

# THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

## Think tanks should pitch Trump best ideas

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Free-marketeers who are in tears about Donald J. Trump's pending presidential nomination should heed the wisdom of the Beatles in "Hey Jude": "Take a sad song and make it better."

Trump's policy agenda remains largely unwritten. While he has detailed solutions on immigration, taxes and health care, Trump has left many issues untouched. This is a problem, but also an opportunity.

Conservatives and "small-L" libertarians who supported Ted Cruz, Marco Rubio or Scott Walker for president can curse Trump or do something constructive: Work with him and his team to develop his platform.

Leaders of the following think tanks should meet with Trump and urge him to champion these conservative and free-market ideas:

- The Reason Foundation should craft for Trump a limited-government blueprint to reverse the Transportation Security Agency's accelerating meltdown. Unveiling a Wollman Rink-style overhaul of the imploding TSA is the timeliest way for Trump to show how he would rescue America from Uncle Sam's holistic dysfunction.
- The National Taxpayers Union Foundation should encourage Trump to endorse the Penny Plan: Cut overall federal spending by one penny per dollar each year for five years, then freeze outlays at 18 percent of national income. As a businessman conversant with budgets and spending restraint, Trump would understand this idea and could sell it to voters.
- The Competitive Enterprise Institute should advise Trump to smother Obama's odious Clean Power Plan. Cost: \$382 billion in disposable income and \$993 billion in foregone GDP through 2040. Benefit: by 2050, expected warming would slip 0.02 degrees Fahrenheit. This is like cranking a thermostat from 72 degrees, all the way down to 71.98. CEI also should ask Trump to halt government prosecution of "global warming" skeptics.
- The National Right to Work Foundation should persuade Trump to guarantee secret ballots in union certification elections, dump Davis-Bacon requirements for union wages in federally funded building projects, end "official time" rules that allow bureaucrats to perform union duties

during taxpayer-funded work hours, and close the union-violence loophole that lets Big Labor militants assault people – provided that their mayhem advances “legitimate union objectives.”

- The libertarian Cato Institute should identify for Trump 10 federal activities and agencies to defund and padlock in his first year as president. For starters: the sugar program, subsidies for bald-eagle-killing wind turbines, the Rural Utilities Service (formerly the Rural Electrification Administration), the Tennessee Valley Authority and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.
- The Goldwater Institute should help Trump embrace the Right to Try: Terminally ill patients should be free to choose promising treatments, even if they lack Food and Drug Administration approval. The FDA should stop shielding those at death’s door from new medications that “might kill them.” Also, Goldwater should explain to Trump why the FDA should approve drugs that are safe and stop fretting about their effectiveness. Let patients and doctors worry about that.
- The Property and Environment Research Center should craft for Trump a moratorium on new federal land purchases. Rather than nationalize more and more acreage, Washington’s shopaholics should authorize deferred maintenance in America’s crumbling national parks.
- The Friedman Foundation for School Choice should convince Trump to finance the Washington, D.C., school voucher program. Shamefully, Obama has struggled to strangle this initiative since he showed up – D.C.’s ill-served black kids be damned.

Once these think tanks have earned Trump’s trust, they should go back to basics. They could start by offering concrete examples of where and how free trade increases prosperity and competitive advantage. Rather than rob “billions and billions” from America, China sells U.S. consumers ever-better products at ever-lower prices.

Along these lines, President Ronald Reagan relied heavily on the Heritage Foundation’s policy cookbook, “Mandate for Leadership.” The Manhattan Institute introduced Rudolph W. Giuliani to broken-windows policing and other urban reforms. The Hoover Institution briefed G.W. Bush on matters both foreign and domestic.

When it comes to Donald Trump, every leader of a market-friendly think tank should recall another piece of advice from “Hey Jude”: “The movement you need is on your shoulder.”