

THE JACK NEWS

Cato Director Jeffrey Miron Has An Impressive Resume For A Potential 2020 Libertarian Candidate

August 10, 2017

Among potential candidates who have not held office, Dr. Jeffrey Miron offers perhaps the most impressive resume. As the head of undergraduate economics at Harvard University, the director of economic policy for the Cato Institute, and the chief economic adviser to Gary Johnson, Miron has a long history of combining both public advocacy and serious academic footwork on behalf of libertarian policies.

Miron piqued some attention and curiosity when he applied for a spot on the party's platform committee, and was selected by the Libertarian National Committee. He has a unique talent for making a pragmatic, utilitarian case for radical libertarian policies like completely free trade, legalization of hard drugs, and deregulation of labor markets.

He is likely most familiar to libertarians as a result of the "Learn Liberty" video series which were a product of the Institute for Humane Studies. He covers libertarian public policy in a wide range of areas, with a mastery of all the details and nuance of different schools of libertarian thought.

While associated with Cato and the previous Johnson campaigns, Miron himself is a fairly hard-line libertarian on the issues. His advocacy frequently focuses on the case for radical free trade and an end to immigration restrictions, topics that are particularly salient in the era of Donald Trump's protectionism and nativism.

Like several other potential candidates, however, Miron would start from a baseline of little name recognition outside of libertarian movement circles. Being an Ivy League professor offers credibility, but by itself doesn't bring the notability and media attention that an elected officeholder or celebrity would offer. That might not be a downside for some Libertarians, though, who are eager to retrench the party's branding and message.

Jeffrey Miron's candidacy has the potential to appeal to both the party's more pragmatic wing, as well as those who want to break away from the perception that the L.P. always nominates "former Republicans."

The party's first presidential nominee in 1972, John Hospers, was a professor. It was a trend the party continued throughout its early years, most notably with Ed Clark in 1980, who along with his running mate David Koch, was the most successful Libertarian ticket until Gov. Gary

Johnson in 2012 and 2016.

Will the party turn to another academic in 2020? Only time will tell, and for the time being Prof. Miron has not indicated his intentions beyond serving on the platform committee. Even if he decides against running, his presence in the party is appreciated by many as lending credibility and intellect to the drafting of the 2018 platform.