

# ATHENS BANNER-HERALD

## Beware of misguided libertarianism

By: Jack Bernard – July 30, 2013

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Beware of modern 'libertarians'

I'm older than most voters. I still remember the original meaning of libertarian, per Webster, as "a person who upholds the principles of individual liberty especially of thought and action."

Libertarians believed that laws restricting individual actions that hurt no one other than the person doing them should not be interfered with by big government. Laws against gambling and prostitution, for example, were opposed by libertarians. Likewise, people should marry whomever they wish, and smoke pot at the ceremony if they wish to do so.

A few decades ago, the right wing radical Koch brothers, the billionaires who are the funding source behind the Tea Party movement, hijacked libertarianism via their pocketbook. The Cato Institute, with Koch money behind it, began to emphasize an Ayn Rand-inspired slash-and-burn philosophy of economic self-interest: Everyone for himself, and let the less fortunate go to the wolves.

This is not true libertarianism. It is an excuse for selfish people to ignore the suffering of others. Watch out for elected officials, like Rand Paul and Paul Broun, when they say they are libertarians as an excuse to prohibit government from helping those in need.

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