



# Santa Maria Times

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## Erasing some of the rules

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According to the 2013 Cato Institute's annual report on economic freedom, the United States has experienced a "substantial decline in economic freedom during the past decade."

This decline occurs amid a clamor for decreasing the disparity between the rich and poor. The 2014 Index of Economic Freedom states, "Substantial expansion in the size and scope of government, including ... has contributed significantly to the erosion of U.S. economic freedom. The growth of government has been accompanied by increasing cronyism that has undermined the rule of law and perceptions of fairness."

Where is the blame? All around us. Every time we demand more regulation, we tie our economy in greater knots. Our legislative leaders have created policies that are so complex and onerous, no one can understand them.

The Federal Tax Reporter states the 2013 U.S. Tax Code is over 77,000 pages. Think about it, Melville's "Moby Dick" was over 500 pages, and that kept it well beyond the reach of most readers.

What can we do? One of the best things is write letters that demand lawmakers to use sound judgment to simplify law. If we voice our dissatisfaction with present policies that are strangling creativity and innovation, our leaders will have to listen.

The greatest threat to our economic freedom is over-regulation and bureaucracy. We must be willing to accept life with fewer government controls and more personal responsibility. Whether we have the courage to do this remains to be seen.