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Veritas

A Publication of the **Texas Public Policy Foundation**

History in the Making:
Forging Texas

An Interview with Ken Oliver:
Right on Immigration

Finding Common Ground:
Healthcare Reform



**Texas Public Policy
Foundation**

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TPPF’s incredible video team is sharing the truths of Texas’ fascinating past through a historically accurate video series: *Forging Texas*. Through engaging narratives and high-quality production, we’re sharing powerful stories that connect us to where we’re from, who we are, and why what has happened in Texas is important for the future of America.

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Cover photo by Alex Billups: Stephen Robinson, TPPF’s audio-video production manager, working with actors and filmmakers on the set of *Forging Texas* in May 2021.

Veritas is a publication of the Texas Public Policy Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, nonpartisan research institute. 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. Our goal is to lead the nation in public policy issues by using Texas as a model for reform.

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CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER’S MESSAGE

Every two years, all eyes turn to Texas as our state lawmakers convene to pass laws and codify reforms during the legislative session. The happy warriors of TPPF recognize the end of session as the culmination of their indefatigable efforts to secure the blessings of liberty for the great people of Texas and our posterity.

In acknowledgement of historic legislative victories made possible by TPPF—such as the ban on critical race theory, the passage of a Conservative Texas Budget, the codification of a stricter spending cap using TPPF’s formula, and prohibiting Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG)—the 87th Legislative Session was largely productive and demonstrated that Texas is the model for Conservative governance.

We can celebrate these crucial successes while also loudly declaring that this session is incomplete, thanks to the craven behavior of the legislators that abdicated their responsibility to Texans by walking off the House floor. Make no mistake: TPPF will remain as diligent and committed to seeing our policy priorities realized in the upcoming special sessions, charging the hill with zeal as we pass the strongest election integrity reform in the nation, and fighting on behalf of Texans to secure the wins necessary to defining the 87th Legislative Session as a success.

To provide you a 30,000-foot view of our achievements this session in advance of what will likely be numerous special sessions, we have included with this issue of *Veritas* an insert that outlines our most significant legislative victories and what they mean for the liberty movement in Texas and across the nation.

As you know, the key tenets of TPPF’s mission can only be realized by cultivating the future of the liberty movement. In this issue, we include a feature story on TPPF’s Liberty Leadership Council to highlight this invaluable program we offer and showcase how we are engaging young Texans across the state as leaders in the movement.

In refutation of the media’s attempt to redefine the principles of Texas’ founding, TPPF launched its *Forging Texas* video series to tell the inspiring story of the state’s origin free from any political agenda. I encourage you to read our *Forging Texas* feature piece to learn how TPPF is shaping the hearts and minds of students by employing Hollywood-quality, meticulously researched accounts of our state’s founding.

This year, while we bore witness to an immigration crisis of stunning magnitude, Ken Oliver, our senior director of engagement and Right on Immigration, was on the front lines in Texas and Washington advocating for policy solutions. In “An Interview with Ken Oliver,” we explore how Ken navigates this contentious issue on the Hill and in the Texas Capitol, as well as how he is working to secure a safer, stronger border.

TPPF continues to champion common-sense, bipartisan healthcare solutions that Texans so desperately need. In “Finding Common Ground: Healthcare,” you will come to understand why our innovative efforts to improve the Texas healthcare system through patient-centered reforms will generate much needed peace of mind for all Texans.

As TPPF reflects on some truly remarkable policy victories this year, we do so focused on charging the hill that still stands before us. We hope that, as our team shortens our victory celebrations to march onward to our next legislative volley, you know full well the vital role each and every one of you play in helping TPPF fight the good fight. Ultimately, our work to keep Texas Texan is made possible by your unwavering support, and for that, we celebrate and thank you.

For Texas,



Kevin Roberts

Kevin D. Roberts, Ph.D.
Chief Executive Officer

History in the Making: *Forging Texas*

by Chassidy Menard



On April 21, 1836, when Sam Houston led his forces into the Battle of San Jacinto, prospects for the revolution looks grim. In the months prior, Santa Anna's army had brutally overrun the Texans at the Alamo and massacred unarmed forces in Goliad. Against the overwhelming power of 1,500 Mexican soldiers, 800 Texans launched a surprise attack with shouts of "Remember the Alamo!" and "Remember Goliad!"

Wounded, muddied, exhausted, and tear-ridden, the victorious force raised their flag—a lone star and striped flag—above the battle scene. The Texans had triumphed, thus sealing the independence of the Republic of Texas, not by numbers, but by spirit.

And it is that spirit that lives on in every Texan's heart and that the Texas Public Policy Foundation (TPPF) seeks to preserve. Based on the principles of ordered liberty, self-government, and equality, the story of the Texas Revolution is the story of ourselves—who we are, how we came to be, and what it means to truly be Texan. For generations, parents, schools, and society taught and reinforced these stories and their sacred principles.

Today, however, there is a new battle for liberty in Texas. This battle does not involve bullets and blood but instead involves minds and hearts. The inspiring stories of the United States' and Texas' founding have

been abandoned by schools, leaving children bereft of the knowledge required to become informed citizens and the reverence for our sacred principles. Equally troubling, teachers who wish to teach civics rooted in facts and history have neither the support of school administrations nor the resources to instruct courses free from political bias.

Traditionally, through research and public policy solutions, TPPF has defended our great state and nation against today's threats to our identity and freedom. However, in 2020, TPPF launched an important new history video series, *Forging Texas*. Primarily created for junior high students but relevant for all Texans, these cinematic films promote civic literacy by shaping students' hearts and minds and providing teachers and parents a tool to immerse children in Texas' powerful history free of a political agenda. On the need for *Forging Texas*, Stephen Robinson, the audio-video production manager at TPPF, notes:

The *Forging Texas* series presents liberty-oriented ideals through filmmaking and reaches audiences eager for content that speaks to their values. The liberty movement has often focused on principles and abstract ideas—which are important—over crafting stories with human interest, emotional connection, and beauty which engage people's hearts and minds. This project will put the story first while emphasizing and

aligning with the values that promote freedom and human flourishing.

The *Forging Texas* series offers a compelling, accurate look into the lives, causes, and passion for freedom that drove Texas and the Texans to independence and greatness. TPPF has identified ten pivotal moments in Texas history which each episode will highlight; each episode is crafted with human interest, emotional connection, and beauty which engage people's hearts and minds. The TPPF filmmaking team has partnered with historians and local museums for each episode's script to ensure historical accuracy. Each video will be seven to ten minutes in length and of exceptionally high quality comparable to a short, feature-length film. TPPF hires actors, creates sets, designs costumes, and coordinates everything needed to ensure that the stories we tell move the audience.

As of July 2021, TPPF will have completed the first three installments of *Forging Texas*: "Season of Revolution," "Season of Defeat," and "Season of Victory." These three videos highlight important moments and the ideological underpinnings of the Texas Revolution. Throughout production, no detail was too small. In "Season of Revolution," beeswax candles were used on set for historical accuracy but were specially crafted to be bright enough for nighttime filming without any modern lighting. In "Season of Defeat," using historic soldiers' journals

housed at the museums, TPPF's crew taught actors and extras playing Mexican soldiers how to march in step and hold guns in historically accurate ways.

TPPF's commitment to producing accurate, beautiful films in this *Forging Texas* series has borne much fruit. One of our consultants, an employee at the Gonzales Memorial Museum and a former history teacher, was moved to tears upon watching the film "Season of Revolution," noting, "This is the best portrayal of my town I have ever seen. This film is going to affect the kids who watch it. They will not remember all the dates taught in history class, but they will remember the values communicated and how they felt about this video. They will remember those things even as an adult in the workplace, in their home, and in the voting booth." Members of the Goliad Museum—many of them seventh and eighth generation Texans—were moved by "Season of Defeat," viewing the video as the most accurate and compelling portrayal of their story they had ever seen.

Over the next 12 months, TPPF will continue to write, film, produce, release, and promote the final seven episodes in this series. The last seven installments of the *Forging Texas* will highlight the Texas Rangers, the American Dream in Texas, the Texas frontier, cowboys and ranchers in Texas, oil and gas in Texas, Texas in the new century, and Texas heritage.

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An Interview with Ken Oliver, Senior Director of Engagement and Right on Immigration

by Seth Galemore

In conjunction with filmmaking, TPPF has also invested in creating a curriculum for each episode to supplement a deeper understanding of Texas history for middle schoolers in Texas. TPPF has partnered with DeAnn Stuart, Ph.D. and Associate Director of Curriculum at the Austin Institute for the Study of Family and Culture, to create a supporting curriculum for the first three episodes of the series. This curriculum includes lesson plans, lecture notes, discussion questions, graphic organizers, hands-on application activities, assessments, grading rubrics, and additional teacher resources. Following each video's release, TPPF will invest significant time and resources into promotion, sharing the video and corresponding curriculum with teachers, parents, and schools across the state. These peer-reviewed materials will be offered as a complimentary resource to teachers and students throughout Texas.

With those 800 Texians, the *Forging Texas* series continues to shout, "Remember the Alamo!" and "Remember Goliad!" TPPF leads the Lone Star

"TPPF leads the Lone Star State in advancing the same principles fought for in the Battle of San Jacinto—liberty, freedom, and opportunity."

State in advancing the same principles fought for in the Battle of San Jacinto—liberty, freedom, and opportunity. Paired with TPPF's research and policy work, *Forging Texas* serves as a new arm in preserving and protecting liberty by shaping minds and hearts with the compelling stories of our republic. If we are to keep Texas Texan, we must understand and preserve our history because the spirit and the story of the Texas Revolution is just as relevant today as it was in 1836. ★

To view all available videos in the *Forging Texas* series, please visit <https://www.texaspolicy.com/multimedia/>.

Photos by Alex Billups and Marshall Tidrick: All photos featured in this article capture moments from filming the newest *Forging Texas* episode, "Season of Victory."



Chassidy Menard joined TPPF in January of 2021 as a development writer. She is a graduate of Wyoming Catholic College where she earned her degree in Liberal Arts and is proud to use her skills in writing and communications to share TPPF's successes. Despite being a native of the swamps of Louisiana, she developed a love for rock climbing while in Wyoming and is a climbing instructor. Chassidy enjoys being active outdoors and has run two full marathons, placing in the top 3 for her age group each time!

In late April, TPPF's senior director of engagement and Right on Immigration (ROI), Ken Oliver, was interviewed by *Veritas* contributor Seth Galemore on the Foundation's efforts championing policies that secure the border, restore the rule of law, and improve legal immigration to the United States.

Galemore: Illegal immigration has reached crisis proportions at the United States' southern border. Many on the Left ignore the story altogether. Others write off Americans' concerns about the situation as "anti-immigrant" or "unjust." How does Right on Immigration respond to that narrative?

Oliver: When it comes to dealing with the crisis on our southern border, we begin and often come back to what should be a common objective for everyone of sound mind: let's stop human smuggling and human trafficking, which go hand-in-hand. It is illegal, and it is neither compassionate nor humane to allow it.

Nor is it "anti-immigrant" for us to want our country to have a border security system that prevents illegal immigration and controls legal immigration in a way that upholds America's sovereignty and prioritizes the best interests of our country's citizens and lawful residents. On the contrary.

This whole issue goes to a core characteristic that has really set the United States apart from so many other modern nations, and that is the historic premium we as a people have placed on respect for

the rule of law. Without it this country would be just as, if not more, oppressive and dysfunctional than the countries so many immigrants and our ancestors alike left in the first place.



Ken Oliver

We want to keep the refuge of freedom that is the United States sustainable and alive because as Rafael Cruz, the father of Senator Ted Cruz, very poignantly reminds us, if we lose it here where else can we go? We launched Right on Immigration in the midst of the border crisis of 2019 to deal with these issues. There was incredible foresight on the part of TPPF to launch this initiative when it did.

Just two years ago we saw the Trump administration struggling with a very similar crisis, mainly driven by exploitation of America's asylum system. The difference at that time was that despite not being able to make much headway to solve the problems in collaboration with the United States Congress, back then President Trump and his administration did finally get a handle on the situation and essentially solved the crisis with some very skillful, tough negotiating with Mexico and the countries of the Northern Triangle, in addition to tightening up the governing regulations on asylum.

The Biden administration was in a perfect position to build upon that progress, but instead immedi-

continued >>



ately destroyed it and has unleashed a crisis that makes that of 2019 pale in comparison.

Galemore: How is illegal immigration linked to human trafficking? Many say that the migrants are fleeing danger, persecution, and violence. Aren't they?

Oliver: The business model of the coyotes, the human smugglers, often leads to human trafficking. There is a direct correlation. That is because the clients of the smugglers usually are not in a position to immediately pay the thousands of dollars it will cost them to make the trek to our border. So many go into debt bondage and can only pay off that debt by illicit labor, often in horrible conditions that are very difficult to escape from. This includes not only the highly publicized exploitation such as in prostitution and sexually oriented businesses, but also much more frequently in other sectors where the victims of human trafficking are even further in the shadows, including as laborers in all kinds of service industries as well as domestic servitude. As

“The business model of the coyotes, the human smugglers, often leads to human trafficking. There is a direct correlation. That is because the clients of the smugglers usually are not in a position to immediately pay the thousands of dollars it will cost them to make the trek to our border.”

TPPF's senior fellow in border security, Josh Jones, also pointed out in his testimony before a congressional hearing this month, some migrants also end up getting into drug smuggling to help pay off their debt.

There is no question that the people who are arriving by the hundreds of thousands at our border do face danger, violence, and persecution by organized crime in their home countries. But asylum was not designed to protect people from the dangers people face from organized crime. It was primarily designed, following the horrific experience of the Jews facing genocide by the Nazis and dissidents facing life-threatening persecution by Communist and totalitarian governments in the aftermath of World War II, to protect people facing immediate threats to their lives from their governments because of their dissident religious or political activism. That remains the case today for the tens of thousands of people each year whose asylum cases are approved. But it does not apply to the hundreds of thousands of people who are currently overwhelming our asylum system and immigration courts with invalid claims.

In addition, the current administration has exacerbated the problem by announcing that they are looking at the possibility of expanding asylum to include new categories of persecution, such as domestic abuse or gang violence.

Galemore: How does Right on Immigration propose to enhance border security?

Oliver: The border security that America deserves requires personnel, infrastructure, and technology. At this point in the 21st century, there is absolutely no excuse for not adequately deploying all three elements, including biometrics, to get the job done.

As we see it, border security is the foundation upon which to build a trustworthy immigration system.

We also understand that walls work and have yet to be built in some areas of Texas where they are needed most. Not that long ago, there was actually broad bipartisan consensus about this. As recently as 2006, then Senators Joe Biden, Barack Obama, and Hillary Clinton all voted for 700 miles of fencing along our border with Mexico. If President Trump received a mandate to accomplish anything in the election of 2016, it was to build that wall.

What many people do not realize is that although about 465 miles of modern border wall was finally built during the Trump administration, at the time of the transition between the Trump and Biden administrations less than 25 miles of that new wall had the state-of-the-art technology installed that was supposed to go along with it. In addition, several hundreds of miles of wall in some of the most trafficked areas in South Texas, such as the Rio Grande Valley and Laredo sectors, still had not been built.

So right now, as Texas prepares to receive tens of billions of dollars in American Rescue Plan Act funds this summer, we advocate that the state dedicate a portion of those funds (estimates at this point are in the \$5 billion range) to finishing this task and completing wall construction in priority areas along the state's border with Mexico. In ad-

dition to being an essential component of border security, restarting construction of the wall would put thousands of Texans to work and make use of all those thousands of tons of steel bollards that were manufactured to be used for the wall but are now just lying around flat on the ground because of the unfortunate decision of the Biden administration to halt construction in these areas.

In addition, Texas is perfectly within its rights to dissuade illegal immigration by expanding the use of the E-Verify employment verification system, both in the public and private sector. We are very pleased with several bills that are advancing in the Texas legislature to do just that, including SB 766 which would require the use of E-Verify by businesses where there is a high risk of sex trafficking. Getting back to what should be a non-partisan policy consensus, it was gratifying to see that bill passed earlier this month unanimously in our Senate. It is also gratifying to see that public opinion is definitely moving our way on these issues. The reality is the severity of the crisis is creating an opportunity for TPPF and allied leaders who agree with us on these issues across the country to advance like never before the solutions that are needed to these problems.

To learn more about Ken's work and Right on Immigration, please visit <https://www.texaspolicy.com/initiatives/right-on-immigration>.



Seth Galemore joined TPPF in April 2020 as the development writer and was soon promoted to grants manager at the Foundation. Now, he has taken on a new role as the director of donor communications here at TPPF. He holds dual bachelor's degrees in English and Linguistics from Truman State University in Kirksville, MO and is proud to use his experience in writing and communications to promote TPPF's successes to its friends and supporters. Seth and his wife Emilie now reside in Georgetown, Texas with their daughter Naomi.



TPPF's Recent Events

The Texas Public Policy Foundation continues to host engaging, accessible events for people throughout Texas and across the nation.

Our Monday livestream series continues to focus on nationally significant topics. Recent speakers include Senator Rand Paul, who spoke on election integrity, and former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, who spoke on the emerging threat of China within our borders and the growing migrant crisis at the southern border. More than 21,000 people watched the conversation with Secretary Pompeo live, proving that virtual events have allowed us to share the most important messages of the liberty movement with more people than ever before.

We have also been able to host many in-person events and have enjoyed seeing many friends and familiar faces across the state.

In March, the Fort Worth Liberty Leadership Council (LLC) hosted a mayoral forum to give all candidates in the race an opportunity to discuss their vision of the future of the city. Also in March, the Houston LLC hosted an event on energy production and grid reliability.

In April, the Dallas LLC hosted an event that pulled back the curtain on the activity of the 87th Legislative Session. Meanwhile, the San Antonio LLC hosted an event on the difference between healthcare and health coverage as well as the state of healthcare reform in Texas. And the Midland LLC hosted a conversation with the mayors of Midland and Odessa to discuss the future of the Permian Basin and how these two cities and work together.

Finally, as you are reading this, the State of the Taxpayer Tour will be underway. This tour visits cities across the state to update citizens on the outcome of the most recent legislative session. While you can get a general sense of our progress this legislative session from the insert enclosed, the State of the Taxpayer Tour is a great opportunity to hear directly from TPPF's experts and learn of the details behind some of the most important legislative items of the past session. ★

To learn if TPPF experts will be visiting a city near you as part of the State of the Taxpayer Tour or to learn about upcoming TPPF events in general, please visit <https://www.texaspolicy.com/events/>.



Photos: Top Row: Jason Isaac, director of TPPF's Life:Powered campaign, speaks at the Houston LLC Event on grid reliability and the future of energy in Texas (left). Senator Rand Paul joined TPPF for a livestream on election integrity (right). | Middle Row: Former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and TPPF CEO Kevin Roberts discuss threats to U.S. security during a recent event (left). Midland LLC members attend an event with Midland Mayor Patrick Payton and Odessa Mayor Javier Joven (right). | Bottom Row: Dallas LLC members discuss what the legislative session outcomes mean for Texans (left). LLC members enjoy dinner and discussion at the home of a Midland LLC member (right).

TPPF's Liberty Leadership Council Prepares Future Conservative Leaders

by Seth Galemore

The Fort Worth LLC hosted a mayoral forum attended by many young professionals.

It has been said that America is irreversibly marching further towards the Left, with some pundits going so far as to claim that the conservative movement will fail within a generation. “Young people,” so the story goes, “are more progressive than ever, and conservatives will never reclaim them!”

Nothing could be further from the truth.

While many young adults have become increasingly disillusioned with the status quo in American politics—perhaps rightfully so—there is a strong desire for reforms based in love of liberty, respect for America’s past, and true progress that does not merely rehash the tired, left-wing policies and programs that fail again and again. This is why the Texas Public Policy Foundation (TPPF) thoughtfully engages the rising generation of Texan leaders through outreach efforts



Midland LLC members attend a “lunch and learn” event with Midland ISD’s new superintendent, Angélica Ramsey.

that inspire patriotism and renewed zeal in America’s founding values and in conservative self-government.

At the core of these outreach efforts is our Liberty Leadership Council (LLC).

The LLC connects young professionals to public policy, helps them understand how policy impacts their lives, and teaches them how they can influence policy change. The LLC shapes the future of Texas politics by equipping the next generation with the tools necessary to become leaders in the conservative movement. The LLC comprises nearly 200 members, aged 21 to 40, with six chapters across the state. Current chapters include Austin, Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston, Midland and San Antonio and there are plans to launch new chapters in other cities soon.

Chapters meet monthly at events coordinated by TPPF and carried out by the local chapters’ leaders. Every chapter is led by a team of five highly motivated members who assist with recruiting members and event attendees, identifying policy issues of local concern, and engaging with conservative civic leaders.

These meetings include policy primers led by TPPF policy experts, discussions headed by entrepreneurs and business professionals, group meals or happy hours to strengthen relationships, and workshops on managing, growing, and increasing the impact of chapter influence.

In conjunction with these monthly events, TPPF also coordinates an annual LLC summit that unites all LLC members from across the state for a two-day conference. During the summit, LLC members hear

from TPPF experts, conservative policy leaders, and many others. TPPF also uses these summits to train members in areas such as legislative advocacy, op-ed writing, event coordination, and social media growth.

Many of the LLC’s members have published commentary about policy issues in their local newspapers or more widely distributed media platforms. With TPPF’s launch of The Cannon Online, the Foundation is increasingly turning to LLC members to share their thoughts on the Foundation’s media page.

Of course, because of the COVID-19 response last year, many of these events did not follow the same path as usual. But, in true TPPF entrepreneurial fashion, the leadership of LLC pivoted and quickly adopted new ways of reaching members.

Olivia White, director of the LLC, helps to coordinate TPPF’s outreach and engagement with each of the chapters, acting as a liaison between the local chapters and the Foundation’s headquarters in Austin. She deserves a lot of praise for shepherding the program through a difficult year. “The world shut down,” she explains, “but we survived and even thrived!” Without Olivia’s leadership, it might not have gone that way.

“Some of the membership benefits went away,” says Olivia. “People couldn’t attend as many events, or we had to limit participation. But our membership stayed steady—they still saw the value in being part of the program.”

That’s because TPPF strives to empower individuals and chapters to use what they learn in their careers and lives. Many of the benefits are intangible: finding camaraderie, belonging to a network of likeminded young conservatives, and feeling like you can make a difference yourself. In some ways, the pandemic strengthened those intangible benefits.



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Jerome Greener, TPPF’s vice president of engagement, speaks at an Austin LLC event.

“Because we couldn’t operate in public venues, many of our local leaders opened their homes to small, intimate salon dinners,” Olivia shares. “TPPF’s policy experts could meet and connect with a very tight-knit group of attendees. It was a great way to keep people engaged.”

Ultimately, the LLC targets young professionals who may not work directly in public policy but strongly desire to improve Texas through the implementation of TPPF’s ideas and values. By engaging with individuals across numerous professional fields, the LLC expands TPPF’s reach and development of the next generation, ensuring that the inculcation of conservative values is not constrained to the public policy sector.

Want to get involved in your city? If you or a young conservative you know would be interested in learning more about the program, you can contact Olivia by email at LLC@texaspolicy.com. We love to hear from young Texans wanting to get plugged into the policy debates that define our time. ★



Finding Common Ground: Healthcare Reform

by Chassidy Menard

Pundits and politicians often posit that America is more divided than ever. Indeed, the chaos of this past year—the election, the global pandemic, the civil unrest—looms dauntingly over our “more perfect union.” However, the Texas Public Policy Foundation (TPPF) is forging a bipartisan coalition over something that all Americans value: choice and peace of mind in healthcare.

The desire for choice and peace of mind in healthcare transcends party, class, and race lines. When we get sick, we want access to someone who can help us and access to medications we can afford. When something catastrophic happens, we want to be sure that everything will be well without having our family and friends being financially distressed or devastated.

In 2019, the Frontier Lab examined the views and values of citizens regarding healthcare. Regardless of party, all Americans desired healthcare that allowed for peace of mind and predictability through choice. Ultimately, every American desires to be in charge of their individual or family medical decisions. Putting Americans in control means patients make better choices that result in high-quality, affordable care.

TPPF’s initiative on healthcare, Right on Healthcare (ROH), is committed to empowering patients through public policy reforms that offer more transparency, choice, and peace of mind. Americans deserve a healthcare system that is focused on quality of care, encourages healthier outcomes, and ensures individuals and families have the options that work

for them. ROH has identified two bipartisan policy reforms, telemedicine and price transparency, that are ripe for changes that will create a more effective system that prioritizes the needs of patients.

Telemedicine refers to medical care provided remotely through the use of technology. Healthcare providers are increasingly using telephones, audiovisual platforms, smartphone applications, and other technologies to assess, monitor, diagnose, and even treat their patients remotely. Telemedicine allows patients to have access to care on their own terms—when and where they are most comfortable. The value of telemedicine was seen very clearly during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns.

In addition to the increased accessibility that telemedicine allows, another significant benefit of telemedicine is cost-effectiveness. Telemedicine is a convenient, affordable way to access healthcare services. On average, a telemedicine encounter can save a patient \$19 to \$121 per visit, with utilizing this service potentially saving a patient \$1,500 by avoiding emergency room costs. Telemedicine also saves patients’ transportation costs by bringing the care to them in their homes or in areas with no physician.

In addition to telemedicine, there is also bipartisan support for another healthcare reform: price transparency. Lack of price transparency has contributed to rising healthcare costs in the United States and making health insurance almost worthless. According to a national survey from May 2020, nearly 9 out of 10 people believe all prices in healthcare

“We have price transparency in virtually every aspect of our lives—airline tickets, vehicle purchase prices, buying a home, you name it. Most Americans agree that healthcare prices should be the same.”

should be disclosed. The responses also showed that patients would feel more comfortable getting the care they may need if they knew the prices in advance. Knowing the negotiated rates can mean a difference of hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars that could remain in Americans’ pockets.

Increasing transparency could benefit consumers in many ways. Transparency would have four critical impacts: better informed consumers and patients; better informed employers that help workers shop for value; improved ability for employers to monitor insurer effectiveness and eliminate counterproductive middlemen; and public pressure on high-cost providers.

ROH supported former President Trump’s executive order on price transparency which became effective in January 2021. Despite the executive order, hospitals have shown pitiful levels of compliance, choosing to pay fines rather than deliver transparent care to those they promise to serve. We have price transparency in virtually every aspect of our lives—airline tickets, vehicle purchase prices, buying a home, you name it. Most Americans agree that healthcare prices should be the same.

The popularity of these two policies is rooted in the shared desire for control of care and peace of mind. With market-based approaches to healthcare like telemedicine and price transparency, patients can control when, how, and what care they are getting—a common desire for left and right alike. Telemedicine allows Americans to have control over their lives and time rather than maneuvering through scheduling and rescheduling appointments at doctors’ offices, spending hours in waiting rooms, and footing large bills for healthcare.

ROH continues to champion common sense, bipartisan reforms that reduce healthcare costs and empower patients. Policies like telehealth and price transparency forge a new bipartisan path for reforming our healthcare system and show us how much we really do have in common. ★

To learn more about Right on Healthcare, please visit <https://www.texaspolicy.com/initiatives/right-on-healthcare>.



Chassidy Menard joined TPPF in January of 2021 as a development writer. She is a graduate of Wyoming Catholic College where she earned her degree in Liberal Arts and is proud to use her skills in writing and communications to share TPPF’s successes. Despite being a native of the swamps of Louisiana, she developed a love for rock climbing while in Wyoming and is a climbing instructor. Chassidy enjoys being active outdoors and has run two full marathons, placing in the top 3 for her age group each time!

BUILDING A LEGACY FOR THE FUTURE

Richard Fisher

How does a man, born and raised in southern California, feel about his new life herding cattle in Texas? “I really, really like Texas,” Richard says of his decision to come to the Lone Star State. “I should have been born here. It feels like it’s always been home.”

Richard Fisher spent his formative years on the West Coast before migrating to Oregon when he was 23, where he stayed for most of his career. For 35 years, he anxiously watched the transformation of the state as five counties around Salem and Portland determined how the rest of the state—which was and is much more conservative—would be governed. Radical liberals had taken over and turned the state upside-down.

Those weren’t the values on which Richard had been raised. “My dad was a steel-worker and my mom worked in real estate,” he says. “They had a strong work ethic. They taught me to be strong, be responsible. And they taught me that you don’t need the government to take care of you.” Their examples set the tone for how he would live his life.

Richard’s 30-year career in title insurance led to owning his own business for 12 years. As a small business owner, he knew how government intervention could make it difficult to survive, due to red tape and onerous regulations. But when he sold his business in 2005, he wasn’t the kind of person to sit around in retirement with nothing to do.

He took an interest in guns and enjoyed visiting gun ranges and target shooting. After a while, he decided to keep himself occupied by getting a federal firearms license to sell guns. It became nearly a new full-time job for Richard. He started his work as a firearms dealer in Oregon, but after a few years, Richard retired to Hawaii. “I knew it would be a more liberal environment. It was even less friendly to Second Amendment rights than Oregon had been, and there were a lot more restrictions. But I was persuaded to give it a try.”

But Hawaii was not the place for Richard to call home.

In 2017, he moved to Texas—he wanted to be in a location more likeminded to his values and the way he wanted to live his life. Richard and his wife now live on a 43-acre ranch in Brownwood, Texas, where they keep a small herd of cattle.

As Richard became more accustomed to the Texan way of life and the policy issues affecting the state, he realized that people he admired endorsed the Texas Public Policy Foundation’s accomplishments, and he started seeing more and more about the Foundation’s successes.

“I like how the team reaches out to keep me involved with their work, and I follow their stances online closely.” So when it came time for Richard to update his will, he decided to include TPPF in his estate plans.

“I’m 65 and I don’t know if I’ll live long enough to experience troubles,” says Richard of the leftward lurch in America over his lifetime. “But I’m worried about our kids’ and grandkids’ futures.” He’s fearful of where



we’re headed as a country and wonders what the Left is thinking by cozying up to Big Tech and Big Media.

“If they’re capable of silencing the Right, they’ll be capable of silencing the Left.” He thinks about the implications of that, and the curtailing of Second Amendment rights he has seen during his time as a federally licensed firearms dealer. “If one of our rights falls, which right falls next?”

But Richard remains confident that everyday citizens can be trusted to think for themselves and control their own lives, and he knows that TPPF contributes to the solution. Joining the Lone Star Legacy Society is his way of putting his faith in America’s future:

“I just want to help grow TPPF to national prominence and replicate what you’re doing everywhere!” ★



OTHER WAYS TO GIVE

You Can Influence the Future in One Sentence

As a TPPF supporter, you rightfully expect to see results. Whether you invested to solve a specific problem or to affect large scale change, TPPF worked hard on your behalf to secure more freedom and prosperity in Texas and beyond.

TPPF has achieved results for you from protecting your property rights from overreaching government, to forcing accountability on Texas schools, to reducing the burden of your property taxes, to emphasizing traditional civics and history in schools, and so much more.

Imagine, then, how rewarding it would be to extend the impact of your generosity beyond today to future generations in a simple and affordable way.

By including a gift to TPPF in your will, you can join us in the fight for freedom for generations to come. And it’s as simple as adding a single sentence to your will.

Is including a gift in your will right for you? If you can answer “yes” to any of the questions below, then you may be ready to write TPPF into your life’s story through your will.

- Do you want the opportunity to guide decisions about the future ownership of your possessions and the legacy you leave behind?
- Do you want to make sure your support of TPPF’s work is still available after your lifetime?
- Do you want to balance your generosity to TPPF with an assurance that loved ones are taken care of first?
- Do you want the flexibility to change your mind about your gift at any time?

If you would like more information about including TPPF in your will and joining Richard as a member of the Lone Star Legacy Society, contact Shari Hanrahan, Director of the Lone Star Legacy Society, at (512) 627-9831 or shanrahan@texaspolicy.com.

Happenings & UPDATES

Brooke Rollins Returns to TPPF, Kevin Roberts and Greg Sindelar Promoted

In April 2021, Brooke L. Rollins, former White House Domestic Policy Advisor and past TPPF President, rejoined the Foundation as Senior Advisor and a member of the TPPF Board of Directors. Kevin Roberts, who took the helm of TPPF after Rollins, has been elevated to Chief Executive Officer and will also be joining the TPPF Board of Directors. Greg Sindelar has been promoted to Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer.

After 15 years at the helm, Rollins left TPPF in 2018 to be an assistant to the president in the White House, directing the White House Office of American Innovation, Chief Strategist, and ultimately became Director of the Domestic Policy Council. She managed all domestic policy for the last administration, including health care, education, immigration, and opportunities for our most underserved communities. In her new role at TPPF, Rollins will advise on strategic direction.

Roberts, a historian and former professor and college president, has been with TPPF since 2016 overseeing its tremendous growth and influence in both Texas and national policy reforms. Sindelar is one of TPPF's longest serving members, looking after the Foundation's fiscal health, developing its elite human resources, and becoming one of the country's most sought-after leaders in the conservative movement.

"Brooke joined TPPF when it was just a handful of experts working on mostly educational issues and turned it into a tremendously influential player at the forefront of nearly every Texas and national policy issue," said TPPF Chairman of the Board Tim Lyles. "While she would never take credit herself, Brooke was instrumental in many of the most successful initiatives of the past administration, including passing the First Step Act, eliminating government-imposed burdens on families, workers, and businesses, lowering prescription drug prices and putting patients first in our health care system, and fighting the scourge of human trafficking across our border. We are thrilled that she has come back home to Texas and will be helping to continue our efforts to grow TPPF here and throughout the country."

"Brooke's return could not come at a better time for Texas and TPPF," said TPPF Chief Executive Officer Kevin Roberts. "Our state is leading the way on critical reforms to protect our freedom, democracy and pros-



Brooke Rollins



Greg Sindelar

"It is a tremendous honor to be coming back to TPPF," said Rollins. "Leading this great organization and redefining what a think tank can do is one of the greatest achievements of my life. I am so grateful to Tim, Kevin and Greg, and the entire TPPF family, for keeping the home fires burning while I was away. There is no organization having more impact on the future of our country and I can't wait to once again be a part of this amazing team. Now more than ever, Texas must be aggressive in protecting our freedoms and pursuing prosperity for this and the next generation. The Texas Public Policy Foundation will be at the forefront of the fight that we can and must win."



Kevin Roberts

TPPF Visits the Border with Lawmakers

The number of Texans who say there is a crisis at the border is the highest it's been in over a year, with the percentage of those who say it is the most important issue Texas policymakers should address jumping 500% since just last September. In April 2021, the Texas Congressional Delegation visited the Texas-Mexico border to examine the catastrophic effects of the reversals the Biden administration has made to successful border security programs implemented by the Trump administration. TPPF's Ken Oliver, who you likely read about in the "An Interview with Ken Oliver" article, accompanied the Texas Delegation on this trip. Ken and the Texas Delegation recorded their experience as they saw evidence of the sophistication of the criminal cartels that find migrants to be even more lucrative—and less dangerous—than drugs, and listened to the heartbroken landowners on the border who often find the weak, the injured, the raped, and the murdered along the trails leading north.

To learn more about this trip to the southern border, please visit: <https://www.texaspolicy.com/press/tppf-releases-video-on-border-visit-with-texas-delegation>

Center for the American Future Expansion

The Center for the American Future (CAF) is the litigation arm of TPPF. CAF represents clients whose lives and liberty are threatened by federal government action in defiance of the U.S. Constitution. Because the threats to liberty are greater than ever, we are glad to announce that CAF is expanding in order to meet the needs of Texans and Americans.

Under CAF's existing structure, the Center's director oversees a single team of a senior attorney, two staff attorneys, two junior attorneys, and a paralegal. However, to broaden the scope of our work to meet the immediate challenges facing our nation, CAF has crafted a plan for expanding our capabilities by adding two additional teams of attorneys and paralegals, and thus tripling CAF's overall ability to fight for freedom. These additional teams will focus on two major fronts: (1) fighting the deeply unconstitutional executive and legislative actions of the Biden-Schumer-Pelosi troika in Washington, D.C., and (2) pressing the legal case for strengthening our nation's fundamental institution of self-government—free and fair elections.

To learn more about CAF, please visit: <https://www.texaspolicy.com/initiatives/center-for-the-american-future>



Photo by Alex Billups: The cast and crew of *Forging Texas* Episode 3, "Season of Victory," on the film's set in May 2021.



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JANUARY 19-21, 2022

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The Texas Public Policy Foundation's Policy Orientation is one of the nation's top policy conferences, selling out each year while bringing together lawmakers, policy experts, and engaged citizens from across the political spectrum to discuss critical issues facing not just Texas, but the nation as well.

Our Visionaries Meeting offers special programming for Visionary-level donors. To register for our 2022 Policy Orientation/Visionaries Meeting or to learn more about Visionaries membership, please contact Annie Casteel at (512) 615-7982 or acasteel@texaspolicy.com.