

Connect
Create a Free Account | [Subscribe](#) | [Login](#)

SEARCH

Home
Magazine
Features
Shop NPQ
Support NPQ
Newsire
Cohen Report
Age of Obama

NONPROFIT NEWSWIRE

Libertarians Psychologized

NOVEMBER 23, 2010
RICK COHEN

1
0
Share
3

November 15, 2010; Source: [The Examiner](#) | If a solid portion of the new Tea Party-energized Republican members of Congress gets its juice from a libertarian ideological perspective, it may be useful to understand what libertarians would want to do with public policy and how libertarian policies would affect the nonprofit sector.

Senior staff of the libertarian Cato Institute such as VP Gene Healy have seen the need to tell the American public just what they might expect from people with, "hello, I'm a libertarian" name tags. Libertarians, Healy said, don't rank as high as liberals and conservatives on "agreeableness" and "extraversion", but tend to be more "dispassionate and cerebral."

He suggests that "liberals have the most 'feminine' cognitive style" among political types compared to libertarians' "most 'masculine'" approach. Of concern to nonprofits is not just how well libertarians play in the sandbox, but what they want to do with the toys—in this case the federal budget. In the November 17 *Wall Street Journal*, Cato purchased a full-page ad outlining libertarian budget cutting beliefs and goals. The [ad contains](#) the following of import to nonprofits:

- "Get . . . the government out of the housing business," including ending HUD subsidies, which Cato believes "have concentrated poverty and fed urban blight," and end support of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, with predicted savings of \$45 billion a year;
- Convert Medicaid to a "consumer-driven health plan through vouchers" and convert Medicaid to a fixed block grant program (and, apparently, undo President Obama's comprehensive health insurance reform), saving \$1 trillion during the next decade;
- "Phase out [Social Security] as a mandatory program and [offer] an alternative voluntary system of private accounts," saving \$50 billion annually;
- Withdraw from Iraq and Afghanistan and reduce the "unnecessary overseas missions" Cato charges have resulted from "military overreach," saving \$100 billion a year (not including the \$125 billion saved in Iraq and Afghanistan);
- Eliminate federal support for K-12 education, which Cato says "have cost American taxpayers \$1.85 trillion since 1965 without noticeably improving outcomes," saving \$40 billion annually;
- "Cut federal (wage and benefit) compensation by 10 percent to save \$20 billion annually."

As Healy notes, the libertarian movement, with worshippers of economist Frederick Hayek (author of the *Road to Serfdom*) and acolytes of the Tea Party's revolutionary war rhetoric, constitute a "strange tribe." No longer an isolated tribe associated with renegade Texas Republican Congressman Ron Paul, the libertarians are in government now, many associated with Ron's son Rand, newly elected senator from Kentucky. Nonprofits had better get used to understanding the language of libertarians. Anyone interested in a Hayek reading group?—[Rick Cohen](#)

Add comment

SUPPORT NPQ

DONATE NOW THROUGH Network for Good

GET SOCIAL WITH NPQ

GET NPQ IN YOUR INBOX

GO

Privacy by SafeSubscribeSM

Vote NPQ!

NPQ is up for the 2010 Mashable Awards!
[Click to vote](#) lend your support.

Subscribe to NPQ

“

NPQ is the Harvard Business Review for the nonprofit sector. Subscribe today to receive our print magazine, highly anticipated by nonprofit professionals across the sector.

Most Popular
Latest Comments

1. [Nonprofits Help Dieters Shed Weight, Not Dollars](#)
2. [New Nonprofit Status Symbol: Billionaires on the Board](#)
3. [What's in Store for Philanthropy in the New Congress](#)
4. [Chamber Plays Matchmaker for Nonprofits and Local Press](#)
5. [Innovation: S.C. Health Care Coop and Small Businesses](#)