principles of freedom are consistent with man’s nature and that’s why they work. When the principles of freedom are recognized and adhered to, there is prosperity, justice and happiness. When the principles have been ignored or rejected, men have suffered poverty, stagnation and political tyranny.

So to obtain freedom it’s vital that we know what the principles are. There are three, actually. Individualism, private property, and free enterprise. They are all necessary for freedom to exist. Leave just one out, and freedom is eroded.

Individualism – your personal choices – the ability to pursue your own rational self-interest. Choices like the

religion you choose; the size home you build; the car you drive; the kind of spouse you select. In short, individualism is fulfilling a life of one’s own.

Private Property. We start with the concept of the right to own and control private property. Your own body is the most important property you will ever own.

So private property is not just land. It is your thoughts, your possessions and the fruits of your own labor. Without the right to own and dispose of the products of ones own life, the individual is dependent upon the State (or someone) for his very existence. So, it is obvious that one can’t be individualistic without the ability to own and control private property.

It can be argued that one can have no other rights without property rights. George Washington said, “private property and freedom are inseparable.” Property Rights activist and rancher, Wayne Hage said, “Either you have the right to own property or you are property.”

And that brings us to the third principle of freedom – **Free Enterprise.** Free markets. Capitalism. The process whereby free men buy and sell and trade the products of their own lives free from interference.

These are the three principles of freedom and these are what we are fighting for.

So, I am honored to speak to legislators who have distinguished themselves in their duties by standing for the principles of freedom. You face so much as a legislator. The unending pressure from special interest groups to support their agenda.

The news media which watches for any misstep, ready to pounce and defame you – especially if that misstep is not a misstep at all- rather a bold move for freedom that goes

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against their agenda.

And of course, there is the push from fellow legislators, some from your own side of the aisle, who pressure you to support their legislation, apparently failing to understand its consequences on freedom.

You have so very many details in which to be involved, to be wary of -- to try and understand. So, I wanted to spend a little time today sharing with you some issues that many times do confuse even the most dedicated freedom advocate.

Especially in dealing with Agenda 21 -- one of the most difficult issues of all to understand and defend against. Agenda 21; Sustainable Development; conservation; planned growth; environmental protection -- Agenda 21 comes wrapped in each of these names, and many more. Like spoiling fish, the wrapping hides the smell.

But, as a result, we seem to be drowning in a sea of endless political fights and issues that affect our actions every day. Where do these issues come from? Who has time to think them up? Who is advocating them?

Recently a local activist asked me to name six issues that would surprise most people to learn are directly connected to Agenda 21.

Agenda 21, according to the Planners, the Greens, and Progressives (I know, I repeat myself) is just an innocuous 20 year old document that has no connection to local planning. Moreover, they tell us it is just a guideline for conservation and "smart growth" of our communities. Nothing more.

In fact, in their own words, they assure us that, "*Sustainable communities encourage people to work together to create healthy communities where natural resources and historic resources are preserved, jobs are available, sprawl is contained, neighborhoods are secure, education is lifelong, transportation and health care is accessible, and all citizens have opportunities to improve the quality of their lives.*"

It all sounds so innocent. What could possibly be wrong with that? Well, putting these plans into place is where the problems begin.

Here are six leading issues that are rarely mentioned or connected to Agenda 21 and

Sustainable Development (especially when we are told that Agenda 21 has nothing to do with federal, state or local government policy). And I'm going to add direct quotes from the proponents of these policies so there can be no doubt of their true purpose and origin.

Issue 1: Global Warming/Climate Change. It has been so discredited in the true scientific community that proponents have become almost silly in their continued attempts to push it. So, why don't they stop? Why is it so vitally important that they continue to promote something that clearly is unproven, to say the least?

It's because all of Agenda 21 policy is built on the premise that man is destroying the Earth. Climate Change is their "Proof." To eliminate that premise is to remove all credibility and purpose for their entire agenda. They are willing to go to any length, even lies, to keep the climate change foot on our throats.

But don't take my word for it. I'll let them speak for themselves:

Christine Stewart (Former Canadian Minister of the Environment) said:

"No matter if the science of global warming is all phony...climate change provides the greatest opportunity to bring about justice and equality in the world."

Timothy Wirth (President, UN Foundation) and former official of the Clinton Administration said,

"We've got to ride this global warming issue. Even if the theory of global warming is wrong, we will be doing the right thing in terms of economic and environmental policy."

Paul Watson (Co-Founder of Green Peace) said,

"It doesn't matter what is true. It only matters what people believe is true."

Issue 2: Fear of over population is the central driving force behind nearly every Sustainable policy initiative. The fact is, in developed nations population is actually going down. The only real growth in the US population in recent years has been from immigration, legal or otherwise.

There is a major divide in the Green movement over the issue of population. Some

DeWeese Report

Vol. 20, No. 5
May 2014

Published by
The American Policy
Center

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Web Page:
www.deweese-report.com

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in the Sierra Club advocate that US borders be closed to stop population growth here, just as you and I do, and for mostly the same reasons. Illegals, they say, overcrowd our cities and damage our way of life, including our environment and use up our natural resources.

The majority of Environmentalists, however, insist that the borders must be open to allow as many to immigrate here as possible. They argue that the US has a greater ability to control them and protect the environment than if we left them in third world countries. That's because the Greens have already strangled our nation and our industry with massive environmental regulations.

In the face of their fear of overpopulation, however, it's interesting to note that studies have shown that there is no world-wide over population crisis. In fact one study insists that we could put the entire population of the world in an area the size of Texas with a population density of Paris, France.

Over population, and its accompanying environmental degradation, is a problem only in poor countries that lack the ability by the poor to improve their conditions. Nations that refuse to legalize private property ownership for the masses, for example, is a primary reason for poverty in these nations.

Meanwhile, Sustainablists work to ban these nations from developing or increasing energy use, thereby keeping them poor. Green regulations stop the building of infrastructure. They panic at the idea of increased energy use in developing nations. And move to stop that growth at all costs.

Instead of working to solve the real problem – poverty -- they exploit the excuse of over population, and advocate enforcing polices to drastically reduce populations. China's brutal one child policy of forced abortions and sterilization has become their model.

Do you think I'm joking? Then consider this quote from *David Brower (Sierra Club)*:

"Childbearing should be a punishable crime against society, unless the parents hold a government license. All potential parents should be required to use contraceptive chemicals, the government issuing antidotes to citizens chosen for childbearing."

Or this one from the United Nations Global Biodiversity Assessment:

"A reasonable estimate for an industrialized world society at the present North American material standard of living would be 1 billion. At a more frugal European standard of living, 2 to 3 billion would be possible."

That report is, of course, advocating that we live on less – actually advocating poverty as a means of achieving sustainability. In other words, enforcing the very thing that would cause populations to skyrocket instead of diminish.

Issue 3: The goal of Agenda 21 is the destruction of the Free Market system. We have heard statement after statement from the UN, from Members of Congress, the news media and from Hollywood, all deriding the free market system as evil, corrupt and a tool of the rich to hold down the poor.

Now suddenly, they are worried about the poor – if it leads to their ability to raid our bank accounts. So, are they really worried about protecting the environment -- or honoring the tactics of Jesse James? Redistribution of wealth is behind every policy that comes out of the UN, and now the Obama Administration as well.

The EPA is the attack dog to shut down entire industries like coal. It has become very difficult to operate a manufacturing business in the US, and nearly impossible to start a new one. Environmental protection is always the excuse, even when Obama's own State Department says the Keystone Pipeline is not an environmental threat. Just last week, radical greens with torches demonstrated outside the house of the head of the Keystone pipeline company. Does that scene not bring back visions of the terror of the Dark Ages?

At the UN's Rio + 20 Summit last year. The idea of "Zero Economic Growth" was advocated - just to keep things fair. It was stated that even the building of new roads upsets the status quo and disrupts a well ordered society. Such idiotic ideas are the driving force behind Sustainable Development. Again, images of the Dark Ages.

And again, not my words. Let them tell you themselves:

Dave Foreman, (Earth First), said "We must make this an insecure and inhospitable place for capitalists and their projects. We must reclaim the roads and plowed lands, halt dam construction, tear down existing dams, free shackled rivers and return to wilderness millions of acres of presently settled land."

Have you had pressure put on you to support legislation to tear down dams and grab (I mean preserve) thousands of acres of open space? Now you know its origin.

A minute ago I stated that their goal is to make us all poor. You thought I was just making that up. Sorry, all of what I'm telling you is their works. I'm just the messenger whom they love to call a fringe nut.

Professor Maurice King (Population Control Advocate) said:

"Global sustainability requires the deliberate quest of poverty, reduced resource consumption and set levels of mortality control"

Now, planning groups like to assure you that their projects are all local, made with local input and have absolutely nothing to do with Agenda 21. Well, not so fast. ***This quote is directly from the website, plannersnetwork.org and its Statement or Principles.***

"We believe planning should be a tool for allocating resources...and eliminating the great inequalities of wealth and power in our society... because the free market has proven itself incapable of doing this."

The largest and most respected planning group in the nation, the American Planning Association is a member and supporter of these principles.

Issue 4: Cheap Energy is the enemy of the Earth. To the average person, the drive to stop any ability to obtain cheap energy makes no sense. People are hurting economically. Jobs are lost. Energy costs are skyrocketing. Any attempt to drill oil, fracking of shale gas, and mining coal are all vigorously blocked by government and green policy. Yet the government spends billions of dollars on "alternative energy" such as wind and solar, which provides less than 3% of our energy needs. Why? What is the motivation to put such shackles on the US economic engine?

The excuse is that energy use drives up CO2 emissions and accelerates global warming - the excuse necessary to "harmonize" the US into the socialist, Sustainable global noose.

But, according to some anti-energy advocates, the fear of cheap energy goes beyond environmental protection. Energy availability, they say, helps build wealth for individuals and removes them from the rolls of the dependent. And you see, dependency on government is a little-mentioned, but major goal of sustainable policy.

Prof. Paul Ehrlich (Professor of Population Studies, Stanford University), said: "Giving society cheap, abundant energy is the worst thing that could ever happen to the planet."

Amory Lovins (Rocky Mountain Institute), said:

"Complex technology of any sort is an assault on human dignity. It would be little short of disastrous for us to discover a source of clean, cheap, abundant energy, because of what we might do with it."

Jeremy Rifkin (Greenhouse Crisis Foundation), said:

"The prospect of cheap fusion energy is the worst thing that could happen to the planet."

Issue 5: Common Core. Many people see the reorganization of the public school issue as separate from Agenda 21. It's not. Those who are promoting what they call the Agenda for the 21st Century understand that it is going to be a long drawn out process.

To reform a nation that has been created on the ideals of limited government, free enterprise and individual liberty into one that unquestioningly accepts government top down control -- will take time. They must wait out those of us who

were educated in the old system, we who were taught that we were born with our rights and that government's job is to protect those rights.

The sustainable system says government will grant us our rights. To enforce such a radical turn around of our society requires that the children be indoctrinated to accept it.

The effort started in earnest in the 1990s under the Clinton Administration through the Department of Education and programs including Goals 2000, School To Work and Workforce Development Boards. These programs set children on the path to accepting top down control as schools became mainly training centers to create the workers of tomorrow.

The original American education system effectively provided an overall academic education from which students could choose their own futures. No longer. Today, the new curriculum has morphed into what is called Common Core. It's a State run central curriculum that revamps schools as little more than job training and indoctrination centers.

Because, you see, today's curriculum is also designed to strip the children of their attitudes, values and beliefs that parents may instill in them, and indoctrinate them into accepting global values - global citizenship and a global economy based on the sustainable agenda.

Little of American civics and history is taught in today's classroom. But text books contain whole chapters on the Five Pillars of Islam, while ignoring the 10 Commandments of Christianity. The children are fed an unending diet of the evils of capitalism; the selfishness of individualism, and the social justice of redistribution of wealth. It punishes students for possessing individuality and is designed to eliminate such natural human tendencies.

That is the "common" in Common Core. Common values, common goals, common future. Don't rock the boat of a well ordered society. Common Core is the curriculum necessary for the acceptance and implementation of Agenda 21. And today nearly every adult up to the age of 40 has gone through this indoctrination, trained to accept a future chosen for them by someone else.

Issue 6. Healthcare. How is healthcare connected to Agenda 21? Simply Google "Sustainable Medicine" and you will find more than 5,850,000 English language references to the subject. Read through the ideas expressed there and you will find nearly every provision of Obamacare.

A friend of mine and an expert on Sustainable Medicine, the late Dr. Madeleine Cosman, put it this way: "Sustainable Medicine + Sustainable Development = Duty to Die." How do we handle the preconceived over-population problem - Central control of the health care system - Obamacare.

Sustainable medicine makes decisions through visioning

Supreme Court sides with landowner in dispute over property claimed for trail

“Rails to Trails” is a Green Land grab

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court on Monday sided with a Wyoming property owner in a dispute over a bicycle trail that follows the route of an abandoned railroad, a decision that could force the government to pay hundreds of millions of dollars to compensate landowners.

The justices ruled 8-1 that property owner Marvin Brandt remains the owner of a 200-foot-wide trail that crosses his 83-acre parcel in southern Wyoming's Medicine Bow National Forest. The trail once was the path of a railroad and is among thousands of miles of abandoned railroads that have been converted to recreational trails.

Chief Justice John Roberts said the government was wrong to assert that it owns the trail.

(US News) Source: Liberty and Property Rights Coalition

Vladimir Putin's Green Allies

Red and Green = Tyranny

Few environmentalists would regard themselves as allies of Vladimir Putin. Indeed, in their stout opposition to petroleum, which the Russian president is using both as a piggy bank and a weapon for expanding his power, it might appear that they are opponents. Such a view is superficial. In many ways, both Mr. Putin's Russia and the modern green movement are offshoots of the collapse of the Soviet empire. They remain united against the old Soviet enemy: free markets and free minds. --*Peter Foster, Financial Post, 8 March 2014*

Europe's alternative energy policy is in a shambles. The EU would be even more vulnerable but for a typically unanticipated example of free market ingenuity: hydraulic fracturing and the boom in shale gas. But guess what: Greens are everywhere resolutely opposed to fracking, and nowhere more than in Europe. Like their peace march colleagues half a century ago, they are ultimately dupes for an authoritarian agenda, be it that of the high priests of Gaia, or Vladimir Putin. --*Peter Foster, Financial Post, 8 March 2014*

Source: Global Warming Policy Foundation, London, England

Greener than “green”

Fracking is friendly to protected species and mosquito-devouring bats.

By Deroy Murdock

Williamsport, PA — A constant, mild hiss.

That was my chief observation when I returned to Anadarko Petroleum’s Landon Pad A, a natural-gas site in Lycoming County, PA. October’s quietude was totally unlike the cyclone of equipment, personnel and activity that had dominated this spot just four months before, when Anadarko and the American Petroleum Institute hosted journalists and policy analysts here.

Back then, engineers used a pressurized blend of 90% water, 9.5% sand, and 0.5% chemicals to crack subterranean shale deposits and awaken natural gas that has slumbered since the dinosaurs died. This hydraulic fracturing, or “fracking,” occurs some 6,000 feet underground. This is 5,000 feet beneath the water table – deep enough to bury three Empire State Buildings.

This spot now resembles the scene of a once-raging party that has been cleared out and cleaned up. The trucks have driven off. Dozens of workers have moved on. The cranes are gone. What remains are three acres of gravel-covered farmland, five completed wells, rising three to six feet above the soil, and a steady, low-volume whoosh.

This is the sound of natural gas being captured; counted by a “cash register” gauge that measures output and thus royalties; and conveyed via yellow pipes into the broader natural-gas market. The result? Warm bedrooms on crisp nights and hot showers on cold mornings.

Despite the shrill complaints of fracking foes, this productive but tranquil patch demonstrates how much *greener* fracking is than other power sources – even “green” ones.

- Fracking should soothe those who fret about CO₂.

Since 2002, carbon dioxide output has grown 32 percent globally, Manhattan Institute senior fellow Robert Bryce wrote for Bloomberg View in September. “In the U.S., meanwhile, carbon dioxide emissions were 8 percent lower in 2012 than they were in 2002, largely due to a surge in shale gas production, which has reduced coal use.” Indeed, fracking has helped America keep its unratified Kyoto Protocol commitments while other countries decry so-called global warming and yet continue boosting CO₂.

New York City, home of über-frackphobe Yoko Ono, is benefiting enormously from fracking.

“New York has the cleanest air now of any major American city,” Gotham mayor Michael Bloomberg told journalists on September 26. Thanks to both purer heating oil in local buildings and the conversion of others to natural gas fracked along the Marcellus Shale, New York’s air has not been this clear in 50 years, officials say.

As the Associated Press’s Deepti Hajela reported, decreases in sulfur dioxide, soot and other pollutants are preventing 2,000 emergency-room visits and 800 deaths annually. This concrete positive vastly outweighs the theoretical risk that fracking someday, somewhere possibly might taint someone’s drinking water – maybe.

- Water is a precious resource. So, conservationists should smile at how little water fracking requires – compared to other energy sources. According to the U.S. Energy Department and the Ground Water Protection Council, it typically takes three gallons of water to produce 1 million British thermal units of energy from deep-shale natural gas/fracking.

Atomic energy requires 11 gallons per million BTUs. Coal: 23 gallons. Corn ethanol? A whopping 15,800 gallons. And soy biodiesel requires nearly triple that amount: 44,500 gallons per million BTUs. That’s 14,833 times the water needed for fracking.

But what about groundwater pollution? The hysteria that fracking poisons drinking water lacks one key ingredient: evidence.

As former EPA chief Lisa Jackson testified before Congress in May 2011: “I’m not aware of any proven case where the fracking process itself has affected water.” Even New York State’s politically frackophobic Andrew Cuomo administration concluded that “no significant adverse impact to water resources is likely to occur due to underground vertical migration of fracturing fluids through the shale formations.” A December 2011 Department of Environmental Conservation draft report added that “there is no likelihood of significant adverse impacts from the underground migration of fracturing fluids.”

- Protecting habitat is another key eco-priority.

Fracking succeeds here, too. An SAIC/RW Beck study found that natural-gas companies use 0.4 acres of land to

generate a year's supply of electricity for 1,000 households. Nuclear power requires 0.7 acres. Coal consumes 0.75 acres. Wind power needs six acres. And solar cells require 8.4 acres to fuel 1,000 households annually. This is 21 times the habitat impact of natural gas. So, if you are a Gila monster or a Joshua tree, cheer fracking and hiss solar.

* What about wildlife?

Anadarko's Brad Milliken says rattlesnakes are protected in Pennsylvania, unlike his home state of Texas. The company, Milliken says, retains "what I would call a rattlesnake wrangler. If we see a snake, we call him up, and they relocate the snake temporarily," until work has been completed. "All of our contractors understand not to disturb the snakes."

Before installing a new pipeline, Anadarko checks for Indiana bats, as they migrate in May and June. Obstructing their flight paths "changes their way of life and can be detrimental to their health," Milliken explains. In such cases, he says, Anadarko would reroute a pipeline rather than threaten these bats.

In contrast, the "Earth friendly," taxpayer-subsidized wind industry slaughters thousands, perhaps millions of bats (including Indiana bats) unlucky enough to fly into the giant Cuisinarts that are their turbines. (My friend Paul Driessen of the Center For A Constructive Tomorrow (CTACT) has documented this carnage with tragic eloquence.)

Nearly a century of horror movies have equated bats with Dracula. Too bad. These hideous creatures do a beautiful

thing: Gobble mosquitoes. By one estimate, a brown bat devours nearly 8,700 such insects annually. So, ironically, fracking protects bats, while "ecologically sensitive" wind turbines are butchering bats.

This is great news for mosquitoes, which *do* suck human blood. It's not such great news for people who fall victim to West Nile virus and other mosquito-borne diseases.

Could gas producers frack even more cleanly? Innovation could and gradually will yield still safer and more Earth-friendly production methods. Cal Cooper of the Apache Corporation wisely proposed at a Manhattan Institute energy policy conference that gas companies "could transport fracking chemicals in powder form and mix them with water at production sites, rather than ship them around in liquid form, which risks a spill in transit."

Rather than blindly decry fracking, environmentalists should encourage more ideas like Cooper's. Beyond that, they should embrace fracking for being easy on the air, water, land and wildlife – in most cases far easier than the "sustainable" energy sources that ecologists adore.

Deroy Murdock is a Manhattan-based Fox News contributor, a nationally syndicated columnist with the Scripps Howard News Service, and a media fellow with the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace at Stanford University. He revisited natural-gas production facilities near Williamsport, PA, on an October fact-finding tour arranged by Energy in Depth and the Anadarko Petroleum Corporation. ●

Freedom *Continued from Page 4*

councils (usually bureaucrats with little or no medical knowledge) assigned the power to determine what shall be done or not done to each body in its "group" in its "native habitat." Sustainable medicine experts do not refer to citizens in sovereign nations, but to "humans" in their "settlements."

Sustainable medicine is the pivot around which all other Sustainable Development revolves. Principle #1 of the Rio Declaration that introduced Agenda 21 is that all humans must live in harmony with nature. It means rationing healthcare, low technology for health care treatment and emphasis on medical care -- not cure.

These are the stories that are not usually discussed or connected to Agenda 21. Americans must understand and connect these dots to every day policy so that they can understand the root and long term goals of policies that are affecting them in their personal lives.

Agenda 21 is the "common core" and it has already invaded every corner of our lives. Sometimes it feels hopeless to stop it. But let me just leave you with this thought.

When you feel overwhelmed in your fight to preserve our freedom, when you feel there is no hope, remember this – there are millions in the world who really want freedom – we are not

alone.

There is a great uprising beginning to take place around the world. The Internet has become an incredible tool to spread the word of freedom. And oppressed people are reading our founding documents and dreaming of freedom for themselves.

Truth is on our side. Right is on our side. And I believe time is on our side. Call me Pollyanna if you will, but I see signs of change. The immigration battle; the battle against Obamacare; the entire Tea Party movement – all show that people are alert. The sleeping giant is awakening.

The truth is, in our lifetime we are probably not going to see America become what we might envision to be the perfect world. Frankly, many of us would disagree among ourselves about what that perfect world should be.

But, in the face of the forces of tyranny which we now fight everyday, if we can preserve our nation's sovereignty and independence and keep the Bill of Rights alive – a document based on the three principles of freedom – then frankly that will be an incredible victory.

And for our children and grandchildren to have a hope of living in Freedom – that will be enough. ●

*News from the
Center on Consumer
Freedom*

Activists Assault Soft Drinks with Biased Studies, Needless Warnings

With soda taxes proving to be widely unpopular, activists are looking at new strategies to drive up regulations on Americans' chosen beverages. Today, National Journal reports on a new study funded by the food activist piggy bank, the \$8-billion Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, which claims that soda taxes won't cost jobs. And in California, land of warning labels on

everything courtesy of the overbroad, misguided Proposition 65, a would-be soda taxer has decided to propose additional warning labels on soft drinks.

The study is little more than big-government agitprop. Even taking its results at face value, the study itself claims private-sector jobs would be lost and government jobs would be gained. There's a reason New York State's 2010 soda tax was backed by the state's public sector unions and hospital trade association, which spent millions lobbying for it: They needed extra cash during a budget crunch. Activists won't give up their efforts for a government cash grab, even though liberal areas like Richmond, California and Telluride, Colorado are dismissing soda taxes by two-to-one margins or more.

Meanwhile in California — land of the dubious “health” initiative — State Sen. Bill Monning has moved on from trying to tax soda to trying to scare people about it. Monning's new measure, Senate Bill 1000, would place a warning label on any soft drink that contains 75 or more calories per 12 ounces.

Californians already suffer from “warning fatigue” because of the labels mandated by Proposition 65 that claim that all kinds of products, from fishing rods to cars to Christmas lights, contain allegedly cancer-causing chemicals. There's no reason to believe that one more warning will have a meaningful effect on obesity rates, and Monning's boneheaded proposal would set a dangerous precedent. Soft drinks provide only seven percent of Americans' daily caloric intake: Will California require warning labels on the food products that provide the other 93 percent? We're noticing that activists are starting to line up pizza to be the next food choice victim; will pizza parties in the Golden State have to come with liability waivers in triplicate?

We hope California lawmakers will set Monning's proposal aside, as they did his previous tax proposal. People need to know that the balance of calories consumed versus calories burned (for exercise and daily activity) determines weight gain and loss, not whether activist-approved or activist-hated products are consumed. Sound policy would emphasize balance, not particular foods or beverages. ●

Obesity Crisis or Bulging Government?

Right after now-former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg first proposed his ban on large sodas, researchers from the RAND Corporation published a paper in the Centers for Disease Control-published policy journal Preventing Chronic Disease. While their proposals were largely overshadowed by Bloomberg's radical foray into soda sizes (which has been blocked by an appellate court), we noted our concern that the authors' thesis that food should be regulated like alcohol was gaining credence and egghead support in the activist community.

One of the co-authors, Deborah Cohen, has expanded the harebrained notion into a book-length manifesto, *A Big Fat Crisis*. A New York Post reviewer outlines her vision for a less-free food culture:

The government would regulate donut shops like it does liquor stores and the surgeon general would plaster candy bars with graphic health warnings. [...]

Since humans are “biologically designed to overeat,” she writes, the government must “apply to unhealthy foods the kind of regulations that have been so successful in limiting alcohol consumption.”

Cohen's litany of demands for regulation is based on the activist theory that foods are “addictive” like cocaine, nicotine, or other drugs. But this is far from the scientific consensus: University of Leeds researcher John Blundell has noted that characterizing overeating as food addiction “is an over-simplification of a very complex set of behaviors” and “implies that normal human social behavior is pathological.”

Anyway, the public hasn't been receptive to Cohen's super-Bloombergism thus far. Amazon.com's live rankings of book sales put *A Big Fat Crisis* well down its “Best Sellers” list—when this post was published, the book was at #32,600. This doesn't surprise us: Recent Pew Research polling found that Americans oppose invasive food choice regulation by wide margins. Hopefully policymakers will remain as un-receptive to invasive, potentially counterproductive regulation as the public has been. ●