

OCPA FaxLine Report

a public policy information service for members of the Oklahoma Council of Public Affairs, Inc.

Dear OCPA Member:

Tuesday, July 1, 2008

This week, millions of us will once again be championing Liberty as the 232nd celebration of the Fourth of July occurs in large cities and small towns across America. It's an important time as we conjure up images of our Founding Fathers -- of sacrifices made and dreams realized. It's a time to remember that it was our independence from a monarchy that defines our nation's idea of Liberty -- *and protecting Liberty never ends.*

On July 3, 1987, President Ronald Reagan spoke about the need for an Economic Bill of Rights. "There are four essential economic freedoms. They are what links life inseparably to liberty, what enables an individual to control his own destiny, what makes self-government and personal independence part of the American experience.

"First is the freedom to work -- to pursue one's livelihood in one's own way, to choose where one will locate and what one will do to sustain individual and family needs and desires. . . .

"[The] second of those freedoms is the freedom to enjoy the fruits of one's labor-- to keep for oneself and one's family the profit or gain earned by honest effort.

"Third is the freedom to own and control one's property -- to trade or exchange it and not to have it taken through threat or coercion.

"Fourth is the freedom to participate in a free market -- to contract freely for goods and services and to achieve one's full potential without government limits on opportunity, economic independence, and growth.

"Just as Jefferson understood that our political freedoms needed protection by and from government, our economic freedoms need similar recognition and protection. Those who attain political power must know that there are limits beyond which they will not be permitted to go, because beyond that point their intrusion is destructive of the economic freedom of the people. We must insist, for example, that there be a limit to the level of taxation, not only because excessive taxation undermines the strength of the economy but because taxation beyond a certain level becomes servitude. And in America, it is the Government that works for the people and not the other way around."

Reagan knew that the centerpiece of such an Economic Bill of Rights needed to be, ". . . a long-overdue constitutional amendment to require the Federal Government to do what every family in America must do, and that is live within its means and balance its budget. . . ." Reagan added, "Our forefathers fought for personal and national independence, yet 200 years later, our own overly centralized government poses a threat to our liberty far beyond anything imagined by the patriots of old."

Reagan identified these challenges 20 years ago. They remain the same today. As we take time to celebrate the blessings of this great nation, let us continue to realize it is the *economic* freedoms we possess which will insure Liberty for generations to come.

Until next time. . . Brett A. Magbee, Vice President for Operations

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