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Grassroot Perspective



Scanning the week's national news, views and clues with you and yours in mind

By Malia Hill

“When integrity is the rule, fallacies and errors are brought honestly into the open, where they can be seen and discarded.” --- Leonard E. Read

Each week, we'll be monitoring the web to find the most interesting, challenging, or important items for those who are concerned about liberty, accountability, and big government. Here are some of the highlights from the past week:

[Technically Political](#)

Most of us are not techies. That's fine. There's nothing wrong with having an imperfect knowledge of the machine I am currently writing this on or the process by which you are now reading it. No one is judging you if you don't know precisely what a “server” does (well, maybe a few people are judging you, but they're mostly in California and China and you don't even know them). What you cannot afford to remain in happy ignorance on is the impact of politics on the internet and technology. [As the President of TechFreedom explains here](#), we should be wary of government efforts to constrain the Digital Revolution, lest such intervention (no matter how well-meaning) infringe on our freedoms and privacy.

[Fine China](#)

American foreign policy. Neither American, nor foreign, nor a policy. Discuss.

Ok, perhaps that's a bit exaggerated, [but as Doug Bandow of the Cato Institute discusses in this column](#), it's not far off when considering the schizophrenic nature of our country's policy regarding China. American interests in Asia (which should be especially important to Hawaii and its economy) suggest that greater partnership with China in addressing the problems facing that region may be the way to a more sensible China policy (or indeed, one with any sense at all).

Pension Problems Plague Public

The public is finally waking up to the seriousness of the pension problem. The question is whether anyone has the political

promises and an unwillingness to deal with unpopular truths or accountability.

And if that's not bad enough, there's the fact that taking advantage of public employee pension programs is even more popular than ignoring their flaws. [The National Center for Policy Analysis reports on a study](#) that finds government workers in 21 states using perks and loopholes to inflate their pensions by thousands of dollars (which costs taxpayers millions in payments to retirement and benefit funds).

[I've had it with these #@!% Cakes on this %#\\$@& Plane](#)

Want to eat cakes on a plane? The government has something to say about that. The [Competitive Enterprise Institute has a fun video](#) on the 5 resolutions that the government has made for you this year, including the aforementioned cakes as well as a ban on tater tots.

Not as fun, but just as informative, is another CEI video on solar subsidies—namely why they don't work.

[Confirming His Prejudices](#)


For some, President Obama's power play and questionable appointment of the head of the consumer finance agency seems like one of those far-away Washington things that are too "inside-DC" to worry about. But what if it did hit you right in the pocketbook? Like, say, through a mass refinancing of mortgages. [The American Enterprise Institute Blog](#) explains how this can happen here, but before you start wishing for a little abuse of executive power, remember that expansion of government power (and erosion of checks and balances) tends to erode our liberties in the long run.


Views expressed in this column are intended to promote creative thought, educate, and, we hope, prompt comment. Accordingly, thoughts expressed do not necessarily reflect the official position of Grassroot Institute of Hawaii or the author.

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