

Greetings ...

Thank you, Jim Forsythe and the Republican Liberty Caucus for affording this opportunity. Thank you Governor Johnson for your vision and service.

My name is Karen Testerman and I would like to talk with you about freedom. The freedom to succeed... The freedom to fail... The freedom to choose how and where your children will be educated... The freedom to choose the kind of health care you want and who will provide that health care... The freedom to speak, think and worship... The freedom embodied in our state motto to Live Free or Die.

The theft of freedoms often begins in small incremental steps. For example, when government talks about safety for our children and then pass laws that dictate when you should use safety restraints , you have just been robbed of your inherent right and responsibility as a parent. AND you begin to loose your freedom to choose how to parent.

When the state robs you of your responsibility to govern yourself, through taxation, and distributes tax dollars collected by you to provide for the welfare of others, we are no longer a republic. The greatest asset to the economy of any state is its people. When the people are able to decide for themselves whom they believe worthy of support and do so freely – then you are operating under a republic and not a dictatorship. We are loosing our way We should not be forced to allow government to be our **nanny who tramples** on our freedoms demanding forced dependency.

Thomas Jefferson said that “Freedom is having choices.” When the government takes your money through taxes your choices are limited and you loose your freedoms.

The same principles apply to our businesses. The Corporate Tax Index is a major influence in the movement of industry to a state and is the most relevant tax when foreign investors make their decisions. NH ranks dead last. When we continue to burden our businesses with high taxes we discourage investors and industry from coming to NH. We also discourage creativity to start small businesses with our taxes and regulations. This has a direct effect on how many jobs NH will be able to create and maintain. When small businesses create 75% of the jobs in this state imposing the new LLC tax is taking NH down the road to extinction.

Looking at the past three budgets, we find there are 87 increases in taxes and fees. The largest number occurred in the last budget. Overall, almost half of these increases were legislatively generated and Governor Lynch had the ability to veto them but chose not to. Let’s look at just one of those most recent 38 increases in taxes and fees. How many of you own more than one vehicle? Every citizen who registers a car or truck must now pay a surcharge of \$30-75 per vehicle.

We are witnessing a government takeover of your wallet.

There is a distinct difference in how our elected officials view the role of government. On one end of the spectrum we have the current administration who believes government is in charge and responsible to provide ALL of your care, from cradle to grave. At the other end of the spectrum is the belief that government is limited by the people and should only perform those tasks that are provided in the state Constitution.

I am the founder and was the director of Cornerstone Policy Research, an organization that looks at public policy and how that policy affects our families. When the Republicans were in control, I could count on 125 pro-family votes. However, when the Democrats became the majority party, I could count on 125 votes for pro-family causes. My point is that it matters how the candidate views the role of government. Their willingness to do the right thing even under peer pressure will impact your ability to restore and preserve your freedoms.

It matters whether your public servant gives you lip service or believes that honest is the best policy. The former believes they know what is best and they will decide for you.

As our own Daniel Webster observed, Government is made for the people, made by the people and answerable to the people. NH has the reputation that this is a state of prosperity because we believe in the bold statement that we must live free or die.

We can steer the state back on the course to prosperity where every citizen who wants a job can find a job, where businesses thrive, where her citizens pay minimal taxes and freedom flourishes...BUT I need your help.

Turning the rudder will take all of us working together. That is why we must fully extend our Right to Know transparency to the budget and spending in this state. We must put the budget and all expenditures online in an easy to read format so that you can hold government accountable.

We must also reform the way the budget is developed. Just as responsible families make the decisions at their kitchen table, the state should look at the revenue generated the prior year. That is the limit for how much can be spent. Period.

If more revenue comes in, it goes into a rainy day fund up to a specified amount. Then it is distributed to the taxpayer. It is possible that the people would decide there is a priority list where excess revenue could be expended.

Getting our financial house in order will be a challenge. But with principled leadership working with you to serve you we can restore our reputed prosperity to this great state. Please go to www.karentesterman.net and join the team to elect me as your next governor. Together we can make a difference for our future generations.