

THE **FUTURE** WE **FORGE** **TOGETHER**



Texas Public Policy
Foundation

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

THE FUTURE WE FORGE
TOGETHER



4 out of 4

Legislative Fellows
placed in Capitol jobs

100,000+

views



of TPPF
Livestreams

Number of attendees

850

at Policy Orientation 2020



758 people

joined TPPF's
Come and Take It Society
monthly giving program



64% Increase

in social media engagement



300+ op-eds placed

150+ research
publications



New people
added to
email outreach lists

@112,000



Issue Campaigns that are
Keeping Texas, Texan

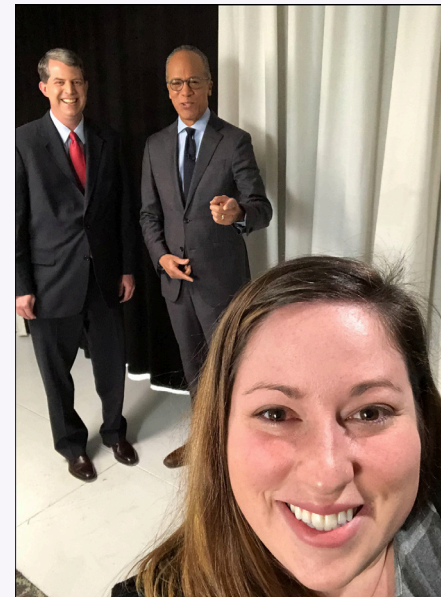
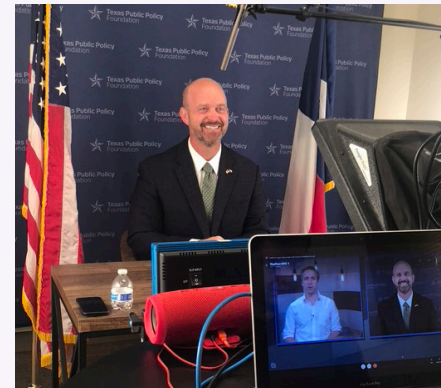
102 Million



People viewed
Alice Marie Johnson's
Super Bowl ad

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Letter from the Executive Director

Who could have predicted 2020? The year began with the Texas and U.S. economies roaring along—Wall Street had recorded record gains for the year when it closed for trading on December 31, 2019.

But then came the COVID-19 pandemic, and the lockdowns put into place to combat it. And everything changed.

I say everything—but that's not precisely true. First principles never change, and those are the things that we here at the Texas Public Policy Foundation continue to fight for every day.

I advocated for freedom and opportunity when Gov. Greg Abbott appointed me to serve on his “Strike Force to Open Texas” advisory council.

We argued for freedom before the U.S. Supreme Court in the Affordable Care Act case in November.

And we have prepared our agenda for the legislative session, in which we all will be forging the Texas that our children and grandchildren will inherit. Freedom must be at its heart.

Our work in the past year reached far beyond Texas. We have maintained a substantial policy presence in Washington, D.C. and many other states.

Our work would, of course, be impossible without the support of patriots in Texas and throughout the nation. Thank you to all who make our work possible! We cherish your trust and are honored to nurture and advance those principles which constitute the foundation of our freedoms.

“Our work would, of course, be impossible without the support of patriots in Texas and throughout the nation.”

In this year's report, you will find just a few examples of the success we have been met with in our mission to promote liberty at every level.

Enjoy this brief celebration of 2020—as unexpected as it was—and preview of what's ahead in 2021.

Sincerely yours,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin Roberts". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Kevin D. Roberts, Ph.D.
Executive Director

Policy Orientation



At Policy Orientation 2020, we knew we were preparing for something big, but little did we know what the year had in store. From Alice Marie Johnson's testimony about redemption, to Tim Carney's focus on community, and then a show of leadership from Representatives Chip Roy and Dan Crenshaw, the insights of Policy Orientation helped us make the most of this year.

Just around the corner, Policy Orientation 2021 will be no less important. Held in Austin on January 13-15, the in-person event is already sold out, but you can catch every minute of the action by registering for livestream access. Don't miss out on this opportunity to be a part of conversations that will shape policy both in this legislative session and for generations to come.





Center for the **American** Future

Litigating for Liberty

Created more than five years ago, the Center for the American Future is TPPF's litigation division devoted to challenging government overreach through the courts. Lead by Robert Henneke, this small team of lawyers is winning big, and 2020 was no exception.

- In January, the Center for the American Future won a 5th Circuit challenge on behalf of Texas General Land Office and, on principle, for landowners everywhere. The court found that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Department was incorrect in denying a petition to delist the golden-cheeked warbler from the endangered species list. This species of bird has recovered since its designation as endangered 30 years ago, and the unnecessary designation is a burden to landowners and State of Texas itself.
- In the most high-profile case of the year, TPPF joined a lawsuit with 20 state attorneys general challenging the Affordable Care Act. While the attorneys general rightfully represent the interests of their respective states, TPPF's Center for the American Future represents the individual plaintiffs, actual Americans hurt by the disastrous Obamacare policy. TPPF's case was heard by the United States Supreme Court in November 2020.
- The Center for the American Future successfully won twice with both state and federal trial courts in Michigan declaring the Township of Canton's tree ordinance unconstitutional. Canton sought hundreds of thousands of dollars in fines against CAF's clients for clearing trees on their private property.
- CAF won injunctions that stopped the cities of Dallas, Austin, and San Antonio from implementing an unconstitutional, one-size-fits-all mandatory paid sick leave ordinances that would have crippled local businesses.



General Counsel Robert Henneke talks to the press following arguments against the Affordable Care Act.

- In a win for government transparency and accountability, they successfully sued on behalf of a Georgetown, Texas resident whose open records request was denied regarding a costly energy contract. The trial court held that the document withheld by the City was not subject to exception under the Texas Public Information Act.

What's Next

With a proven track record of tackling federal overreach, the Center for the American Future becomes even more important under a Biden administration. A return to liberal leadership in the White House means an even greater expansion of federal powers and bureaucratic abuse. With continued support the Center for the American Future will be on the front lines to stop this threat.

Liberty Action Agenda



Liberty Action Agenda for the 87th Session

The Liberty Action Agenda is a set of bold policy reforms that must be made now to ensure Texas continues to flourish. It includes dozens of policy reforms to improve K-12 and higher education, increase access to health care and lower costs, reduce the tax burden and control spending, strengthen law enforcement and keep communities safe, make energy reliable and affordable, and ensure the integrity of our election system.

The Liberty Action Agenda's Top Ten Priorities:

- 1** Prohibit taxpayer money from funding lobbyists.
- 2** Pass a Conservative Texas Budget and protect the property taxpayer protections put in place during the 86th Legislative Session.
- 3** Give parents greater control of their child's education by increasing access to virtual and hybrid options and protecting charter schools from discrimination by municipalities and counties.
- 4** Ensure that Career and Technical Education (CTE) funding is aligned with occupations that are high wage and high demand and increase transparency and accountability in career training programs.
- 5** Make permanent the liberalization of the use of telemedicine.
- 6** Develop a comprehensive model to identify, train, assign, retain, promote, and support police officers.
- 7** Protect the 2nd Amendment rights of lawful gun owners.
- 8** Empower the Texas Secretary of State to conduct all vote-by-mail operations, count and store vote-by-mail ballots independently of all county systems and strengthen disability qualifications and verification.
- 9** Create an elective course on the founding principles of the United States for Texas secondary education institutions and adopt the Chicago Principles on free speech and debate.
- 10** Prohibit the state from doing business with companies that engage in energy discrimination through politically motivated environmental, social, and governance (ESG) investing.

2020 Campaigns



A New Model

TPPF has always been an organization with an outsized influence, but as we continue to grow and take on more issues, coordination and clear objectives become even more important. This year, during a pandemic, we rolled out a new campaign model, and the timing couldn't be more perfect. Campaigns bring together policy, research, legislative affairs, communications, development and outreach united for specific goals. This allows for collaboration and coordination from the very beginning, and the results are significant.

CAMPAIGNS of 2020

Government for the People

Accountability and Transparency in Government

The **Government for the People** campaign is an important watchdog during the COVID-19 response, especially as local governments try to expand their powers under emergency orders. Whether by calling out overreach, capturing the stories of Texans hurt by shutdown orders, or encouraging Texans to speak out, this campaign stands up for government transparency and accountability.

Next year, the campaign will set its sights on banning taxpayer-funded lobbying. For too long, taxpayers have been forced to pay for lobbyists who advocate for bigger government, higher taxes, and more spending. This abusive practice not only harms Texans in the immediate, but also over the long-term as liberal local governments use it to grow their influence and budgets. Prohibiting taxpayer-funded lobbying is the single, most consequential reform lawmakers could enact next session.

The campaign is also working for accountability and transparency on behalf of some of the most vulnerable, children in the foster care system. Their child welfare work is putting children, not bureaucratic systems, at the center of reforms and maintaining a focus on family as the primary social unit.



TPPF told the story of Josh Collins, owner of the of The Sports Zone Bar & Grill in Tyler, Texas. Josh and his family nearly lost their business when COVID-19 shutdowns forced him to close the doors.

Remember the Taxpayer

Budget and Tax Policy Focusing on the Effect on Taxpayers

The mission of the **Remember the Taxpayer** campaign is right in the name. Too often, we speak about state, local and federal tax dollars but forget that government doesn't create that funding. Instead, those are dollars come from taxpayers. With that in mind, the campaign calls for a Conservative Texas Budget, one that does not grow faster than the average Texan's ability to pay, reduced spending overall, preserving property tax protections and rolling excessive regulations, which make government itself less efficient and the expenses to operate in the state greater.

TPPF's Chief Economist Vance Ginn (upper left) and Executive Director Kevin Roberts (upper right) were joined by property-tax-reform champions Rep. Dustin Burrows (bottom left) and Sen. Paul Bettencourt (bottom right) for cities to not use a disaster loophole when it comes to raising local taxes.



Next Generation Texas

Results-based K-12 and Higher Education Plus Workforce Development Solutions

The **Next Generation Texas** campaign recognizes Texas' future depends on revolutionizing our education systems to work together for student-centered success. Whether it is influencing remote learning rules in the wake of school shutdowns, aligning career and technology courses with the actual needs of the local market, or reaffirming families' rights to control their children's education, Next Generation Texas is working for Texas' tomorrow today.

Additionally, the campaign is making sure schools are fulfilling what should be a central tenet of American education, civics education. Through our Summer Civics Institute for teachers and the development of curriculum for classrooms, TPPF is helping to make sure students graduate with an appreciation of being American and equipped to be a good citizen.

The Next Generation Campaign and Booker T. Washington Initiative hosted watch parties, both in-person and virtually, across the state of Miss Virginia, the story of one mother's heroic battle to bring education options to DC.



Right on Crime

Voice for Public Safety

For more than a decade, **Right on Crime** continues to lead the movement for conservative criminal justice reform. In 2020, there was an extra focus on practical policing reforms providing accountability while strongly supporting our law enforcement personnel. In fact, ROC experts are developing training methods for police officers.

Other Right on Crime initiatives include creating better bail policies, grand jury reform, improved re-entry programs that reduce recidivism, and helping implement a “closer-to-home” model of juvenile justice.

In a year when many sought to sabotage law enforcement through violence and calls to “defund the police,” Right on Crime once again was a voice of reason proving reform within a law-and-order framework is not only possible but the best course to keep our communities safe while providing a path to redemption and second chances.

Randy Petersen, former law enforcement officer and Senior Researcher at TPPF, shares how improving policing, a core function of government, is best achieved through better training and better hiring, not through calls to defund the police.

Right on Healthcare

Making Healthcare Affordable and Accessible

Those on liberal left often talk about healthcare affordability, but their government-centric policies repeatedly fail. **Right on Healthcare** knows policies that strengthen the doctor-patient relationship offer the results. These policies include price transparency, allowing doctors to directly dispense prescription drugs, introducing direct primary care as an option for Medicaid patients, and expanding the use of telemedicine.



TPPF hosted Rep. Dan Crenshaw talking about how direct primary care can benefit Americans and help restore the doctor-patient relationship.



Right on Immigration

Prioritizing American Interests

Through the Border Security Coalition, which doubled in size during 2020, **Right on Immigration** makes the case that border security is essential to our national interests and a prerequisite for immigration reform. Working with the Congressional Border Security Caucus, the campaign made policy recommendations leading to 18 Texas county sheriffs joining a recommended agreement with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Often overlooked as a consequence of border security failures, human trafficking is a focus of Right on Immigration. It's a bi-partisan issue bringing together anti-trafficking leaders and law enforcement agencies to develop new approaches and end this horrible practice.



Election Protection Project

Securing Trust in Our Election System

Safe, secure elections are the foundation to a functioning democracy. Through the **Election Protection Project**, TPPF is working to make sure that every qualified citizen can exercise their right to vote while also safeguarding our elections from fraud. Our work focuses on maintenance of accurate voter rolls, prevention of non-citizen voting, stopping illegal vote harvesting, and preventing abuse of mail-in ballots.

In a year with many questions about the reliability and accuracy of our election system, the Election Protection Project is a trustworthy advocate for accountability and reform.

Vice President of National Initiatives Chuck DeVore (left) and Chief Communication Officer Brian Phillips (right) speaking from TPPF's Election Protection Headquarters

Life:Powered

Promoting Affordable, Reliable Energy

Life:Powered works to raise America's energy IQ by telling the story of fossil fuels beyond the simplistic and wrong green narrative. A special focus in 2020 and continuing in 2021 is shutting down the energy, social and governance (ESG) movement. This philosophy calls for disinvestment in traditional energy sources through public and private pension systems. Such a movement is not only senselessly punitive, it does nothing to address environmental concerns, especially when it comes to preventing the use of natural gas.

Additionally, Life:Powered is focused on electric reliability and the dangers an artificially created reliance on wind and solar power will bring. Because the sun doesn't always shine and the wind doesn't always blow, solar and wind energy cannot meet our 24/7 energy needs. With a focus on grid reliability, Life:Powered is highlighting the need for continual energy sources and the risk of relying too much on intermittent sources.

Sen. John Cornyn joins the Life:Powered team at an event highlighting the importance of dependable energy.





Video from our Citizens Defense Campaign warning against defunding the police was one of the most viewed of the year.

Citizens Defense

Advancing our Constitutional Right to Self Defense

In the past, TPPF did not focus on gun control issues, leaving that work to other highly qualified policy and political groups. In the tumult of 2020, however, we have an essential voice to add to the debate. Building on our expertise in criminal justice reform coupled with a deep understanding of individual liberties and their expression in policy, the **Citizens Defense** initiative was created.

The mission of Citizens Defense includes protecting Second Amendment Rights, prohibiting a *de facto* registration of firearm owners, and eliminating barriers for law-abiding citizens to own weapons and provide for their own self-defense. Since its inception, Citizens Defense has been one of our most successful campaigns attracting widespread support and collaboration.

OTHER Initiatives

Booker T. Washington Initiative

In the spirit of Booker T. Washington, one of America's great activists for education, entrepreneurship, and self-reliance, this namesake initiative uses detailed data analysis to uncover the real causes of poverty. Working closely with the Next Generation Texas Campaign, the **Booker T. Washington Initiative** is redefining the debate on poverty and debunking the idea that taxation, government programs, and invasive policy solutions are what will help our nation's poor to escape their burdens.

States Trust

Based in our D.C. office, **States Trust** exists to restore the states as a key voice in federal policymaking, under the framework of the Tenth Amendment. By showing how states are leading on issues like healthcare, criminal justice reform, higher education, and immigration, States Trust is forging a path of real solutions from beyond the Beltway.

Liberty Leadership Council

A special group for those under 40, **Liberty Leadership Council** is a place to learn more about policy, connect with other young conservatives, and be a leader in your community. With six councils across the state, Liberty Leadership Council continues to grow. Despite COVID restrictions, LLC was able to host 28 events, both virtually and in person. By November, combined attendance numbers for these events was more than 1,000 with a special week-long conference on being an effective advocate left to go.

Livestreams



Vitally Virtual... While TPPF has often offered livestreams for our events, the events of 2020 made the ability to hold virtual events even more important. Not only did our livestream events offer a way to connect when in-person attendance was impractical, it also gave TPPF a time to shine. It was not just the medium of livestream events but the quality content we offered during a time of uncertainty helped people understand the complex issues emerging during the pandemic.

The impact can be seen in our large viewership. With more than 100,000 views throughout the year, weekly livestreams were one of the most important endeavors in 2020.



Video Storytelling



At Policy Orientation in January, TPPF premiered our micro-documentary about voter fraud and ballot harvesting. The response was so strong it launched our Election Protection Project. While we knew at the time this work was important, the events of the next 10 months only proved how much that initiative was needed.

Additionally, our team created what will now be the first of 10 groundbreaking cinematographic videos bringing the history of Texas to life and highlighting why we are people committed to liberty and individual freedom. Look for episodes 2 and 3 to premiere in early 2021.

In the wake of COVID-19 shutdowns, we used video to tell the story of how closures were affecting Texans and how private businesses were on the front lines of the COVID-19 response. Our Recovery Texas video series highlights the true resilience and compassion of Texans.

To watch these videos and others from our amazing film team, visit: texaspolicy.com/multimedia/





Scenes from the filming of TPPF's epic Texas history project, Forging Texas.

Legislative Fellows



In 2020, TPPF graduated its first class of Legislative Fellows with great success. Designed to give junior legislative staff members an opportunity to prepare for leadership positions, our Legislative Fellows are hired as full-time staff members working at TPPF from the end of one legislative until the next. During this time, they develop expertise, gain experience and learn how TPPF is a resource for elected officials and other policy makers. Our first class had four members, all of whom have taken expanded roles related to public policy.



Austin Griesinger was a legislative fellow for the Texas Public Policy Foundation focusing on K-12 education. He previously worked as the Deputy Legislative Director for a Texas state representative during the 85th Legislature and as a legislative director during the 86th Legislature. He is now Legislative Director for state Rep. Gary Gates.

Austin attended the Patriot Academy for seven years and completed their leadership program as a part of his homeschool education.



Elizabeth O'Connor was the legislative fellow for Right on Healthcare. Her research has covered the history of government intervention in the U.S. healthcare system, and she wrote commentaries published in *The Hill* and the *Washington Examiner*. She is now a Federal Funds Analyst at Legislative Budget Board.

Prior to joining the Foundation, O'Connor was a policy intern during the 86th Legislative Session with Sen. Donna Campbell, M.D., where she researched topics such as agriculture, water, and rural policy.



Sam Johnson began his career in the legislative world first as a House Messenger and then as Assistant Clerk for the House Committee on Appropriations during the 85th Legislative Session. In 2019, he returned to the Texas Capitol as a policy analyst for the House Republican Caucus.

During his time at TPPF, Sam worked on a variety of issues and wrote often about reforms for career and technology education. He is now a policy analyst with state Sen. Brian Birdwell.



Grace Watson, before becoming a legislative fellow, was the Communications Director for the office of state Rep. Valoree Swanson. She is now a legislative aide for state Sen. Bob Hall. During her time at TPPF, Grace wrote and researched extensively on issues related to immigration, mandatory paid sick leave policies and local taxation.

Prior to her time at the Texas Capitol, Grace worked in the tax office in her home county of Eastland, and she also served her local community as a client advocate for a nonprofit family resource center.

2020 Financials

2020 Balance Sheet

Assets

Cash & Receivables	\$9,688,395
Prepaid Expenses	\$192,644
Property & Equipment	\$17,926,898
Other Assets	\$0
Total Assets	<u>\$27,807,937</u>

Liabilities

Current Liabilities	\$243,840
Deferred Revenue	\$62,867
Long-term Liabilities	\$0
Total Liabilities	<u>\$306,707</u>

Net Assets

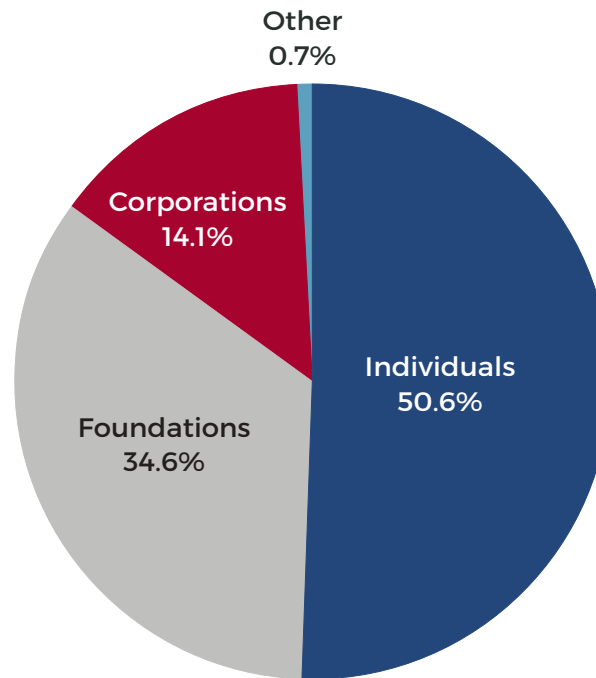
Equity - Prior Years	\$27,250,818
Equity 2020	\$557,119
Total Net Assets	<u>\$27,807,937</u>

Total Net Assets & Liabilities

\$28,114,644

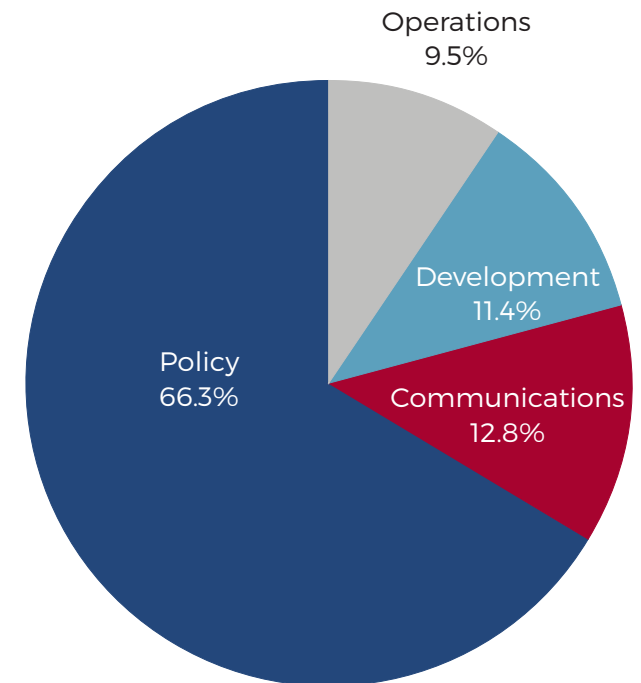
Operating Revenue

\$16,392,954



Expenses

\$15,835,835



—All financial data subject to review by independent audit.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Foundation's mission is to promote and defend liberty, personal responsibility, and free enterprise in Texas and the nation by educating and affecting policymakers and the Texas public policy debate with academically sound research and outreach.

Funded by thousands of individuals, foundations, and corporations, the Foundation does not accept government funds or contributions to influence the outcomes of its research.

Cover Image: This image of the Gonzales Flag comes from the first in an exciting new video series from TPPF on the history of Texas. To learn more about this project which is preserving Texas' glorious past and inspiring our future, see more inside.