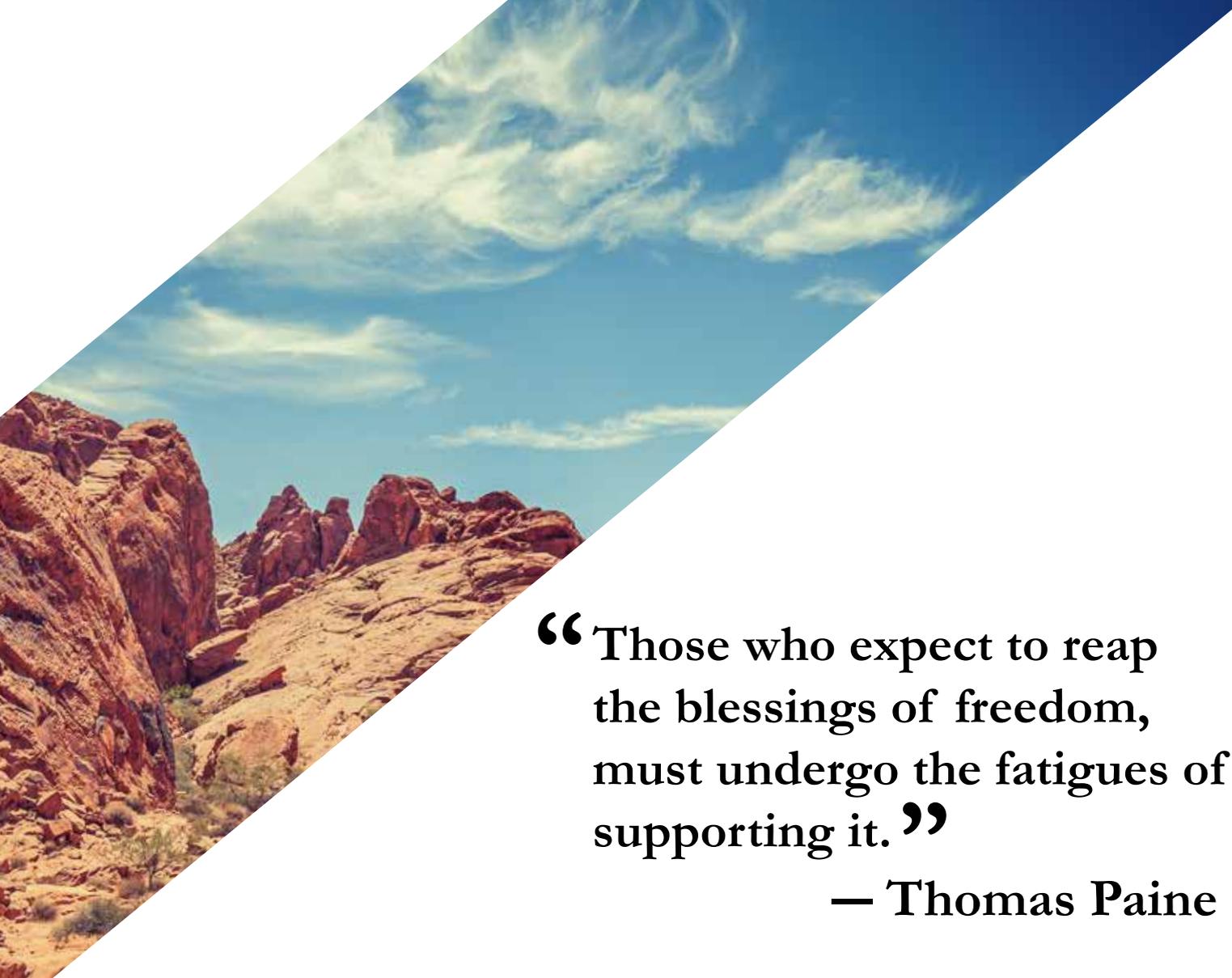




2017

NEVADA POLICY
RESEARCH INSTITUTE





“Those who expect to reap the blessings of freedom, must undergo the fatigues of supporting it.”
— Thomas Paine

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Chairman and President's report

Looking back over the course of the last year, it is easy to be struck by just how much impact the Nevada Policy Research Institute has had on policy discussions in the state, the region and the nation.

NPRI's outsized influence on policy shouldn't be too surprising to those of us who are familiar with the organization. The Institute has been making waves for 26 years now.

Last year, things started off with an unfriendly legislature looking to import California-style tax-and-spend big government policies. Clearly, we had our work cut out for us.

But we managed to compile an impressive number of "wins," despite the legislative makeup of the state. For starters, there

were no new taxes (aside from the marijuana tax) passed into law, one of the state's school-choice programs was expanded, and we won a major transparency case in the lower courts.

And that's just the short list of things we managed to accomplish.

Throughout the year, the Institute's policy work was featured in local, regional and national media outlets. We broke new ground with an innovative exploration into Civil Asset Forfeiture. Our transparency websites — TransparentNevada and TransparentCalifornia — are now considered the gold-standard for state-based transparency projects.

Indeed, on almost every front, we're doing more than ever to

keep liberty-loving Nevadans informed, educated and armed with good policy.

As you will see, flipping through the following pages, we at NPRI were quite busy last year — and it paid off. Our sphere of influence is larger than ever before.

But we wouldn't have been able to accomplish any of this without your support. It's your engagement and generosity that has made all of NPRI's work possible — and will help us accomplish the big plans we have for 2018 and 2019.

The next year is going to hold a lot of positive things for the Institute. We'll be revamping our communications efforts. We'll be touching on new policy. We will be engaging Nevadans that

have never before joined the fight for liberty, and expanding the army of free-market advocates so necessary to keeping the Silver State free.

Together, we know we will see many more success stories. It won't be easy — but, together, we will continue to have an outsized influence on policy in the Silver State.

Sincerely,



John A Tsarpalas | President



Ranson Webster | Chairman



2017 Legislative Session

“No man’s life, liberty or property are safe while the legislature is in session.”

— Mark Twain

It’s a common problem in politics: Politicians like to judge themselves by how many new laws or government programs they initiate. Sadly, Nevada is no exception.

And so, the Nevada Policy Research Institute had its work cut out for it in 2017 when politicians met in Carson City for the *79th Legislative Session*.

Despite being run by lawmakers focused on importing California-style tax-and-spend policies, big-government lawmakers had a hard time getting laws enacted.

Minimum-wage hikes, new tax schemes and heavy-handed regulations either died in committee, failed to pass the legislature or were vetoed by the governor.

In other words: Despite the best efforts of tax-and-spend legislators that ran the Assembly and Senate, *Nevada taxpayers managed to hold back the growth of government!*

Thanks to NPRI’s online **Taxpayer’s Guide to Nevada’s 79th Legislative Session** — which rated the impact important bills would have on taxpayers — fiscally conservative lawmakers and voters suddenly had a real-time resource to keep abreast of the best, and worst, pieces of legislation in 2017.

NPRI outlined bills in clear terms for lawmakers and taxpayers to understand — and the results were promising! Many of the worst proposals were ultimately killed, voted down or vetoed by Governor Sandoval — and big-government advocates had little to show for their efforts by the end of the session.

NPRI’s work on this front also set the stage for our **Legislative Review and Report Card** — a publication that outlined the backroom deals, the intense debates and the “rest of the story” about the 2017 legislative session.

The **Review and Report Card** allowed voters to see which

lawmakers actually put the concerns of taxpayers over those of special interests and political cronies, and it highlighted the battles small-government advocates experienced in 2017’s legislative session.

Unfortunately, it wasn’t all wins. The state’s universal school choice program — *Education Savings Accounts* — failed to receive funding. In fact, key lawmakers in *both* parties ignored the will of taxpayers on more than one occasion.



Of course, that’s what makes NPRI’s **Review and Report Card** so important: The publication lets taxpayers know *exactly* which lawmakers *truly* represented their interests.

WHO DOES CIVIL ASSET FORFEITURE TARGET MOST?

A REVIEW OF LVMPD'S FORFEITURE ACTIVITIES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016

DANIEL HONCHARIW, MPA
NEVADA POLICY RESEARCH INSTITUTE
SUMMER 2017



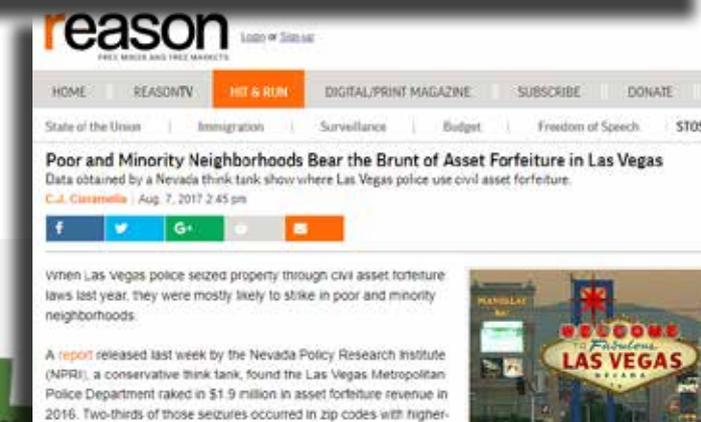
Nevada Policy Research Institute's policy work continued to turn heads after the session.

In July, the Institute released a first-of-its-kind report in Nevada regarding Civil Asset Forfeiture. Policy Analyst Daniel Honchariw mapped out the instances of forfeiture in Las Vegas, and was able to draw some stunning conclusions from the data.

Namely, NPRI saw that the practice — which allows law enforcement to seize property, even in the absence of criminal charges — disproportionately impacted minority neighborhoods, and individuals without the financial means to fight forfeiture in the courts.

The “heat map” within the report instantly caught the attention of the nation. Reason.com and USA Today both ran full stories on the results, and the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights even referenced the study in a report on forfeiture later in 2017.

The NPRI study has proven to be a useful tool for the bipartisan fight against asset forfeiture abuse in Nevada, and the rest of the nation.





TRANSPARENCY

Transparency is a key component of holding government accountable to taxpayers — which probably explains why governments fight it at every turn.

In 2015, when the Nevada Policy Research Institute requested pension payout information from Nevada's Public Employee Retirement System (PERS), it ran into a major obstacle: *PERS had intentionally altered its records to avoid complying with the state's public records law.*

In early 2017, after NPRI sued the agency to force compliance, the courts ruled in favor of transparency, ordering PERS to

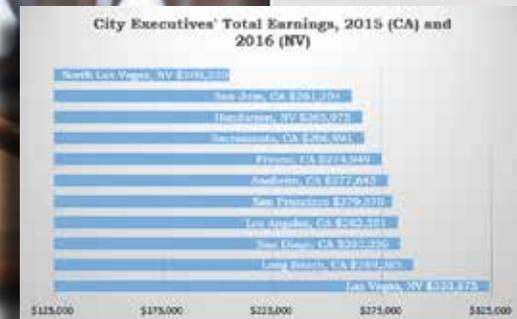


Nevada Senators vote to keep their pensions hidden from taxpayer scrutiny

By Robert Folmer
Friday, April 21, 2017

Today, 11 state senators — most of whom are PERS members themselves — just passed a completely unenforceable law aimed at making private their taxpayer-funded pensions.

Such a singular focus on keeping the public in the dark, and perhaps a lack of proper understanding of the subject matter, resulted in language that plainly states the names of all public employees in Nevada would be confidential under the just-passed SB304.



release the information. Unsurprisingly, PERS has appealed to the state supreme court — and oral arguments are scheduled for early 2018.

The agency's reluctance to act transparently with the very taxpayers that fund it is, unfortunately, par for the course in government. And the reason is simple: Transparency *forces* governments to be accountable to the taxpayers who fund it!

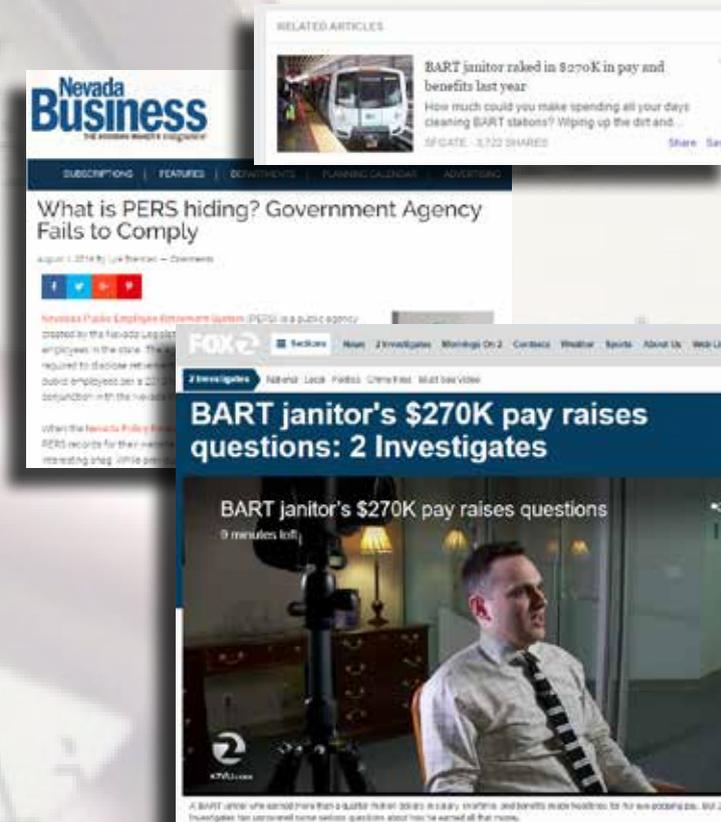
There is no greater example of this than NPRI's multistate transparency projects: **TransparentNevada.com** and **TransparentCalifornia.com**.

The two websites — which simply make all government employee salary and pension payout amounts available to the general public — had over *56 million page views* in 2017 alone!

And all that attention has translated into real wins for public policy.

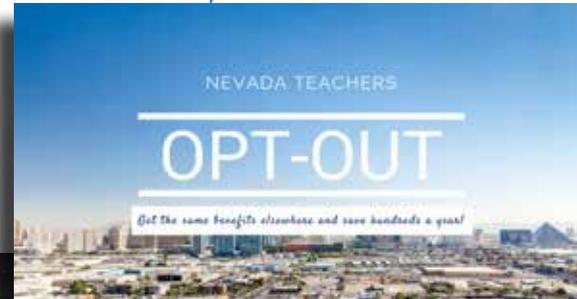
When TransparentCalifornia.com reported on a public-sector janitor who boosted his salary to more than \$270,000 with overtime-pay and benefits in 2016, even the tax-and-spend state of California took notice. That outrage turned into action when a law was passed last year that put an inspector general in charge of bringing an end to such abuse!

Here in Nevada, the results have been equally as impressive. Last year, the Las Vegas City Council awarded city manager Elizabeth Fretwell a \$38,500 bonus to address "gender equity issues" — this *despite* the fact that Fretwell was already earning *well more than her peers in much larger cities such as San Diego!*



Unsurprisingly, the story caught the attention of a public that has seen an unending wave of proposed tax increases in recent years.

This kind of accountability doesn't happen when government is left to its own devices — which is exactly why NPRI will never give up the fight for a more transparent government in Nevada.



Clark County teachers!

Are you getting your money's worth from the CCEA?

Opt-out between July 1st - 15th and save up to \$800 a year!



Thanks to the Nevada Policy Research Institute's **work**, it is clear that workers of all ideological stripes believe in the concept that workers — not union bosses and politicians — should have the freedom to decide for themselves whether or not they want to belong to a union.

It's a concept that NPRI has long supported.

For more than half a decade, NPRI has been letting Nevada teachers know they *don't have to* belong to a union if they don't want to. This simple informational campaign, held every year during the small window of time teachers are able to opt out in July, has proven invaluable to teachers who don't believe their union is worth the hundreds of dollars in dues they're asked to pay.

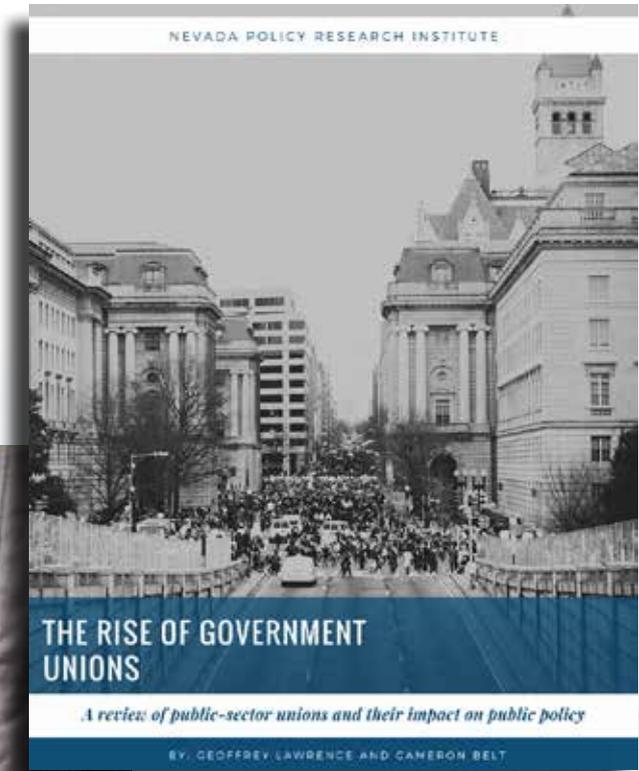
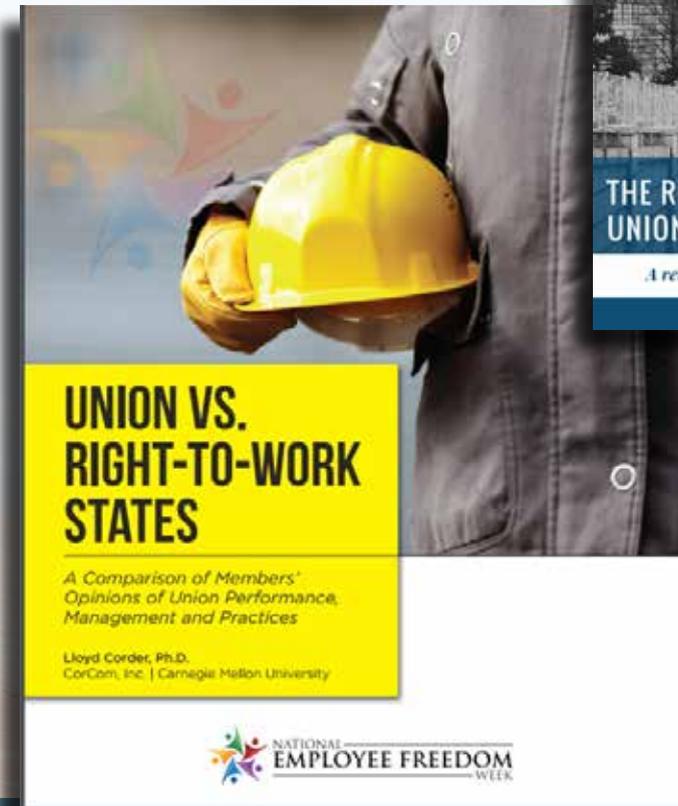
Thanks to NPRI's simple campaign, the state's largest school district, Clark County, has seen *almost half* of its teachers decide not to be a part of the union!

But the Institute didn't limit itself just to Nevada.

Once again, NPRI spearheaded **National Employee Freedom Week** — a week dedicated to the idea that no one should ever be forced, coerced or pressured into joining a union against their will. At the heart of this year's **National Employee Freedom Week** was a survey that showed strong

support among union members for pro-worker reforms such as regular recertification and “right to work.”

The impact NPRI has had on the national discussion over labor issues in the last year is amazing. *The Heritage Foundation* held a panel focused on the concept of **National Employee Freedom Week** with Mark Janus — the Illinois government worker who is taking the issue all the way to U.S. Supreme Court. More than 100 national and state-level groups joined the effort from across the country to raise



awareness of pro-worker reforms such as right-to-work, “Worker’s Choice” and an end to abusive collective-bargaining practices.

A joint publication of The Heritage Foundation and NPRI also highlighted the history of public-sector unions, and the immense cost they have placed on public finances, innovation and worker rights.

The labor issues NPRI tackled in 2017 were just more examples of how large the Institute's sphere of influence has become.

PARENT OUTREACH

Of course, it wasn't all wins for free-market advocates this last year. The state's groundbreaking educational choice program — Education Savings Accounts — was left unfunded in a behind-the-scenes “compromise” between a handful of Republicans and the teacher-union-beholden Democrat leadership.

But even in that fight, NPRI was able to gather some astounding support. Nearly half of the 10,000 parents who had tried to apply for the program applied with NPRI's help. Countless parents contacted their lawmakers, appeared in committee hearings and told their friends and families about the importance of school choice — all a result of NPRI's immense outreach efforts.

Ultimately, however, Governor Sandoval and a few key members of the legislature let these thousands of parents down by negotiating away any chance of funding the groundbreaking reform.

The army of parents and activists that NPRI helped organize, however, isn't done. In the years ahead, these parents will be

key to making sure Nevada's children are no longer trapped in underperforming schools.

As it turns out, the voices of these thousands of parents were hard to ignore — even for lawmakers that are in bed with the public-school establishment.

As a result, there was one free-market win in education reform:

An expansion of the Opportunity Tax Scholarships — a program that grants scholarships to low-income children who want to attend a private school of their choice.

Roughly half of Nevadan school children are eligible for the program, and legislators ended up granting the program a one-time increase of \$20 million.

However, it's not likely to be an easy win to maintain. Just one week after the end of the legislative session, the chief lobbyist for the state's main teachers union, Chris Daly with the Nevada State Education Association, told the media that the union would be setting its sights on the scholarship program — fighting to cut, if not end, the program.



“We don't like [the one time increase]. We're going to hold the makers of this deal to their commitment that this was a one-time appropriation... and cut it to the \$6 million or eliminate the program,” he told the *Nevada Independent*.

The message from Daly was quite clear: For the unions and education establishment, even a mere \$20 million in scholarships is too much of a threat to allow.

However, as NPRI Vice President Steven Miller illustrated in an eight part series in 2017, the public school system is so full of corruption, abuse and waste, parents are right to demand an alternative.

Miller's series, *Rotting from Within*, documented the culture of corruption and waste in Clark County.

The series — along with NPRI's relentless outreach efforts — demonstrates why an army of parents are out there ready to keep fighting for more educational options.

ROTTING FROM WITHIN
A glimpse into the systemic waste and corruption of CCSD

150 NEVADA APPEAL Labontan VALLEY NEWS
NEWS SPORTS ENTERTAINMENT'S EVENTS LABONTEAN VALLEY
Students across the state rally at Capitol in Carson City for school choice
Willy Miller January 26, 2017
Dancing and mixing with yellow scarves to a hit made famous by Justin Timberlake, hundreds of students, teachers, parents and other supporters gathered at the Capitol on Wednesday evening to rally for educational choice in schools.
The rally was part of school choice week proclaimed by Nevada Gov. Brian Sandoval and 18 other governors. The event is held annually in January.
Wednesday's audience at the Capitol included around 300 people, with schools from Fallon, Las Vegas, Reno, and Boulder represented.

Arguments for Nevada's school choice program begin Friday
By Shoshie Johnson | sjohnson@foxnews.com
Posted 07/28/2016 11:17PM Updated 07/28/2016 11:17PM

RITA LAZANG
LAS VEGAS 10:58 AM '80s Moody class dies
8 NOW

BY STEVEN MILLER NEVADA JOURNAL

INVASION OF THE INTERNS

In the summer of 2017, the Nevada Policy Research Institute was overrun by interns.

College students from all over the nation — and in one case,



from as far away as the United Kingdom — came to NPRI to learn what it's like working in a free-market think tank.

At least once a week, NPRI staff treated the interns to a “class” on important professional skills, such as public speaking, critical thinking and education on free market policies. The majority

of their time, however, was spent “in the trenches” — helping staff with our critical policy work.

Of course, it wasn't all work. Every Friday, interns were treated to an informal barbeque lunch, put on by NPRI staff.

“Here at the Institute, I was given the opportunity to see the ‘bigger picture’ through creative work,” explained Sydney Darwin, one of eight interns that joined the Institute over the summer. “With just a glimpse into this world, I am already hooked.”

The intern program is still going strong in 2018. Currently, three students from UNLV — who also happen to be veterans — are taking part in the program.

Ronald Reagan once explained “Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same.”

Judging by the enthusiasm and talent we saw in NPRI's 2017 interns, freedom will continue to have staunch defenders for generations to come.



NPRI'S CELEBRATORY DINNERS

SPRING CELEBRATION

ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

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Bronze Sponsor
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Ben and Susan Farahi
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Acclaimed writer, scholar and renowned filmmaker Dinesh D'Souza helped mark the occasion as the keynote speaker for both the Spring Celebration in Reno, and the 26th Anniversary Celebration in Las Vegas. D'Souza discussed the "Big Lie" Americans have been told over the decades, and how to fight for the truth.



WHAT'S NEXT?

It looks like 2018 is going to be another busy year.

Oral arguments will be held before the Nevada Supreme Court in our case against the Nevada Public Employee Retirement System in March.

Over the summer we will once again let teachers know about their right to opt-out of union membership, and we will spearhead the **National Employee Freedom Week** coalition in the wake of a groundbreaking U.S. Supreme Court case heard in late February.

We will provide lawmakers, candidates, legislative staffers, the

general public and the media with training on critical free-market issues.

And, due to popular demand, we will publish the next edition of NPRI's famous **Piggy Book** — another research project by NPRI that sets out to expose egregious examples of waste and abuse in local and state government.

But those big-ticket items are just the beginning — and we wouldn't be able to accomplish any of these important projects without your support. It's your engagement and generosity that has made all of NPRI's work possible.

The Nevada Policy Research Institute is committed to being the voice for taxpayers, limited government advocates and free-market principles. And with your continued generosity and support, we will be able to keep Nevada prosperous and free.

We're excited for another productive year. We look forward to many more victories with our supporters, advocates and allies by our side.

We know we will have many more success stories, and many more hard-won battles in the next couple of years. It certainly won't

be easy — but, together, we will continue to have an outsized influence on policy in the Silver State and the region.

Thanks for all your support as we go into 2018!



**“Government is the great fiction, through
which everybody endeavors to live at the
expense of everybody else.”**

— Frédéric Bastiat



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