



Today in Liberty: Boehner's future still up in the air, libertarianism rises

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Tue, 04/08/2014

"My thing is personal freedoms, freedoms for the individual to love whom they want, do with what they want. In fact, I want the government out of almost everything." — Rob Lowe

— **Boaz on the "libertarian surge":** At *Politico Magazine*, David Boaz, executive vice president at the Cato Institute, explains why libertarianism is growing in popularity. "Lots of libertarians were involved in the tea party and the opposition to the bailouts, the car company takeovers, the 2009 stimulus bill and the quasi-nationalization of health care. But libertarians were also involved in the movement for gay marriage," Boaz writes. "Indeed, John Podesta, a top adviser to Presidents Bill Clinton and Barack Obama and founder of the Center for American Progress, noted in 2011 that you probably had to have been a libertarian to have supported gay marriage 15 years earlier. Or take marijuana legalization, which is just now becoming a majority position: Libertarians have been leaders in the opposition to the drug war for many years." He points out that libertarians "have played a key role in the defense of the right to keep and bear arms over the years." He also notes that Ron Paul and, more recently, his son, Rand Paul, have sparked interest in the libertarian philosophy.

— **No, leftist groups weren't targeted by the IRS:** That, according to IRS agents who testified before the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee. "Only seven applications in the IRS backlog contained the word 'progressive,' all of which were then approved by the IRS, while Tea Party groups received unprecedented review and experienced years-long delays," says the report, according to *The Daily Caller*. "While some liberal-oriented groups were singled out for scrutiny, evidence shows it was due to non-political reasons."

— **Amash v. Rogers in MI-08:** Call it a proxy war, if you will, but both Michigan Republicans have lined up behind candidates in MI-08. Rep. Mike Rogers (R-MI) endorsed state Senate Majority Leader Mike Bishop in the Republican primary to succeed him. Rep. Justin Amash (R-MI), however, has thrown his support behind state Rep. Tom McMillin.

— **Boehner’s future still a question:** Most House Republicans believe that Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) will run again for the top spot in the chamber if Republicans win control of the Senate. But that doesn’t mean he’ll win. “Should Boehner run for a third term as Speaker, it’s unclear whether he can get the 218 votes on the House floor on the first ballot, however,” *The Hill* notes. “In January of 2013, Boehner fended off a poorly planned coup attempt and secured enough votes on the initial ballot. A dozen Republicans opted not to support Boehner by voting for someone else, voting “present” or abstaining.”

— **The cost of Obamacare:** Though supporters of the law are still pushing a lower, \$1 trillion figure as Obamacare’s price tag, Philip Klein explains that CBO projections show that the cost of the law is more than double that figure. “When CBO analysts most recently looked at the gross cost of expanding Medicaid and giving subsidies to individuals to purchase insurance through the new exchanges — the bulk of the law’s spending — they came up with slightly more than \$2 trillion for 2015 through 2024,” Klein wrote at the *Washington Examiner*. “After deducting some offsets from the law — such as penalty payments from employers and individuals due to insurance mandates — CBO estimated the net cost at nearly \$1.5 trillion.”

— **There’s more than one war in the GOP:** In a piece published yesterday at *The American Conservative*, James Antle explains that Republican hawks have gone to war with the new breed of antiwar and noninterventionist conservatives, pointing to primary challenges against Reps. Walter Jones (R-NC) and Justin Amash (R-MI). “The main event, however, is going after Rand Paul,” Antle noted. “Paul is unlikely to face a viable primary challenger for his Senate seat, but he is considered a top-tier candidate for the Republican presidential nomination. “Can he win Iowa, yes. Can he win New Hampshire, yes. Can he win the nomination, maybe—and that’s scary,” an unnamed Mitt Romney bundler fretted to *Time*.”

— **Oh, and speaking of Republican hawks and Rand Paul:** They went nuts yesterday over a 2009 video in which Rand Paul, not yet a Senate candidate, said that Vice President Dick Cheney pushed for war in Iraq to benefit Haliburton. Maybe, just maybe he was on to something. The fallout, so to speak, is mostly staying in the neoconservative echo chamber. At least for now.

— **More money doesn’t mean better student performance:** Watchdog.org brings us the findings of a recent Cato Institute study which found that public students haven’t performed at a higher level despite billions in spending. The takeaway from this study is that what we’ve done over the past 40 years hasn’t worked,” said Andrew Coulson, director of the Cato Institute’s Center For Educational Freedom, via Watchdog. “The average performance change nationwide has declined 3 percent in mathematical and verbal skills. Moreover, there’s been no relationship, effectively, between spending and academic outcomes.”

— **Happy anniversary, Hank Aaron:** Forty years ago today, Hank Aaron hit his 715th career home run, breaking Babe Ruth’s career record. We don’t care what anyone says, Hank Aaron is still the home run king.

— **Days until the next primary:** 35 — Nebraska (May 13). The Republican primary for the open U.S. Senate seat, featuring Ben Sasse and Shane Osborn, has been one worth watching.

If you work for a liberty-minded organization, think tank, or candidate, please send tips, news, or event information to [jason-at-unitedliberty\(dot\)org](mailto:jason-at-unitedliberty(dot)org).