



Hendrickson: Governor Kim Reynolds – Defender of Freedom and Conservatism

John Hendrickson: Governor Reynolds demonstrated to the nation that conservatism works and Iowa is a place where freedom and opportunity are flourishing.

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“This campaign is more than a contest between two men. It is more than a contest between two parties. It is a contest between two philosophies of government,” stated President Herbert Hoover in describing his differences with then Governor Franklin D. Roosevelt. Governor Kim Reynolds, just as with President Hoover, offered a different philosophy of government during her televised response to President Joe Biden’s State of the Union address. Governor Reynolds offered a clear conservative policy contrast to President Biden’s progressive liberalism. On the national stage the governor shared Iowa’s story of how conservative values protect and advance both freedom and economic liberty.

Since assuming office in 2017, Governor Reynolds has advanced a policy agenda rooted in limited government and the protection of traditional conservative values. Governor Reynolds and the Republican-led legislature have consistently passed prudent budgets while delivering three separate rounds of tax cuts. Iowa voters have given elected officials a mandate to continue down this path, re-electing Governor Reynolds in 2018, and maintaining conservative majorities in the Iowa House and Senate.

“On the economy, the contrast couldn’t be more stark. While Democrats in D.C. are spending trillions, sending inflation soaring, Republican leaders around the country are balancing budgets and cutting taxes. Because we know that money spent on Main Street is better than money spent on bureaucracy,” noted Governor Reynolds. At the direction of Governor Reynolds, Iowa hasn’t just focused on keeping more money on Main Street while ignoring the federal debt, but our state has returned \$95 million of unnecessary Covid funding to the federal government.

This week the governor ensured more money will remain on Main Street when she signed a historic tax reform measure into law. This new bill will create a 3.9 percent individual flat income tax rate by 2026, gradually lower the corporate tax rate to 5.5 percent, and eliminate all taxes on retirement income. This is a significant pro-growth tax reform measure that will lower taxes for all Iowans while creating economic growth and more opportunities.

Even before the pandemic, Iowa’s economy was growing, and the budget was in surplus. When the pandemic hit our shores in early 2020, Governor Reynolds kept Iowa’s economy open, which resulted in a quick economic recovery. As a result of her fiscal conservatism, Governor Reynolds even received an “A” grade from the CATO Institute’s *Fiscal Policy Report Card*.

Heading into this year's legislative session, Iowa was projected to have a \$1.2 billion budget surplus, continuing a trend of economic growth coupled with spending restraint, demonstrating that prosperity isn't achieved by more taxes and more spending.

In her speech, Governor Reynolds talked about a "pro-parent" and "pro-family" revolution occurring across the nation. In Iowa and across the country parents are growing frustrated about the radical curriculums and inappropriate books being taught in schools. "Republicans believe that parent's matter. It was true before the pandemic and has never been more important to say out loud: Parents Matter. They have a right to know, and to have a say in, what their kids are being taught," stated Governor Reynolds. The governor is currently advocating for greater transparency and accountability in school curriculum and library resources.

Throughout the pandemic, Governor Reynolds also understood the importance of keeping schools open and Iowa became the first state to ensure that all students could attend class in-person. Governor Reynolds is also fighting for more parental choice in education. Last year the legislature expanded education freedom in Iowa by reducing barriers to open enrollment and expanding charter schools. Governor Reynolds continues to push for education reforms that will allow greater choice for parents in providing the best educational opportunity for their children.

Most important of all, during her response to President Biden, Governor Reynolds summarized what a great silent majority of Americans are feeling at this time. "Americans are tired of a political class trying to remake this country into a place where an elite few tell everyone else what they can and cannot say. What they can and cannot believe," stated Governor Reynolds.

Governor Reynolds is on the frontlines fighting to stop progressive, liberal, woke, policies. Whether it is fighting against vaccine mandates and other federal overreaches, Governor Reynolds has always stood with freedom even when it is unpopular. A cultural revolution is occurring, and it is threatening to destroy traditional values. "But it's the American people who are waiting to exhale. Waiting for the insanity to stop," noted Governor Reynolds.

"If we, as elected leaders, are doing our job, then the government is working well but operating in the background. It's supporting the ingenuity and spirit of our people, not drowning them out. It's keeping them safe, not restricting their freedom," stated Governor Reynolds.

Governor Reynolds demonstrated to the nation that conservatism works and Iowa is a place where freedom and opportunity are flourishing. She reminded Americans that government is not the solution. A public policy strategy that wants citizens to thrive must be built on the foundation of protecting both economic liberty and the values that have made the United States exceptional.