



NEWSLETTER

March 2026 ISSUE#: HV025

Mercer We the People of Hopewell Valley is a steady source of news to heal the accelerating erosion of our fundamental freedoms nationally and locally.

Embrace our First Amendment

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

Source: <https://billofrightsinstitute.org/primary-sources/bill-of-rights>

Kind regards,
Publius Bonhomme Richard, Publisher & Co-Editors

HOW TO CONTACT US:

Email us at: info@mercervethepeople.com

Please email us to be included for future newsletters.

Printed copies of the newsletter will be made available at Rosedale Mills and local library. Any other suggested location(s) please let us know.

Call for Contributors!

MercerWe the People of Hopewell Valley is looking for contributors to write articles, especially informing the community about what is happening at local meetings. If you're interested in writing for us about that or any other topic, whether it is monthly or as needed, please reach out to us at info@mercervethepeople.com

President Donald J. Trump's 2026 State Of The Union Address Delivered On Tuesday, February 24, 2026

Publisher's Note: We lead our newsletter with the powerful final words from President Trump's historic State of the Union (SOTU) address.

Two-hundred fifty years is a long time in the life of a nation. But in another sense, it's really a mere moment in the eye of history. Two of the gentlemen we met in the gallery this evening took their first breaths one century ago. One hundred years before that, on July 4th, 1826, the author of the Declaration of Independence, brilliant Thomas Jefferson, drew his last breath. Just a single long human life span separates the giants who declared and won our independence from the heroes who stand among us tonight.

Everything our nation has done, everything we have achieved, has been the work of those few great lifetimes. In those brief chapters, Americans built this nation from 13 humble colonies into the pinnacle of human civilization and human freedom. The strongest, wealthiest, most powerful, most successful nation in all of history. Americans ventured out across the daunting and dangerous continent. We carved pass through an unforgiving wilderness, settled a boundless frontier, and tamed the beautiful but very, very dangerous wild west. From empty marshes and wide-open plains, we raised up the world's greatest cities. Together we mastered the world's mightiest industries, shattered history's monstrous tyrannies. And we liberated millions from the chains of fascism, communism, oppression and terror.

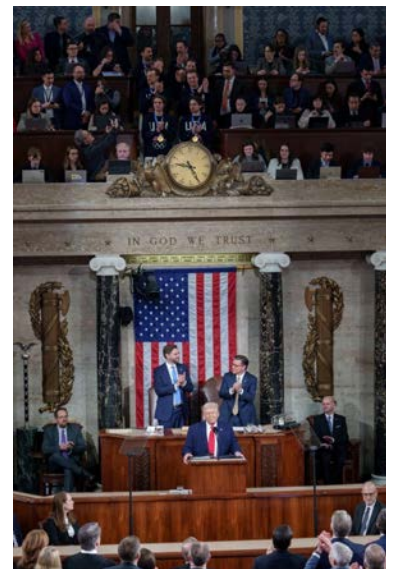


Photo courtesy of The White House Gallery; <https://www.whitehouse.gov/gallery/president-donald-trump-delivers-his-state-of-the-union-address/>

Americans lifted humanity into the skies on the wings of aluminum and steel. And then we launched mankind into the stars on rockets powered by sheer American will and unyielding American pride. We wired the globe with our ingenuity. We captivated the planet with American culture and now we are pioneering the next great American breakthroughs that will change the entire world. All of this, and so much more, is the enduring legacy, unmatched glory of the hard-working patriots who built and defended this country and who still carry the hopes and freedoms on all of humanity's backs. For years, they were forgotten, betrayed, and cast aside. But that great betrayal is over, and they will never be forgotten again. Because when the world needs courage, daring, vision and inspiration, it is still turning to America.

And when God needs a nation to work his miracles, he knows exactly who to ask. There is no challenge Americans cannot overcome, no frontier too vast for us to conquer, no dream too bold for us to chase, no horizon too distant for us to claim. For our destiny is written by the hand of Providence. And these first 250 years were just the beginning. From the rugged border towns of Texas to the heartland villages of Michigan, from the sun-kissed shores of Florida to the endless hills of the Dakotas, and from the historic streets of Philadelphia to right here in our nation's capital, Washington, D.C., the golden age of America is upon us.

The revolution that began in 1776 has not ended. It still continues because the flame of liberty and independence still burns in the heart of every American patriot, and our future will be bigger, better, brighter, bolder, and more glorious than ever before. Thank you. God bless you and God bless America.

Watch the full SOTU on Youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eWrZQBgpY7I>

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Local News

Several Developments

By Dufresne

1. Hopewell Township prevailed at the NJ Supreme Court in defending the lawsuit filed by Hopewell Borough and Pennington Borough with regard to the Township's recent PILOT agreements.
2. Hopewell Borough has passed its own PILOT.
3. The School Board announced at their last meeting that their annual budget is facing extreme challenges and that many cuts may be required.
4. Hopewell Township is now reviewing its budget, and they appear to be flush with cash!

These developments are all inter-related. Here's my interpretation:

First, the Supreme Court judgement is sad, because Hopewell Township will be emboldened to pass more PILOTs. The Court makes it legal for one entity's laws to raise the taxes in the neighboring entity! The court sadly sidestepped this key issue.

The worst thing about the PILOTs is that 95% of the tax revenue from new homes goes now to the Township and not to the Schools, which normally received approximately 57% of every tax dollar.

The Township will remind everyone that they have made a large contribution towards construction at Bear Tavern, but this contribution represents only 10 cents on the dollar when compared to the amount that the schools would have received had there been no PILOTs.

Second, Hopewell Borough's PILOT will be relatively small, and while it will lead to a further restricting of funds to the schools, the borough clearly regarded their PILOT as a necessary retaliatory measure.

Third, the financial challenges now faced by the schools are just the start owing to the absence of school revenue from Hopewell Township's new housing, we are seeing a structural problem that reoccur year after year.

We must all call upon the Township to make further VERY significant contributions towards school funding. It will be clear that the Township will not be raising your municipal taxes, but that apparently healthy budget comes at a cost... much higher school taxes.

I have no doubt that the Township, having caused this debacle by passing its PILOTs, will now attempt to blame your higher overall taxes on the School District rather than talk about how the PILOTs transferred monies that normally would have gone to the Schools and are now going to the Township.

The Schools must either raise taxes significantly and/or make draconian cuts to their existing budget.

Make no mistake. Your overall tax bill is about to go way up and the fault is NOT the School District but rather the PILOTs.

Steven Chaykowsky et al v. Bristol-Myers Squibb Company et al - Motions To Dismiss Denied!

On February 26, 2026 Federal Judge Robert Kirsch granted Plaintiffs' motion for remand to state court, and denying the Defendants' motions to dismiss. This case now moves back to state court - and ultimately BMS's removal to federal court proved to be unsuccessful (unless appealed).

Background

In 2018, Defendant BMS sought to sell a 433-acre property in Hopewell Township, New Jersey and Plaintiff Chaykowsky sought to buy it. Relevant here, Chaykowsky offered to buy the property as is - i.e., under its then-applicable zoning restrictions - and was willing to pay \$25 million in cash to do so. The relevant defendants did not accept the offer (or subsequent higher offers), instead telling Township officials that no offers had been made and the property would need to be rezoned to attract buyers. As described below, an ordinance was eventually passed that rezoned the property in ways that allegedly benefited Defendants.

Read the full opinion at: <https://mercerwethepeople.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/Opinion-Granting-Remand-202602.pdf>

Also, read original reporting here in previous issues:

May 2025: <https://mercerwethepeople.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/0525-MercerWe.pdf>

June 2025: <https://mercerwethepeople.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/0625-MercerWe.pdf>

Case 3:25-cv-01907-RK-RLS Document 85 Filed 02/26/26 Page 1 of 2 PageID: 549

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF NEW JERSEY

R. STEVEN CHAYKOWSKY et al.,
Plaintiffs,
v.
BRISTOL-MYERS SQUIBB COMPANY et
al.,
Defendants.

Civil Action No. 25-1907 (RK) (RLS)

ORDER

KIRSCH, District Judge

THIS MATTER comes before the Court upon the Motion to Remand filed by Plaintiffs R. Steven Chaykowsky, Westside Pacific Estates, Inc., and John Hart (ECF No. 81) and the Motions to Dismiss filed by Defendants Bristol-Myers Squibb Company, Jones Lang LaSalle, Inc., Jones Lang LaSalle Americas, Inc., Jones Lang LaSalle Brokerage, Inc., Daniel J. Loughlin, Township of Hopewell, New Jersey, BeOne Medicines U.S. Holdings, LLC, BeOne Medicines U.S. Manufacturing Co., Inc., BeOne Medicines U.S.A., Inc., and BeOne Medicines Hopewell Urban Renewal, LLC (ECF Nos. 72, 73, 74). After careful consideration of the parties' submissions, for the reasons set forth in the accompanying Opinion, and for other good cause shown,

IT IS on this 26th day of February, 2026, **ORDERED** that:

1. Plaintiffs' Motion to Remand (ECF No. 81) is **GRANTED**;
2. Defendants' Motions to Dismiss (ECF Nos. 72, 73, 74) are **DENIED** as moot;
3. The Clerk's Office is directed to **TERMINATE** the motions pending at ECF Nos. 72, 73, 74, and 81;

INAUGURAL Courageous Conversations Book Discussion Group Event - Monday, April 13

By HVRA (Contact us at: info@hvrageop.org)

People in our community and nationwide are very concerned that political polarization, lack of civil discourse, and conflict entrepreneurs are dividing Americans in ways that foster dysfunctional governance and threaten the future of our nation. We all have felt it: fighting over politics with family members, avoiding discussion of certain topics that are controversial, or reacting disrespectfully to posts on social media that may differ with our view of the world.

Braver Angels (<https://braverangels.org/>), one of many groups that encourage the transformation of the attitude and discourse of our nation's citizens - one person and community at a time - recognizes that spirited and constructive differences of opinion about issues, policies, values and election outcomes are not new in our country. But today, normal political competition has degraded into acts of dehumanizing and demonizing our opponents, and even worse with political violence.

How did we get here? There are many forces pushing us towards this politics of contempt. Binary thinking or the "us versus them" mindset has led us to become blind to alternative moral worlds. Unregulated political fundraising and general election choices often dominated by candidates on the extremes make political parties less accountable to everyday citizens. Conflict entrepreneurs exploit conflict and manufacture outrage for profit, attention and power. Social media algorithms manipulate our thinking and reinforce our beliefs by playing on emotions and fears and we are not shown information that challenges our opinions. Sorting and siloing are powerful forces that drive us to align with people who think the same way we do and make it harder to hear any other perspectives. Twenty-four hour partisan news media also feeds this division.

The decline in civics education in public schools is also a factor. We are not preparing young people to become effective in their future citizenship roles. Activism is stressed without providing students with sufficient knowledge about our history, how our country works, and each person's responsibility in a democratic republic. In 2022, only 13% of eighth-grade students scored proficient in history and 22% scored proficient in civics on the National Assessment of Educational Progress. Toxic polarization makes it difficult for schools to even come to an agreement on what such a civics curriculum should contain.

How can we best confront this polarization challenge? A better future pictures American political institutions operating in the spirit of citizenship and common purpose, with vigorous policy debates and people treating each other with dignity and respect, even if they disagree on how to solve the complex problems we face as a nation. A better future for America means learning the skills we, our children, and our children's children can use to engage in civil discourse and courageous conversations. A better future for America means addressing this social dilemma with a collective action response.

All movements for change start local. Our country needs as many of us as possible in Hopewell Valley to join together to help diminish the politics of contempt. Author Jonathan Haidt calls this approach a "collective action response". We can voluntarily support each other in efforts to transcend the forces that paint our fellow citizens as the enemy. We can voluntarily help build a national culture of kindness, dignity, respect, hope, togetherness, community, civility and meaningful dialogue. We can be activists to build bridges across differences as we engage in healthy disagreement about ideas and policy positions based on facts and merit.

Seeking to initiate a "collective action response" for positive change in our political discourse the Hopewell Valley Republican Association (HVRA) is sponsoring a Courageous Conversation Book Discussion Group. This book group is for liberals, conservatives, progressives and all community members who want to reverse the troubling trend of the Red-Blue divide.

Our first selection is foundational to understanding how we can achieve a better future for America. Authors Doug, Beth and Becky, through their work with Braver Angels, have written a book that is a roadmap to bring us out of the chaos and into a better political environment that will benefit us all. This book is about learning the skills to engage each other across differences. It is intentionally bipartisan. The book discussion group will follow a clear code of conduct (respectful dialogue, active listening, evidence-based discussion, inclusivity and safety, shared time, constructive disagreement) and operational norms (come prepared having read the material, stay on topic).

The Hopewell Branch of the Mercer County Library has multiple copies of all the book selections available for checkout.

"May our children and our children's children to a thousand generations, continue to enjoy the benefits conferred upon us by a united country" – Abraham Lincoln

Courageous Conversations
BOOK DISCUSSIONS

Read books written by reasonable people and engage with others across differences with meaningful civil discourse.

The United States is experiencing a crisis of political polarization, incivility, and distrust that many fear is tearing our country apart. This complex problem is driven by political, psychological, and technological forces and the crisis impacts individuals, our community and our nation.

WHAT CAN ORDINARY PEOPLE DO?

The Hopewell Valley Republican Association invites you to a book discussion group designed to connect people across the political divide and to help build a culture of kindness, respect, dignity, and hope.

IF YOU COULD HELP EASE THE DIVISIONS IN OUR COUNTRY, WOULD YOU DO IT?

Monday, April 13th from 6:00 to 8:00 pm

BEYOND the POLITICS of CONTEMPT:
Practical Steps to Build Positive Relationships in Divided Times
Doug Techner, Beth Mallow, & Becky Robinson (BraverAngels.org)

Community Room at Mercer County Library / Hopewell
245 Pennington-Titusville Road, Pennington
(MCL has copies of the book available to check-out)

Other Books for Future Discussions
How to Raise a Citizen • Lindsey Comack
The Righteous Mind • Jonathan Haidt
The Two-Parent Privilege • Melissa S. Kearney

HVRA Hopewell Valley Republican Association

For more information, please contact us at hvrageop.org
Paid for by the Hopewell Valley Republican Association, PO Box 332, Taverville, NJ 08562

Contrast Local “News” Support of Anti-ICE to That of President Trump’s Honoring of Angel Families

March 2, 2026: Headline articles:

Volunteers Mobilize Across Mercer County to Monitor ICE Activity and Support Families: <https://mercerme.us8.list-manage.com/track/click?u=9a8740b2d9e97b83f12217796&id=5d2693ad8d&e=d9f5c79af7>

Families Speak Out After Trenton Arrest Operation; Governor Opposes Proposed ICE Facility: <https://mercerme.us8.list-manage.com/track/click?u=9a8740b2d9e97b83f12217796&id=28bd19218c&e=d9f5c79af7>

< MercerMe Headlines: Local reportin... AA

Good morning, Hopewell Valley —


Here's your local reporting from MercerMe, your community-supported newsroom. We focus on reliable coverage of what's happening here — so you can stay informed without the noise.

Our latest reporting is below.

Local news, made possible by readers.

[Become a supporter](#)


Volunteers Mobilize Across Mercer County to Monitor ICE Activity and Support Families



Emery Coppola, a hydrologist who lives in Lawrenceville, remembers the first time he witnessed a raid by immigration officials. It was last August on Bayard Street in Trenton, he recalled....

[Continue Reading >](#)

Families Speak Out After Trenton Arrest Operation; Governor Opposes Proposed ICE Facility



A week after federal agents arrested three men during a law-enforcement operation at a Trenton auto-repair business, family members, clergy, and immigrant-rights advocates gathered at St. Bartholomew Lutheran Church in...

[Continue Reading >](#)

President Trump Honors Angel Families, Remembers American Lives Lost To Illegal Immigration

By The White House originally published in The White House (February 23 2026)

Today, President Donald J. Trump welcomed Angel Families to the White House for an emotional ceremony honoring American lives tragically taken by criminal illegal aliens who never should have been in our country.

Paying solemn tribute to the second anniversary of Laken Riley’s murder, President Trump signed a Proclamation designating February 22 as National Angel Family Day — a day of remembrance for victims and their grieving loved ones devastated by the consequences of open border policies.

With America’s border now the most secure in history, the Trump Administration remains unwavering in its commitment to remove dangerous criminal illegal aliens from our communities, ensure accountability, and make sure not one more American family has to endure this pain.

- **Allyson Phillips, whose 22-year-old daughter, Laken Riley, was killed by an illegal alien while out for a run in Georgia:** “If you’ve lived that nightmare that we have lived, you understand the importance of the job that he is doing in securing our nation and fighting for our families — because this could be any family.”
- **Steve Ronnebeck, whose 21-year-old son, Grant, was shot and killed by an illegal alien while working at an Arizona convenience store:** “President Trump talked about Grant even before he was elected in 2016 — and finally, we had hope... Now, today, we are finally going to see that somebody’s going to remember all of our loved ones.”
- **Laura Wilkerson, whose son, Joshua, was tortured and killed by his illegal alien classmate:** “I met a man about 11 years ago who was running for office and he sat with us a couple days, and he watched as the tears rolled down my face as I told him the story of how our youngest son, Joshua, was brutally beaten, tortured, strangled to death, and his body set on fire. The man next to me was President Trump. He never, ever, looked away from my pain. He looked me straight in the eye and he said, ‘I will never forget the story of your sweet son, and I will never give up fighting for the American family.’ ... He has never missed a day of fighting for the American family.”
- **Marie Vega, whose son, former U.S. Marine and Border Patrol Agent Javier ‘Harvey’ Vega, Jr., was ambushed by two illegal aliens during a family fishing trip:** “Thank God we have you in office. Without you, America, and the world, would not know the consequences of open borders. Thank you for restoring law and order. Thank you for acknowledging us — the Angel Families.”



- **Jody Jones, whose brother, Rocky, was shot and killed by an illegal alien:** “I’m sick and tired of hearing these Democrat politicians stand up on these podiums and say how sorry they are for seeing these criminal illegal aliens being ‘ripped apart’ from their families. What about us? What about the American family? What about us? We mean something, too, and this man right here understands it.”
- **Officer Ethan Curreri, who arrested the illegal alien that would go on to murder Laken Riley months later:** “I personally arrested José Ibarra for endangering the welfare of a child. A few months later, I saw his face again in the news after he viciously murdered Laken Riley. I did my job. I put him in custody. The system failed; no detainer, no accountability, no deportation, and an innocent American life was taken. If you enter our country illegally, there will be consequences under this Administration.”

Access the Presidential Article: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/articles/2026/02/president-trump-honors-angel-families-remembers-american-lives-lost-to-illegal-immigration/>

The State Of Our Journalism? Viciously Anti-Trump

OPINION by Tim Graham originally published in Newsmax (March 2 2026)

The State of the Union speech is an effective annual exercise to measure how journalists feel about a long speech on national TV by Donald Trump.

They hate it intensely, like most children hate broccoli.

They would like to scrape that steaming plate into the garbage.

The New York Times published a front-page editorial by White House reporter Katie Rogers — lamely labeled as “News Analysis.”

It came under the headline “Casting Democrats as Villains, Trump Produces a Spectacle.”

You can sense their outrage. Nobody should darkly cast Democrats as villains, especially the people Democrats relentlessly suggest are authoritarians out to end our democracy, but only after they starve children and close hospitals.

Like a good Democrat, Rogers insisted Republicans find themselves in a “politically treacherous moment,” while Democrats are “seeing polling moving their way” and “remain confident about the midterm elections.”

The usual midterm election trends should inspire confidence, as well as all the partisan “news” products.

Liberal outlets sent out their pollsters to find that Trump has “gone too far” on immigration, taken the country in “the wrong direction” and has all the wrong “priorities.”

Their pollsters are always going to keep the “vibes” high for Democrats and paint dark clouds over the Republicans in any election season.

They tried in 2024, but the people ruined it for the pollsters.

They also pile on Republicans with their so-called independent fact-checkers.

They pounce relentlessly on Trump, aerobically implying to the public that you can’t believe a word Trump says about anything.

They’re trying to put the oomph behind this Jimmy Fallon joke: “Trump’s speech focused on his major accomplishments, and when those eight seconds were up, he just riffed for an hour and a half.”

The New York Times and the Associated Press published “fact checks” of Trump before his speech was even made available to the public.

When it was over, Times “fact-checker” Linda Qiu and other Times staffers posted 29 fact checks about Trump, and they used 20 of them to fill up an entire page of the paper.

Online, they had just one note on Gov. Abby Spanberger, D-Va., who was assigned the Democratic Party response — but she was touted as correct.

Overall, I found in a quick review of the “fact checks” after Trump’s speech there were 123 for the president and just four for Spanberger — and all four of those ruled the new governor as factual.

PolitiFact has featured only six fact checks on Spanberger over her career, and only one was a “False.”

Aren’t they nice?

Democrats feel free to unload attack lines that are untrue on their face, like this one from Spanberger’s rebuke, “Our president told us tonight that we are safer because these agents arrest mothers and detain children.”

Did Trump literally say, “We’re safe because ICE agents arrest mothers and detain children”?

No.

But everything is fair game when a Democrat is boiling up rhetoric.

Your “independent fact-checkers” say nothing when Trump is compared to Hitler and the Republicans are compared to the Nazis.

Democrats yelled from the House floor that Trump “killed Americans” who interfered with ICE, and no one objected.

They exploded in outrage when Rep. Joe Wilson, R-S.C., yelled, “You lie” at President Barack Obama during a Sept. 9, 2009 address on healthcare reform, but “you killed Americans” is considered fair.

This latest address to Congress underlines the elitist media should not be considered a reliable source in describing which actors in politics are practicing honesty and decency, promoting unity and a bipartisan spirit.

They offer none of those qualities in their work.

Access the article: <https://www.newsmax.com/timgraham/rogers-analysis-pollsters/2026/03/02/id/1247969/>

Education

What’s Happening In HVRSD Schools?

HVRSD Board Of Education Meeting February 9, 2026

By The Wall of Ed

Agenda: <https://go.boarddocs.com/nj/hvrSD/Board.nsf/Public#tab-meetings>

Meeting Recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hRAQTbv2pYY>

Next Meeting March 16th 2026 at the HVRSD Board Office, 425 Main St, Pennington, NJ

VOC Student Essay Contest

By VOC Staff originally published in *Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation* (February 19 2026)

The Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation (VOC) will honor the legacy of the Declaration of Independence with an essay contest that will teach students about freedom movements that directly cited or paraphrased the Declaration of Independence. This will demonstrate to citizens and students the exceptional nature of the American “experiment” in self-government and ordered liberty.

Essay Prompt: Explain how the U.S. Declaration of Independence inspired a key liberty champion and/or freedom movement in a foreign context.



Scholar David Armitage suggested that nearly 200 countries and overseas political movements have cited the Declaration, from Haiti to Kosovo. For example, Mahatma Gandhi used the language of the Declaration in 1930. Czech anti-communist, dissident, playwright, and later president of free Czechoslovakia, Vaclav Havel asserted the transcendent nature of the Declaration: “The Declaration of Independence ... states that the Creator gave man the right to liberty. It seems man can realize that liberty only if he does not forget the One who endowed him with it.”

The Foundation will recognize up to 52 outstanding student essays that focus attention on how the Declaration of Independence influenced declarations, speeches, and other political writing in foreign contexts during the 20th century. We are especially interested in short essays that focus on those seeking freedom from communist and Marxist systems.

The contest is **open to grades 9-12 and college students** from across the United States. Essays should be between **750-1000 words** and utilize the **Chicago Manual of Style** with endnotes for any citations. Students must agree in writing at the time of submission that they avoided plagiarism or the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in drafting the text of the essay. Students will send their essays via attachment to **1776@victimscommunism.org** and clearly specify their name, hometown, school, phone number, and email address. The contest closes on May 1, 2026.

The Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation will electronically publish up to one high quality essay per week during 2026. Each winner will be recognized with a \$100 Amazon Gift Card. In addition, the Foundation will recognize overall prizes of first (\$1,000), second (\$500), and third place (\$250) for university students and overall prizes of first (\$1,000), second (\$500), and third place (\$250) for high school students.

Access the article: <https://victimscommunism.org/voc-launches-student-essay-contest/>

New Book 'Climate Porn' Targets Phony Science, Exposes Anti-Constitutional Assault On American Sovereignty

By Kevin Mooney originally published in Restoration News (February 12 2026)

The counter-revolution is a backlash to falsified research, classroom propaganda that coincides with America's birthday.

Pornography in the classroom can assume many forms.

There are the overt graphic forms that have stirred vociferous opposition among parental rights groups across the country. The K-12 curriculum directed at children and adolescents often faces debates at school board meetings and in hotly contested elections. But another version operates on the sly and through subterfuge that deserves greater exposure. "Climate Porn," as I describe in my book released today, has its roots in propaganda masquerading as science.

Excessive Exposure Has Detrimental Outcomes

Just as excessive exposure to porn can lead to decreased sexual satisfaction and mental health problems, unfounded climate alarmism can lead to decreased faith in human possibilities and a reduction in the quality of life.

As America approaches her 250th anniversary of independence, an opportunity has emerged to reverse disastrous public policy decisions while cutting a path back to the ideals of the nation's founding. But the hour is late, the time is short, and the opposing side is well organized and well-funded.

Climate Porn: How and Why Anti-Population Zealots Fabricate Science while Targeting American Capitalism, Freedom and Independence explains what is at stake.

Millennials in danger of becoming marginalized by policies rooted in what is aptly described as "junk science" have a huge stake in efforts to reintroduce the scientific method into educational settings, where it is most needed. Climate activists inside and outside of government are motivated by political and policy ambitions that leave no room for careful inquiry, rigorous observation and experimentation. Instead, they work to coerce outcomes and conclusions that make the case for government intervention into the private sector along with ever-expanding regulations. But the countermovement based on sound science and open inquiry has gained steam in recent years.

Independently funded groups of scientists and researchers free from government influence have started pushing back. Updated studies point to natural variability rather than human emissions as the primary drivers of warming and cooling trends. Contrary to what has been widely reported throughout the media and the academy, humanity is not a blight to the planet and carbon dioxide is not a pollutant.

That's why President Donald Trump's efforts to overturn the faulty "endangerment finding" vilifying CO2 is so critically important. The endangerment finding sits at the foundation of all the anti-energy climate regulations climate activists put into place going back to the Obama administration. In *Climate Porn*, I go into great detail about the vital legal and scientific strategy the Trump administration has put into place to achieve America's full energy potential.

My new book applauds Trump's decision to withdraw from the U.N.'s Paris Climate Accord. The U.N. made use of the accord to advance "Net Zero" initiatives that would replace affordable and reliable energy with expensive, intermittent alternative energy proven to be unreliable.

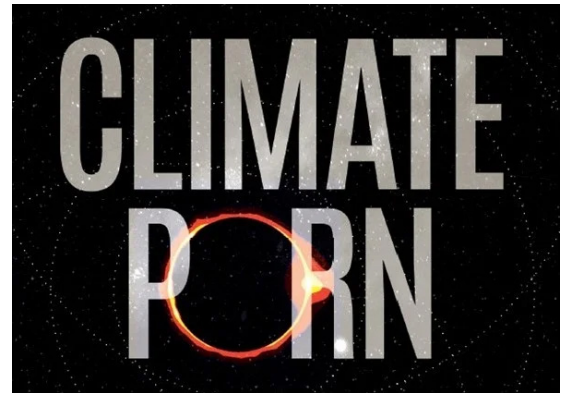
We Won't Always Have Paris

Trump made a statement on the campaign trail: "I represent Pittsburgh, not Paris." That cuts to the heart of the ideological differences in play. The revolutionary antecedent to Trump's remarks would be "No Taxation without Representation!"

No one in Paris, or any other foreign country or agency, should be permitted to implement new taxes in the name of climate change without a straight up and down vote in Congress. But then again, the climate movement places a premium on dismantling constitutional limited government. They tell us that climate change is a dire emergency that leaves no time for democratic debate and deliberation.

Climate Porn makes the case that the challenge to humanity comes not from climate change as such, but from climate change policies that assault human freedom and expand government power beyond constitutional boundaries—while simultaneously destroying the reliable, inexpensive energy that powers our modern life.

There are hopeful signs the wheel is beginning to turn, and strong indications the anti-American climate movement has passed its peak. But that movement leaves behind a long list of victims that include honest scientists, academics, and average citizens who have been marginalized, deplatformed, prosecuted, and in some cases incarcerated. *Climate Porn* tells their story.



Humanity has stories going back to the Bible, and even long before, of powerful government figures conspiring to suffocate ideas and conceal the truth. The cult around global warming fits snugly into this sordid history.

The second Trump administration has taken incremental, but important steps back in the direction of restoring American sovereignty and independence. How enduring and lasting this policy shift will be is an open question. Are looking just a speed bump along the way toward the end of the republic? Or will the country have as much to celebrate on July 4th, 2076, as it does this year?

There are sources for American renewal that are not available in Europe and other parts of the world. Independence and freedom go together, and lead to prosperity. But that dynamic does not take hold without an active, engaged citizenship willing to push back government figures who walk all over the natural rights of the people they are supposed to represent. That happened 250 years ago, sparking the American Revolution. It can happen again, sparking a new American Revolution reestablishing common sense energy policy and national sovereignty in the face of globalist forces.

See how in my new book: *Climate Porn: How and Why Anti-Population Zealots Fabricate Science while Targeting American Capitalism, Freedom and Independence*. It's available now at this link.

Refer to this newsletter's book section for more details.

Access the article: <https://restoration-news.com/new-book-climate-porn-targets-phony-science-exposes-anti-constitutional-assault>

The U.S. Spent \$30 Billion To Ditch Textbooks For Laptops And Tablets: The Result Is The First Generation Less Cognitively Capable Than Their Parents

By Sasha Rogelberg originally published in Fortune (February 21 2026)

In 2002, Maine became the first state to implement a statewide laptop program to some grade levels. Then-governor Angus King saw the program as a way to put the internet at the fingertips of more children, who would be able to immerse themselves in information.

By that fall, the Maine Learning Technology Initiative had distributed 17,000 Apple laptops to seventh graders across 243 middle schools. By 2016, those numbers had multiplied to 66,000 laptops and tablets distributed to Maine students.

King's initial efforts have been mirrored across the country. In 2024, the U.S. spent more than \$30 billion putting laptops and tablets in schools. But more than a quarter-century and numerous evolving models of technology later, psychologists and learning experts see a different outcome than the one King intended. Rather than empowering the generation with access to more knowledge, the technology had the opposite effect.

Earlier this year, in written testimony before the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, neuroscientist Jared Cooney Horvath said that Gen Z is less cognitively capable than previous generations, despite its unprecedented access to technology. He said Gen Z is the first generation in modern history to score lower on standardized tests than the previous one.

While skills measured by these tests, like literacy and numeracy, aren't always indicative of intelligence, they are a reflection of cognitive capability, which Horvath said has been on the decline over the last decade or so.

Citing Program for International Student Assessment data taken from 15-year-olds around the world and other standardized tests, Horvath noted not only dipping test scores, but also a stark correlation in scores and time spent on computers in school, such that more screen time was related to worse scores. He blamed students having unfettered access to technology that atrophied rather than bolstered learning capabilities. The introduction of the iPhone in 2007 also didn't help.

"This is not a debate about rejecting technology," Horvath wrote. "It is a question of aligning educational tools with how human learning actually works. Evidence indicates that indiscriminate digital expansion has weakened learning environments rather than strengthened them."

The writing was perhaps already on the wall. Fortune reported in 2017 that Maine's public school test scores had not improved in the 15 years the state had implemented its technology initiative. Then-governor Paul LePage called the program a "massive failure," even as the state poured money into contracts with Apple.

Gen Z will now have to face the ramifications of eroding learning capabilities. The generation has already been hit hard by the transformations of the 21st century's other technological revolution: generative AI.

Early data from a first-of-its-kind Stanford University study published last year found AI advancements to have "significant and disproportionate impact on entry-level workers in the U.S. labor market." But a less capable population means more than just poorer job prospects and fewer promotions, Horvath warned; it endangers how humans are able to overcome existential challenges in the decades to come.

"We're facing challenges more complex and far-reaching than any in human history—from overpopulation to evolving diseases to moral drift," he told Fortune. "Now, more than ever, we need a generation able to grapple with nuance, hold multiple truths in tension, and creatively tackle problems that are stumping the greatest adult minds of today."

Technology's impact on learning

Classroom technology usage has ballooned in recent years. A 2021 EdWeek Research Center poll of 846 teachers found 55% said they are spending one to four hours per day with educational tech. Another quarter reported using the digital tools five hours per day.

While teachers may be intending for these tools to be strictly educational, students often have different ideas. According to a 2014 study, which surveyed and observed 3,000 university students, students engaged in off-task activities on their computers nearly two-thirds of the time.

Horvath blamed this tendency to get off-track as a key contributor to technology hindering learning. When one's attention is interrupted, it takes time to refocus. Task-switching also is associated with weaker memory formation and greater rates of error. Grappling with a challenging singular subject matter is hard, Horvath said. For the best learning to happen, it's supposed to be.

"Unfortunately, ease has never been a defining characteristic of learning," he said. "Learning is effortful, difficult, and oftentimes uncomfortable. But it's the friction that makes learning deep and transferable into the future."

Sustained attention to a singular subject is anathema to how technology today has been deployed, argues Jean Twenge, San Diego State University psychology professor studying generational differences and the author of 10 Rules for Raising Kids in a High-Tech World. More time on screens isn't just ineffective in facilitating learnings; it's counterproductive.

"Many apps, including social media and gaming apps, are designed to be addictive," Twenge told Fortune. "Their business model is based on users spending the most time possible on the apps, and checking back as frequently as possible."

A Baylor University–led study published in November 2025 uncovered why this is: TikTok required the least amount of effort to use, even less than Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts, by balancing relevant videos with surprising and unexpected content.

Concerns over social media addiction have become so dire that 1,600 plaintiffs, across 350 families and 250 school districts, filed a lawsuit alleging Meta, Snap, TikTok, and YouTube created addictive platforms leading to mental health challenges like depression and self-harm in children.

Solving the tech crisis

Horvath proposed a swath of solutions to Gen Z's tech problem, at least as it pertains to classroom use. Congress, he suggested, could impose efficacy standards to fund research on what digital tools are actually effective in the classroom. The legislature could also require strong limits on tracking behavior, building profiles, and collecting data on minors using tech.

Some schools have taken matters into their own hands. As of August 2025, 17 states have cracked down on cellphone use in school, banning the technology during instructional time, and 35 states have laws limiting the use of phones in the classroom. In fact, more than 75% of schools have said they have policies prohibiting cellphone use for nonacademic purposes, according to the National Center for Education Statistics, though enforcing those bans has been met with variable success.

Ultimately, Horvath said, the loss of critical thinking and learning skills is less of a personal failure and more of a policy one, calling the generation of Americans educated with gadgets victims of a failed pedagogical experiment.

"Whenever I work with teenagers I tell them, 'This is not your fault. None of you asked to be sat in front of a computer for your entire K-12 schooling,'" Horvath said. "That means we...screwed up—and I genuinely hope Gen Z quickly figures that out and gets mad."

Access the article: <https://fortune.com/2026/02/21/laptops-tablets-schools-gen-z-less-cognitively-capable-parents-first-time-cellphone-bans-standardized-test-scores/>

NJ Teachers Say Union 'Hijacked' Dues To Fund Leader's Campaign

By Kevin Mooney originally published in Restoration News (February 4 2026)

Alleged effort to conceal money trail may run afoul of federal tax and state election laws

New Jersey teachers frustrated with sky-high union dues are suing to recover expenditures for political activism they do not support and never authorized.

The money trail at the center of the litigation leads in and out of the political action committee Garden State Forward. Teachers allege New Jersey Education Association (NJEA) operatives "deliberately and concertedly took steps to conceal the existence of that PAC from the membership, even going so far as to misreport contributions on tax filings in support of its concealment efforts," according to the suit filed in September.

It was in this manner, the teachers argue, that the NJEA violated its membership contract with them, as well as other legal and fiduciary rules.

As the suit explains, membership dues are distinct and separate from voluntary contributions to political causes. Yet the plaintiffs allege tens of millions of dollars in membership dues were diverted to Garden State Forward to support the failed 2025 gubernatorial bid of Sean Spiller, a former Democrat mayor of Montclair, who also served as NJEA president during the campaign.

Suspicious Piqued

Ann Marie Pocklembo, a high school music teacher in Hamilton and one of the two plaintiffs, told Restoration News that she became privy to Garden State Forward's machinations when Spiller's "conflicts of interest" began popping up on social media.

"It's probably not a good idea to have a union official as mayor because it means he's probably going to promote his own cause," Pocklembo said.

She noted that during the COVID-19 pandemic, many Montclair residents were vocal about their dissatisfaction with Spiller's leadership. "There were lawsuits already claiming double-dipping with his benefits. Fast forward to 2025, and now he's in the ring for governor, and we already believe he didn't do a good job in Montclair."

Pocklembo said union officials repeatedly assured her that her dues were not contributing to Spiller's campaign because she did not voluntarily contribute to the NJEA's PACs. Nevertheless, she remained skeptical. She began raising questions about how the New Jersey teachers' union was financing the gubernatorial campaign of its own president.

After researching reports on Sunlight Policy Center of New Jersey, a watchdog site, Pocklembo discovered the existence of Garden State Forward. This prompted her to ask more questions on the NJEA's Facebook pages in January 2025.

"I believe I was blocked from the private, members-only part of an NJEA Facebook on the very day I began to ask questions about Garden State Forward," she said. "Garden State Forward is the magic PAC. I believe they don't want people to know about it."

Pocklembo also said she was blocked from the public portion of NJEA's Facebook page for a short period but was reinstated after bringing her plight to the attention of her local NJEA affiliate. Still, to this day, she cannot access the union's members-only Facebook page.

"The NJEA is taking on causes that have little or nothing to do with education," Pocklembo said. "I don't believe they speak for the majority of teachers, and they pursue a lot of left-wing policies."

'Hijacked'

The NJEA, a state affiliate of the National Education Association, is New Jersey's largest union with more than 200,000 members. A breakdown of dues shows those members pay anywhere from \$991 to \$1,038 in annual state-level dues. Add what members pay annually to the NEA, the county, and local affiliates, and their total annual dues come to about \$1,600.

"Our dues don't need to be that high," Pocklembo said. "They waste a lot of money. I think the union has been hijacked by people with self-serving interests."

The teacher said most of the NJEA's money goes to the "top echelon" at its Trenton headquarters, with just 10 percent benefiting local chapters. "And it's the local that does all the work," she added.

The union's membership form includes a section that asks for voluntary contributions to the NJEA PAC and the NEA Fund for Children and Public Education. There is no mention of Garden State Forward.

An information sheet that comes with the application says the PAC contributions are voluntary and "not a condition of membership." The same sheet also claims members "may refuse to make any contribution and this will not affect his or her membership rights or benefits."

However, the suit alleges \$40 million in general membership dues were diverted to Garden State Forward, which then sent the funds to two other political action groups: Protecting Our Democracy and Working New Jersey.

The plaintiffs assert three major claims: breach of contract, negligent misrepresentation, and breach of fiduciary duty. They also seek damages, along with additional costs and attorneys' fees.

Spiller is named among the defendants. He was one of three NJEA officers who controlled and decided how Garden State Forward funds were spent and distributed during his 2025 campaign. The other two officers were the union's vice president and secretary-treasurer.



What's a Super PAC, and Why Does it Matter?

Garden State Forward is a super PAC, which means it can only make independent expenditures. But a super PAC can also raise unlimited sums of money from corporations, unions, associations, and individuals, and then spend those funds either in support of or against particular candidates. But there is the caveat that, unlike traditional PACs, super PACs are prohibited from donating directly to political candidates, and they cannot operate in coordination with candidates.

Anthony Holtzman, an attorney with the Fairness Center, the law firm representing Pocklembo, noted that both Protecting Our Democracy and Working New Jersey supported Spiller's gubernatorial bid. As Spiller also served as chairman of Protecting Our Democracy, the suit points out that he was ideally positioned to direct funding over to his own campaign.

Spiller's alleged conflicts of interest figure prominently into the litigation. While operating simultaneously as NJEA president and as a gubernatorial candidate, Spiller "put his own interests above the best interests of Plaintiffs, who were union members, and otherwise acted arbitrarily and in bad faith towards them, in breach of fiduciary duties that he owed to them," according to the suit.

The former NJEA president and failed gubernatorial candidate also faced conflict-of-interest allegations during his time as mayor of Montclair. Influence Watch reported how Spiller was accused of enabling the Montclair Education Association, an NJEA affiliate, to usurp the authority of the local school board and set district policy.

Spiller, for his part, appears undeterred by the negative press and mounting legal challenges. He is now running to become president of the NEA.

Meanwhile, the plaintiffs in New Jersey would like to ensure that their membership dues cannot be commingled with political action committees.

"We allege the union misallocated dues paid to it by members like our clients and made misrepresentations to them and was not transparent with them," Holtzman said.

The "misrepresentations" took on several forms, the attorney noted, including the wording on the membership cards the teachers signed.

"Those membership cards function as legal contracts," he said. "They don't necessarily look like a contract you might see every day because they are short, concise documents. But the courts have acknowledged they function like contracts."

The suit highlights what Holtzman calls the "free-standing separate section of the membership card" that's focused exclusively on making financial contributions to the union's PACs. Unless teachers check off the box agreeing to make voluntary contributions, Holtzman said they should be free from supporting any of the NJEA's political action committees.

By misallocating general membership funds and pouring them into the PACs, Holtzman argues, the NJEA "breached its contract" with teachers. But the membership form is just one of several examples of the union's "misrepresentations" to teachers, Holtzman said.

Related Complaints

The Fairness Center, a nonprofit public interest law firm based in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, also represents the New Jersey Policy Institute (NJPI) in separate but related cases against the NJEA.

In a complaint to the IRS, the New Jersey think tank alleges the NJEA, a federal tax-exempt nonprofit, violated federal tax law by failing to disclose its donations to Garden State Forward as political activity on the required federal tax forms.

Another NJPI complaint filed with the New Jersey Election Law Commission (ELEC) alleges the union circumvented New Jersey's \$5,800 campaign contribution limit. The union, according to the filing, used NJEA PAC and Protecting Our Democracy, Inc. to donate a combined \$11,600 to Spiller's campaign.

"As we allege in the IRS complaint, NJEA appears to have violated the Internal Revenue code provision by failing to disclose the millions of dollars it has allocated to Garden State Forward as political contributions," Holtzman said. "In our clients' view, they're supposed to have listed those millions of dollars going to Garden State Forward. They were supposed to be identified as political spending by the union, but instead, they characterized this spending as a grant in a different section."

The NJEA's emphasis on political activism over member services fits into a larger national story. Financial disclosure forms show the NEA has been pumping millions of dollars into "far-left causes," including so-called "dark-money groups."

The NEA election to replace its current president will be held this coming summer at the union's convention in Denver.

Oral arguments in the NJEA teachers' lawsuit could come as early as February. The IRS and ELEC have their own separate timetables for any investigations they conduct.

Access the article: <https://restoration-news.com/nj-teachers-say-union-hijacked-dues-to-fund-leader-s-campaign>

Election Integrity

Citizens For NJ Election Integrity Files Amicus Brief In Key Supreme Court Case On Election Integrity

By Mark Demo

February 18, 2026 – To help safeguard the integrity of our electoral process, Citizens for New Jersey Election Integrity (C4NJEI), in collaboration with Project Civica, Inc., has submitted an amicus curiae brief to the United States Supreme Court in the case of Michael Watson, Mississippi Secretary of State v. Republican National Committee, et al. (No. 24-1260).

This brief supports the respondents and highlights the real-world challenges posed by laws that allow ballots to be received and counted after the federally mandated Election Day. As a nonpartisan organization dedicated to promoting secure, transparent, and accountable elections, C4NJEI draws on its extensive experience in election oversight, research, and advocacy.

The brief underscores how similar laws in New Jersey and New York have led to prolonged delays in vote counting, certification, and resolution of close races, ultimately eroding public trust in the system.

The Case and Its Implications

The Supreme Court case centers on Mississippi's statute permitting the counting of ballots received up to five days after Election Day. C4NJEI's brief argues that such extensions contradict Congress's intent for a single, uniform Election Day, as established in federal law. By sharing insights from New Jersey's own experiences under N.J. Stat. § 19:63-22—which allows un-postmarked ballots to be accepted up to six days post-election—the brief illustrates the practical pitfalls of these policies. New Jersey has seen routine delays in high-profile elections since implementing extended ballot receipt periods. For instance:

In the 2020 Seventh Congressional District race, results remained uncertain for over a week, with candidate Tom Kean Jr. conceding only on November 19—16 days after Election Day.

The 2021 gubernatorial contest between Phil Murphy and Jack Ciattarelli dragged on due to a surge in mail-in ballots and provisional votes, fueling rumors and uncertainty amid an estimated 550,000 mail ballots and 70,000 provisionals.

More recently, in 2024, Atlantic County failed to certify results on time, still tallying ballots 21 days after the election.

Even the February 5, 2026, special primary for New Jersey's 11th Congressional District saw delays, with Tom Malinowski conceding to Analilia Mejia on February 10, and counting continuing into February 11.

The brief also references New York's 2020 22nd Congressional District race, where absentee ballot adjudication under a seven-day post-Election Day window left the seat vacant for months. Claudia Tenney was not sworn in until February 11, 2021—three months after the election—leaving constituents unrepresented as the 117th Congress convened.

The Impact on Voter Confidence

Citing research from Yale and the University of San Diego, the brief notes that delays in reporting results inherently foster distrust among voters, even without external misinformation. These extensions not only prolong uncertainty but also complicate procedural safeguards, chain-of-custody, and timely dispute resolution—core elements of fair elections.

C4NJEI's mission is to ensure that every lawful vote is counted accurately and transparently while upholding the finality of Election Day. This amicus brief represents our commitment to these principles, providing the Court with grounded, practical perspectives from states like New Jersey where such laws have been tested in real elections.

Looking Ahead

The Supreme Court's decision in this case could have far-reaching effects on election administration nationwide, including in New Jersey. We encourage our supporters and fellow citizens to stay informed and engaged in protecting election integrity.

For the full text of the amicus brief, contact us at info@c4njei.org



Election Integrity And Improving The Process

By Mark Demo originally presented at The Republican Renewal Summit (Hosted by the Mercer County Republican Committee, February 28 2026)

Background

- As of late October 2025, Democrats (2.52mm) held an 850,000 registered voter lead over Republicans (1.67mm).
- NJ is a sanctuary state that gives drivers licenses to non-citizens.
- It is illegal to ask for voter id.
- NJ has over 900,000 registered voters on a permanent vote by mail list; 57% of whom are registered democrat while only 20% are registered republicans.
- NJ voters begin voting by mail 45 days before election day. Vote by mail ballots can be received up to 6 days after election day as long as the ballot is postmarked by election day.
- Limited ballot harvesting is legal in NJ. One person can be the bearer for up to 3 voters. The limit is increased to 5 voters who are immediate family members residing in the same household.

The General Election

- Going into Election Day:
 - Democrats had returned 394,288 VBM ballots compared to 131,486 for Republicans (262,802 diff).
 - Overall VBM response rates were Dem (77.7%), Rep (74.0%) and Una (57.5%).
 - Democrats had cast 301,821 Early Voting ballots compared to 262,520 for Republicans (39,301 diff).
- On Election Day, Democrats cast 731,207 ballots compared to 544,618 for Republicans (186,589 diff).
- Overall Turnout was up 31% from the November 2021 election
 - 3.47mm /52% in '25 vs 2.64mm/40% ballots cast in '21.
 - Hudson County (+71,837 ballots) and Passaic County (+58,867) led with 57% and 52% turnout increases over 2021 figures.

Election Execution

- No major blow ups this election (unlike Mercer Nov 2022 and Burlington Nov 2024).
- Election day bomb threats at polling places in multiple counties (both blue and red).
- Multiple voting machine issues in Cumberland County.
- Poll book issues in Essex County where voter signature on file appeared blacked out in the pollbook at certain Essex County voting locations.
 - Essex County uses Knowink Pollbooks which is owned by Liberty Vote who recently purchased Dominion Voting Systems.

Individual Issues We Are Digging Into

- Election Day Turnout in Hudson and Passaic Counties exceeded 2021 governor's race turnout by 71,837 ballots (+57%) and 58,867 ballots (+52%) respectively.
- The average percentage of VBM ballots as the percentage of all ballots returned across all 21 counties is 19%, Camden County is 39%.
- Mercer County again exceeded the state average of Provisional ballots issued. Mercer number of provisional ballots issued was 3,911 (3.0%). The statewide average was 1.7%. The 3,911-figure exceeded last November total of 3,286 by 19%. Mercer mishandling of Provisional ballots is a key issue in the November '22 lawsuit vs the county.
- Early Passaic County VBM returns within the first 20 days of the mail voting were over 12 times the rate of returns for the same period during the 2024 presidential election.

Social Media Issues

- X users reported 500,000 new first-time voters in this election. After reviewing the voter history data from the State of NJ, there were only 90,518 first time voters.
 - 32% Democrat, 17% Republican and 50% Unaffiliated.
 - 65.8% voted on election day.
 - 17% were 18 years old, 27% were between 21-30 years old.
 - Middlesex (10.1%), Hudson (9.7%), Essex (9.4%), Bergen (9.6%) and Monmouth (7.7%).

- There were 1,332,628 new voters registered in NJ since 12/31/21.
 - 33% Democrat, 21% Republican and 45% unaffiliated.
 - Of these new voters, 492,872 voted in this past November election. (same exact percentage as above)
 - 57.9% voted on election day.
 - 42% were between the ages of 21-40.
 - Middlesex (8.9%), Hudson (8.4%), Essex (8.3%), Bergen (9.2%) and Monmouth (7.9%).

Additional Analysis Highlights

- There were no districts in the state where ballots cast exceeded registered voters.
- There were 305 instances of people who voted in the November '25 general election who were immediately dropped from the voter roll during the next monthly SVRS update (1/28/25).
- 3,488 people with inactive confirmation status voted in the November '25 election. All but 13 votes were cast in-person.

Voter Turnout Analysis

- Performed deep dive into registered voters who did not vote in the November 2025 Election
 - 654K out of 1.67MM registered republicans did not vote. ~49% or 318K last voted in June '25 or November '24.
 - Nearly 20% of non-voting republicans have never actually voted in an election.
- Performed deep dive into registered voters who did not vote in the November 2024 Election
 - 340K out of 1.63MM registered republicans did not vote. 4.5% or 15.3K last voted in June '24 or November '23.
 - Due to the large Rep turnout, the percentage of never voting republicans was nearly 38%.

| Nov-25 Years Since Last Vote | Democrat | | Republican | | Unaffiliated | |
|---------------------------------|------------------|--------------|------------------|--------------|------------------|--------------|
| | Voters | Percent | Voter | Percent | Voters | Percent |
| 2025 | 61,338 | 5.9% | 34,014 | 5.2% | 5,784 | 0.4% |
| 2024 | 355,359 | 33.9% | 284,367 | 43.5% | 485,385 | 31.1% |
| 2023 | 18,073 | 1.7% | 10,977 | 1.7% | 11,268 | 0.7% |
| 2022 | 42,545 | 4.1% | 27,586 | 4.2% | 31,823 | 2.0% |
| 2021 | 34,559 | 3.3% | 24,673 | 3.8% | 29,490 | 1.9% |
| 2020 | 193,597 | 18.5% | 90,335 | 13.8% | 255,750 | 16.4% |
| 2019 | 7,565 | 0.7% | 3,467 | 0.5% | 4,803 | 0.3% |
| 2018 | 28,365 | 2.7% | 10,088 | 1.5% | 26,258 | 1.7% |
| 2017 | 9,245 | 0.9% | 3,273 | 0.5% | 6,703 | 0.4% |
| 2016 | 38,554 | 3.7% | 14,842 | 2.3% | 50,911 | 3.3% |
| 2015 | 2,004 | 0.2% | 923 | 0.1% | 1,881 | 0.1% |
| 2014 | 5,590 | 0.5% | 2,251 | 0.3% | 5,495 | 0.4% |
| 2013 | 5,791 | 0.6% | 2,829 | 0.4% | 6,541 | 0.4% |
| 2012 | 17,211 | 1.6% | 6,402 | 1.0% | 31,816 | 2.0% |
| 2011 | 1,565 | 0.1% | 797 | 0.1% | 2,208 | 0.1% |
| 2010 | 3,560 | 0.3% | 1,778 | 0.3% | 5,035 | 0.3% |
| 2009 | 2,985 | 0.3% | 1,547 | 0.2% | 4,412 | 0.3% |
| 2008 | 13,198 | 1.3% | 4,606 | 0.7% | 25,903 | 1.7% |
| 2007 | 670 | 0.1% | 337 | 0.1% | 1,053 | 0.1% |
| No previous | 205,015 | 19.6% | 129,037 | 19.7% | 570,462 | 36.5% |
| Total not voted 11/25 | 1,046,789 | 41.5% | 654,129 | 39.2% | 1,562,981 | 65.7% |
| Registration | 2,520,000 | | 1,670,000 | | 2,380,000 | |
| Total Voted 11/25 | 1,473,211 | 58.5% | 1,015,871 | 60.8% | 817,019 | 34.3% |
| Votes for Candidate | 1,896,610 | | 1,417,705 | | | |
| Num of UNA (approx) | 423,399 | | 401,834 | | | |

| Nov-24 Year Since Last Vote | Democrat | | Republican | | Unaffiliated | |
|--------------------------------|------------------|--------------|------------------|--------------|------------------|--------------|
| | Voter | Percent | Voter | Percent | Voter | Percent |
| 2024 | 9,209 | 1.4% | 4,387 | 1.3% | 2,685 | 0.5% |
| 2023 | 18,073 | 2.8% | 10,977 | 3.2% | 11,268 | 2.0% |
| 2022 | 42,545 | 6.7% | 27,586 | 8.1% | 31,823 | 5.6% |
| 2021 | 34,559 | 5.4% | 24,673 | 7.3% | 29,490 | 5.2% |
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| 2009 | 2,985 | 0.5% | 1,547 | 0.5% | 4,412 | 0.8% |
| 2008 | 13,198 | 2.1% | 4,606 | 1.4% | 25,903 | 4.5% |
| 2007 | 670 | 0.1% | 337 | 0.1% | 1,053 | 0.2% |
| Never Voted | 205,015 | 32.1% | 129,037 | 37.9% | 570,462 | 100.0% |
| Grand Total | 639,301 | 25.2% | 340,135 | 20.9% | 1,074,497 | 43.2% |
| Registration | 2,534,000 | | 1,628,000 | | 2,485,000 | |
| Total Voted 11/24 | 1,894,699 | 74.8% | 1,287,865 | 79.1% | 1,410,503 | 56.8% |
| Votes for Candidate | 2,220,713 | | 1,968,215 | | | |
| Num of UNA (approx) | 326,014 | | 680,350 | | | |

| County | Count | Percent |
|--------------------|----------------|-------------|
| Atlantic | 26,719 | 4.1% |
| Bergen | 64,120 | 9.8% |
| Burlington | 38,276 | 5.9% |
| Camden | 29,935 | 4.6% |
| Cape May | 10,977 | 1.7% |
| Cumberland | 10,660 | 1.6% |
| Essex | 31,129 | 4.8% |
| Gloucester | 24,732 | 3.8% |
| Hudson | 31,864 | 4.9% |
| Hunterdon | 13,190 | 2.0% |
| Mercer | 18,585 | 2.8% |
| Middlesex | 47,140 | 7.2% |
| Monmouth | 56,031 | 8.6% |
| Morris | 44,276 | 6.8% |
| Ocean | 63,261 | 9.7% |
| Passaic | 35,446 | 5.4% |
| Salem | 6,467 | 1.0% |
| Somerset | 22,616 | 3.5% |
| Sussex | 19,397 | 3.0% |
| Union | 29,983 | 4.6% |
| Warren | 29,325 | 4.5% |
| Grand Total | 654,129 | |

- Top November 2025 Republican non-voter counties were Bergen, Ocean and Monmouth.
- While ~49% of non-voters voted in the last 2 elections, only 16% of Republican non-voters were registered during that same period. Most Republican non-voters were registered 10 or more years ago (42%).

The Massive Gap in NJ Voter Rolls

- During its November '25 election analysis, Citizens for NJ Election Integrity identified over 100,000 voters who, per the National Change of Address (NCOA) and Proprietary Change of Address (PCOA) databases, had already moved out of state.
- This is consistent with New Jersey Division of Elections admission to the RNC in their July 2025 letter in response to a lawsuit over Voter Roll records (Republican National Committee, Inc. v. State of New Jersey, Department of State, Division of Elections, Docket No. MER-L-1499-25).
- New Jersey concedes it does not leverage many available data sources for crosschecking, relying instead on sporadic, state or county-level inputs that counties must manually verify. The State admits:
 - No integrations with key national systems: National Change of Address (NCOA) database, Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE), Social Security Death Index (SSDI), or National Association of Public Health Statistics and Information System (NAPHSIS).
 - ERIC membership exists but is unimplemented, missing opportunities for interstate duplicate detection.

| Years Since Registration | Count | Percent |
|--------------------------|----------------|---------|
| 0 | 49,927 | 7.6% |
| 1 | 56,782 | 8.7% |
| 2 | 31,030 | 4.7% |
| 3 | 31,064 | 4.7% |
| 4 | 29,057 | 4.4% |
| 5 | 55,187 | 8.4% |
| 6 | 35,520 | 5.4% |
| 7 | 26,890 | 4.1% |
| 8 | 24,879 | 3.8% |
| 9 | 37,091 | 5.7% |
| 10+ | 276,702 | 42.3% |
| Grand Total | 654,129 | |

Never Voted – Except for November 2020

| County of Nov 2020 Only Voters | | | Registration Year | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---------|---------|-------------------|----------|---------|------------|---------|--------------|---------|-------|-----------|---------|
| County | Count | Percent | Year | Democrat | Percent | Republican | Percent | Unaffiliated | Percent | Other | Grand Tot | Percent |
| Atlantic | 7,775 | 3.3% | 2025 | 290 | 0.5% | 168 | 0.5% | 650 | 0.5% | - | 1,138 | 0.5% |
| Bergen | 25,290 | 10.7% | 2024 | 1,440 | 2.3% | 925 | 2.6% | 3,038 | 2.3% | 140 | 5,543 | 2.4% |
| Burlington | 14,294 | 6.1% | 2023 | 1,294 | 2.0% | 777 | 2.2% | 2,784 | 2.1% | 122 | 4,977 | 2.1% |
| Camden | 14,522 | 6.2% | 2022 | 1,175 | 1.9% | 716 | 2.0% | 2,347 | 1.8% | 107 | 4,345 | 1.8% |
| Cape May | 2,439 | 1.0% | 2021 | 1,258 | 2.0% | 692 | 2.0% | 2,467 | 1.9% | 101 | 4,518 | 1.9% |
| Cumberland | 4,276 | 1.8% | 2020 | 24,767 | 39.1% | 11,702 | 33.1% | 45,635 | 34.7% | 1,360 | 83,464 | 35.5% |
| Essex | 19,108 | 8.1% | 2019 | 10,936 | 17.2% | 6,048 | 17.1% | 19,100 | 14.5% | 1,302 | 37,386 | 15.9% |
| Gloucester | 8,643 | 3.7% | 2018 | 5,467 | 8.6% | 3,109 | 8.8% | 10,187 | 7.8% | 524 | 19,287 | 8.2% |
| Hudson | 17,528 | 7.4% | 2017 | 4,604 | 7.3% | 2,852 | 8.1% | 8,240 | 6.3% | 455 | 16,151 | 6.9% |
| Hunterdon | 3,095 | 1.3% | 2016 | 3,393 | 5.4% | 2,115 | 6.0% | 7,371 | 5.6% | 310 | 13,189 | 5.6% |
| Mercer | 10,018 | 4.3% | 2015 | 1,059 | 1.7% | 634 | 1.8% | 2,971 | 2.3% | 105 | 4,769 | 2.0% |
| Middlesex | 19,687 | 8.4% | 2014 | 912 | 1.4% | 544 | 1.5% | 2,667 | 2.0% | 76 | 4,199 | 1.8% |
| Monmouth | 17,256 | 7.3% | 2013 | 1,002 | 1.6% | 573 | 1.6% | 2,913 | 2.2% | 94 | 4,582 | 1.9% |
| Morris | 12,935 | 5.5% | 2012 | 967 | 1.5% | 625 | 1.8% | 2,756 | 2.1% | 81 | 4,429 | 1.9% |
| Ocean | 15,235 | 6.5% | 2011 | 526 | 0.8% | 350 | 1.0% | 1,635 | 1.2% | 58 | 2,569 | 1.1% |
| Passaic | 12,226 | 5.2% | 2010 | 478 | 0.8% | 334 | 0.9% | 1,570 | 1.2% | 62 | 2,444 | 1.0% |
| Salem | 2,048 | 0.9% | 2009 | 431 | 0.7% | 315 | 0.9% | 1,330 | 1.0% | 39 | 2,115 | 0.9% |
| Somerset | 8,841 | 3.8% | 2008 | 642 | 1.0% | 441 | 1.2% | 2,217 | 1.7% | 68 | 3,368 | 1.4% |
| Sussex | 4,144 | 1.8% | 2007 | 112 | 0.2% | 100 | 0.3% | 469 | 0.4% | 10 | 691 | 0.3% |
| Union | 12,866 | 5.5% | 2006 | 146 | 0.2% | 91 | 0.3% | 578 | 0.4% | 8 | 823 | 0.3% |
| Warren | 3,195 | 1.4% | 2005 | 157 | 0.2% | 118 | 0.3% | 586 | 0.4% | 16 | 877 | 0.4% |
| Grand Total | 235,421 | | 2004 | 327 | 0.5% | 242 | 0.7% | 1,508 | 1.1% | 36 | 2,113 | 0.9% |
| | | | 2003 | 112 | 0.2% | 100 | 0.3% | 576 | 0.4% | 15 | 803 | 0.3% |
| | | | 2002 | 141 | 0.2% | 87 | 0.2% | 508 | 0.4% | 10 | 746 | 0.3% |
| | | | 2001 | 131 | 0.2% | 114 | 0.3% | 648 | 0.5% | 17 | 910 | 0.4% |
| | | | 2000 or prior | 1,642 | 2.6% | 1,562 | 4.4% | 6,668 | 5.1% | 12 | 9,865 | 4.2% |
| | | | Grand Total | 63,409 | 100.0% | 35,334 | 100.0% | 131,419 | 100.0% | 5,259 | 235,421 | 100.0% |

Sources:

- NJ Dept of State, Division of Elections, State Voter Registration System (SVRS)
- Republican National Committee, Inc. v. State of New Jersey, Department of State, Division of Elections, Docket No. MER-L-1499-25
- Citizens for NJ Election Integrity (www.citizens4njei.org)
- X.com
- ELLY, The Elector List (www.theelectorlist.com)

About Citizens for NJ Election Integrity

Citizens for NJ Election Integrity is a non-partisan organization dedicated to ensuring fair and transparent elections in New Jersey. The group advocates for electoral reforms, improved voter verification processes, and public education on election integrity. For more information, please visit <http://www.citizens4njei.org/>.

Media Contact

Mark Flaherty, Communications Director, Citizens for NJ Election Integrity

914-473-2038 • Mark.Flaherty@citizens4njei.org

For further inquiries or to schedule an interview, please contact C4NJEI at the information provided above.

ICYMI

COVID Justice Resolution

By COVID Justice Coalition

The COVID-19 response produced the most sweeping suspension of civil liberties in modern American history. **Emergencies do not suspend the Constitution.** This resolution repudiates COVID-era overreach and **affirms binding protections for liberty** in any future public-health crisis.

For years, Americans have waited for an honest reckoning with the COVID-19 response—one grounded in reality rather than excuses or institutional gaslighting. Instead, the nation endured the most sweeping suspension of civil liberties in modern history, driven by emergency powers that often lacked evidence, silenced dissent, and inflicted lasting harm, especially on children, small businesses, the elderly, and the working class.

This proposed Senate resolution is a **first step toward clarity.**

Developed by collaborators associated with organizations including Autism Action Network, Children's Health Defense, Health Freedom Defense Fund, Independent Medical Alliance, Stand For Health Freedom, and The Brownstone Institute, it formally repudiates the most destructive COVID-era policies and establishes binding principles to ensure they are never repeated.

This resolution does not assign blame. It does not trade in fear. It reasserts constitutional limits. It stands as notice to the future: emergency powers must never again override liberty, evidence, or human dignity.

The COVID Justice Resolution

To affirm the permanent lessons of the COVID-19 response, to repudiate certain emergency measures as incompatible with constitutional liberty, and to establish binding principles for any future public-health emergency.

Whereas the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020–2023 occasioned the most widespread and prolonged suspension of civil liberties in American history;

Whereas many measures taken in the name of public health, at both the federal level and most states, lacked sufficient evidence of efficacy, in some cases were arbitrary, imposed disproportionate harm on the poor and working classes, and violated foundational principles of limited government;

Whereas the Senate now judges, with the benefit of hindsight and exhaustive subsequent reflection, that certain categories of intervention must never be repeated;

Now, therefore, be it Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) Declares that the following actions, however well-intentioned at the time, represented grave mistakes that shall not be repeated in any future public-health emergency:

- (a) Prolonged closure of elementary, secondary schools, and colleges/universities for in-person instruction, which caused measurable and lasting harm to children’s educational attainment, mental health, and social development while producing no demonstrable reduction in community transmission beyond what targeted protections for vulnerable adults would have achieved;
- (b) Indefinite closure or capacity restriction of private businesses deemed “non-essential” by executive fiat, including but not limited to restaurants, gyms, hair salons, places of worship, and small retail establishments;
- (c) Universal population-wide mask mandates imposed by state, local, or federal authority (even for children) without at least medical exemptions that respect for bodily autonomy;
- (d) Stay-at-home orders that confined healthy citizens to their residences for weeks or months at a time, criminalizing ordinary outdoor activity, in addition to the brutal division of the workforce between those deemed “essential” and those deemed “nonessential;”
- (e) Restrictions on routine access of nursing homes, hospitals and other medical services, including dentistry, that fell outside emergency demands, resulting in missed diagnostics and medical disruptions for millions of people;
- (f) Agency-led dismissal, deprecation, and even removal from access to known therapeutics for respiratory viruses, which were made unavailable even with a physician prescription;
- (g) The eviction moratoriums issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that exceeded statutory authority and disrupted the contractual foundations of property rights;
- (h) Vaccine mandates imposed directly or indirectly (through OSHA, CMS, Department of Defense, or federal contractor rules) upon private employees, healthcare workers, members of the Armed Forces, or students as a condition of employment, education, or participation in civic life;
- (i) The creation and enforcement of vaccine passport or immunity-status discrimination systems by any level of government or by private entities under government coercion;
- (j) The sustained censorship, shadow-banning, deplatforming, or professional sanction of physicians, scientists, or citizens who publicly questioned official public-health guidance, including good-faith discussion of early-treatment protocols, natural immunity, or the developmental status of novel vaccines;
- (k) The transfer of unprecedented fiscal authority to executive agencies without explicit Congressional appropriation, resulting in trillions of dollars of spending with inadequate oversight;
- (l) Agency-directed hospital protocols which violated the doctor-patient relationship and trampled individual rights in medical treatment;

(2) Affirms that the constitutional rights enumerated in the First, Second, Fourth, Fifth, and Fourteenth Amendments, as well as unenumerated rights retained by the people under the Ninth Amendment, do not become optional during a declared emergency;

(3) Establishes as the permanent policy of the United States Senate the following principles that shall guide any future emergency response:

- (a) Time-limited emergencies: No national or state emergency declaration related to public health may exceed 30 days without explicit reauthorization by a vote of Congress or the respective state legislature;
- (b) Legislative primacy: No federal agency may impose penalties, mandates, or restrictions on private conduct affecting the broad population or economy without express statutory authorization enacted after the emergency has begun;

- (c) Protection of minors: Elementary and secondary schools shall remain open for in-person instruction absent a specific, written finding by the relevant state legislature that closure is the least restrictive means of preventing imminent and overwhelming hospital collapse in that jurisdiction;
 - (d) Religious exercise: Places of worship shall be classified as essential at all times and may not be subjected to numeric capacity limits or activity restrictions more stringent than those applied to commercial establishments; religious freedom shall never again be infringed;
 - (e) Bodily autonomy: No American may be compelled, coerced, or subjected to adverse employment or educational consequences, or denied access to private businesses or their services or to civic life for declining any medical intervention, including vaccination, during a public-health emergency;
 - (f) Transparency and data: All modeling, data sets, and advisory committee deliberations used to justify restrictions shall be released in real time, unredacted except for legitimate national-security concerns;
 - (g) Prohibition on censorship: No federal official or agent may request, direct, or incentivize, even with pressure or funding to third parties, private communications platforms to remove, suppress, or label protected speech concerning pandemic policy, treatment options, or vaccine safety and efficacy;
 - (h) Compensation for takings: Any legitimate business forced to close or operate at reduced capacity by government order shall be entitled to full and prompt compensation for lost revenue at fair market rates;
 - (i) Sunset of emergency powers: All emergency orders issued by executive agencies shall automatically expire 30 days after issuance unless affirmatively renewed by Congress or the respective state legislature;
- (4) Directs the Government Accountability Office to conduct annual audits of federal and state emergency-preparedness plans to ensure compliance with the principles herein;
- (5) Calls upon the States to enact parallel legislation embodying these same principles, and pledges cooperation with any State that does so;
- (6) Expresses the profound regret of the Senate for the unnecessary suffering inflicted upon the American people—especially children, small-business owners, the elderly isolated in nursing homes, cancer patients denied routine screenings, and millions who lost livelihoods—by policies that prioritized uniformity of compliance over proportionality, evidence, and human dignity.

Sign the Resolution: <https://covidjustice.org/#resolution-form>

COVID Justice Resolution: <https://covidjustice.org/>

Notre Dame Faces Push To Uncover Historic Columbus Murals

Faculty and alumni say the Catholic university should embrace artwork celebrating the faith's arrival in the New World.

By Kevin Mooney originally published in The American Spectator (January 1 2026)

University of Notre Dame alumni and faculty members are calling on the school's new president and other recently installed leaders to uncover paintings of Christopher Columbus in the center-hall foyer, under the famed Golden Dome.

Under a previous administration, 12 murals depicting the Catholic explorer and his voyages to the Americas were covered up in 2019. In a letter explaining the decision, Rev. John Jenkins, then the university's president, said he was responding to critics who found the murals offensive and demeaning toward Native Americans.

But alumni familiar with the controversy see "a narrow, small sect of woke ideologues" at work who do not speak for the school's broader community. Current faculty members who were present when the murals were covered see an opportunity for the school's new president, Rev. Robert A. Dowd, to reverse course.

Correcting the Record

The murals, located in Notre Dame's main administration building, are at the heart of the university's campus with its Golden Dome.

Commissioned by Notre Dame's founder, Rev. Edward Sorin, the three-year project was completed from 1882 to 1884 by Italian artist Luigi Gregori. Gregori was a resident artist at the Vatican and later became a professor and resident artist at Notre Dame.



Columbus Coming Ashore,' part of the Columbus Murals at University of Notre Dame by Luigi Gregori, circa 1882-1884 (Photo by Matt Cashore/University of Notre Dame/Wikimedia Commons)

Felipe Fernandez-Armesto, a Notre Dame history professor, says a dispassionate and informed view of the murals makes it clear that the native people are, in fact, portrayed in a very positive light:

Natives are depicted in the three paintings in which they appear: first, as models of innocence and goodness; then as grand, noble envoys from the New World to the Old, bestowing gifts that — in a material sense — the Europeans can't match, and dominating the court of the King and Queen of Spain; finally, as exemplars of moral superiority, pitying and comforting Columbus on his downfall, while my fellow Spaniards skulk shamefully. The positive depiction of Natives, including the Potawatomi representative who makes a "guest appearance" in one mural, along with Gregori's self-portrait, was crucial to the painter's and patron's plan of advocating for America as a better place than Europe, a New World where Catholicism could do more good.

Even if the murals needed to be covered for their own protection, this would need to be done in a way that does not damage them, Fernandez-Armesto explained. The coverings should be "cheap and easy to uncover," he said, for research, teaching, and maintenance purposes.

Fernandez-Armesto also emphasized the importance of preserving "the whole of each mural," including the borders and the cartouches, which can contain important information.

"The present method fails on all counts," he said. "It has damaged the paint areas; it permanently obscures parts of the works because not all parts of the coverings are removable; and it's laborious and costly to remove and replace."

But the upshot here, the professor suggested, is that the murals may no longer need to be covered at all.

"The misunderstandings that made some people hostile to them in the heat of past controversies are surely remediable," Fernandez-Armesto said. "I'd like everyone to see how important the murals are for understanding — inter alia — the histories of Notre Dame and of U.S. Catholicism. Above all, I'd like everyone to see how Gregori and Father Sorin wanted to use the walls of Main Building to celebrate the grandeur and moral greatness of Native Americans."

Alumni Decry Leftward Shift

In interviews, several alumni expressed their displeasure with the murals' concealment.

Werner Graf, a 1986 graduate with a degree in accounting and a secondary teaching degree from St. Mary's, attributed the decision to "a woke sect of Domers in positions of power who have had no reservations about injecting their liberal politics into school operations."

"It aggravates a good many alumni when they read that 'Notre Dame' covered up our beautiful murals or 'Notre Dame' has repeatedly honored pro-abortion politicians or 'Notre Dame' changed the fight song," Graf said in an email. "It's actually not 'Notre Dame' but rather a woke sect of domers in positions of power who have had no reservations about injecting their liberal politics into school operations. This lack of humility, unfortunately, tarnishes the entire community and actually alienates a large portion of the Notre Dame family."

Graf, a former IBM and Procter and Gamble executive and current CEO of Graf Dairy, recalled how Jenkins assembled a committee to discuss how criticism of the mural might be handled.

"By all accounts, this committee was charged with how to assuage the administration's liberal insecurities, not debate whether this idiocy should be undertaken at all," Graf said.

He noted that the committee initially decided to display high-resolution images of the murals in a nearby room to allow visitors a chance to admire them. "As inadequate as it was, even this never happened."

Graf said he would like his alma mater to uncover the artwork and reassert its Catholic heritage. The murals' core purpose, he said, is to depict "the introduction of Jesus to the New World." He argued that concealing them "not only deprives current Domers, but also condemns Sorin and all preceding leaders who admired and revered the art."

There is also the matter of Italian pride. David Bregande, a 1995 design graduate, remembers "what a big deal" Columbus Day was growing up in Fredonia, New York, not far from Buffalo.

"There was terrible prejudice against Italian immigrants at one time, and having Columbus Day as a national holiday was recognition of this horrible mistreatment," Bregande said. In the eyes of Italian Americans around the country, "Columbus became an important symbol for us."

Bregande also finds it disturbing that the university is depriving its own community of art and history that, as an educational institution, it should highlight and promote.

"As a visual artist, I will say it's a beautiful piece of work with some profound historical ties," he said. "The decision to cover the art was made because Notre Dame didn't want to offend someone, but someone will always be offended. They seem to forget that the university also has ties to American Catholics and Italian Catholics who have experienced their own persecution."

Columbus, Bregande added, was "a man of his time" and was not unique in his way of thinking. "But he was a huge catalyst for spreading Western civilization into this hemisphere, and that has been very good for all of us."

Peter Dumon, a 1990 graduate and real estate investor based in Chicago, said he fears Notre Dame has put itself on a highly compromising path by capitulating to the demands of what he calls “a small vocal minority.”

“What if we had a group of atheists on campus who were offended by the basilica?” he asked. “Are we going to tear it down?”

Changing Course

Rev. Bill Miscamble, another Notre Dame history professor, agrees that the antagonism toward Columbus appears to be part of a broader shift toward political correctness across college campuses. “The murals were an effort to celebrate the bringing of the Gospels to the new world,” Miscamble said in an interview. “It’s quite extraordinary that at Notre Dame, a place where we celebrate the presence of the Gospels in the new world, these murals have been covered over.”

He expressed concern that a “highly skewed view of Columbus” has taken hold that “ignores the complexities of history.”

Still, Miscamble remains hopeful that Notre Dame’s new leaders will revisit the previous administration’s decision.

“I hope and pray this new administration will remove the coverings and accept the fact that these murals are an essential part of Notre Dame’s history, and that they celebrate the very events that brought about Notre Dame’s existence,” he said.

Notre Dame did not respond to our inquiries about the murals’ status.

The school’s new president, Dowd, was elected in December 2023 and assumed office on July 1, 2024. Other new administrative appointments include John T. McGreevy, who became the Charles and Jill Fisher Provost in July 2022, and John F. Crowley, who was elected to the Board of Trustees, effective July 1, 2025.

With so many new leaders in place, Graf, who describes himself as “an early and hopeful admirer of Father Dowd,” would like to see him and others address what he views as policy inconsistencies.

“A small sect of complainers does not represent the whole of Notre Dame,” he said. “Notre Dame will not restrict access to pornography on its online infrastructure on campus but feels obligated to restrict access to art in its foyer. Does this make sense?”

Graf also made the point that “the sect” he identifies does not speak for all Native Americans.

Linda Capps, vice chair of the Potawatomi Nation based in Shawnee, Oklahoma, made that clear.

“Different Native American groups have different views,” she said. “But you can’t change the fact it [the mural] is a legitimate work of art, and it’s truly beautiful.”

Capps added that she is in favor of uncovering the murals “because it goes back to a point in history. I think it’s a shame to do away with quality artwork.”

Miscamble, meanwhile, argued that Notre Dame — as a Catholic university devoted to the pursuit of truth — should tackle history in all its complexities. Putting Columbus back on display and acknowledging all the good he achieved, despite any human imperfections, is very much in line with that mission, he said.

Access the article: <https://spectator.org/notre-dame-faces-push-to-uncover-historic-columbus-murals/>

Absurdities Of Our Age

By Victor Davis Hanson originally published in The Blade of Perseus (February 25 2026)

Despite Bernie Sanders’ rants, four out of ten American households pay no income tax. And the bottom fifty percent in income, of those who do pay income tax, account for less than 3% of all federal income tax revenue. The top 50 percent of households pay 97% of all federal taxes. About 30 percent of Americans are on some sort of local/state/federal assistance. In other words, the American tax rate is among the most progressive in the world. The point is not that anyone is calling again for massive Reagan-era income tax cuts, but rather there is no need with a national top income tax rate of 37% and a California state income tax top bracket of 13.3%, to raise taxes even higher.

In California, 1% of households already pay almost 40% of all state income taxes—and they are leaving in the thousands. In contrast, some 30%-50% of Californians pay no state income tax.

In answer, the state now desires to tax billionaires 5% of their aggregate wealth (calibrated by all their assets) to raise an estimated \$20 billion a year for five years (\$100 billion). In response, already \$1 trillion in assets have left California, as billionaires flee to no-tax states.

Why should a billionaire, who pays income and capital gains taxes, be forced to surrender 5% of his assets to Sacramento and what would it then be spent on? If a resident has \$1 billion worth of houses, personal property, bonds, stocks, etc., and must cough up \$50 million in cash to the state, in many cases he will have to sell some assets—or leave the state.

Nor does anyone think of the consequences, such as: if California can confiscate 5% of billionaires’ assets, what would stop the state from going after those worth \$10 million, \$5 million, or even \$1 million? (Cf. Washington state’s new “millionaires’

tax” of 9.9% on income over 1 million.) And what will they do in California with the anticipated \$100 billion from the billionaires—finish at least one third of the failed high-speed rail project?

Hire more investigators to try to find and prosecute those who are responsible for the current multibillion-dollar welfare fraud, and reclaim the ill-gotten funds (including the \$1 billion lost to inmates, including those on death row, who defrauded the government of Covid money from their cells)?

Expand the new racial reparations fund? Build another desert solar plant like the one that is useless and being dismantled? Another billion-dollar battery storage plant at Moss Landing that periodically blows up?

Double the illegal alien MediCal health care budget? House another 30,000 illegal alien inmates in California jails and prisons?

Hire another \$700,000 LA Water and Power “expert” to ensure there is no functioning reservoir above Pacific Palisades during its conflagration? Expand the travel budget for the mayor of Los Angeles?

During the Biden years, there are estimates that there were somewhere between 10 and 12 million illegal entrants. Do the math over Biden’s 1,461 days in office. If you take the higher figure, then each day of his tenure, 8,213 illegal aliens crossed into the United States.

At the lower 10 million entrant figure, some 6,844 illegal aliens daily barged across the southern border.

To get an idea of the gargantuan influx, some 12 million entrants equate to illegal aliens matching the entire population of San Francisco (840,000) every 102 days of the Biden tenure. In other words, Biden created in just four years about 14 San Franciscos of illegal aliens.

Or to put it another way, the illegal alien population that arrived from January 2021–25 was larger than the population found in some 40 individual states. Never did anyone calibrate the cost to feed, house, treat, and educate another 14 San Franciscos, much less the effect of this new pool of mostly poor, non-English speaking population on the social services accorded U.S. citizens. And certainly, no one seems to care that, without an audit, if even 5% of the influx were criminals that would translate into 600,000 criminal aliens roaming free, and often under the protective aegis of blue city/state, no-cash bail, and sanctuary-city policies.

I doubt there was a single Minnesotan, anti-ICE mom who demonstrated on behalf of any of the victims of some 600,000 criminal aliens who crossed the border—or the numbers of poor who had to deal with swamped ERs or had their dialysis treatments backlogged or could not find a doctor in need, given the needs of a sudden influx of 12 million people, many of whom had likely never seen a Western doctor.

Access the article: <https://victorhanson.com/absurdities-of-our-age/>

Public Corner

Public Local Meetings

Interested in attending public meetings? Here are a few in your area for this month.

<https://www.mercercounty.org/i-want-to/calendar-meeting-list>

HVRSD School Board Meeting

Monday March 16, 2026 - 6:30 PM

Monday March 23, 2026 - 6:30 PM

425 S Main St. Pennington, NJ 08534 Or Livestream on YouTube

Municipal Township Meetings

<https://www.hopewelltpw.org/calendar.aspx?CID=32>

Township Committee Special Budget Meeting

Monday March 2, 2026, 5:30 PM

Township Committee Regular Meeting

Monday March 2, 2026, 6:30 PM

Township Committee Special Budget Meeting
March 9, 2026, 5:30 PM

Township Committee Regular Meeting
March 16, 2026, 6:30 PM

Meetings are in hybrid format- Township Municipal Building & Zoom

Township meetings will be held at HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL SERVICES BUILDING 201 Washington Crossing - Pennington Road, Titusville, NJ 08560

In case you are unable to attend Township Committee mtgs, the recordings are available. Per the township clerk's office Kathy, they are "usually," available within a few days of the meeting.

Happy viewing

https://videoplayer.telvue.com/player/k83q0qZsxB_6dlk4EjvYfv...

Or: <https://www.hopewelltpw.org/> select How Do I.../ bottom right View/ Video Library

Board of Elections Meeting

Tuesday March 10, 2026 at 12:00 PM

Board of Elections Meetings will be at 930 Spruce St., Lawrence, NJ 08648

Mercer County Board of County Commissioners

Meeting Schedule -- March 2026

Tuesday March 10, 2026 6:00 PM Agenda Meeting

Thursday March 12, 2026 5:00 PM Formal Meeting

Tuesday March 24, 2026 6:00 PM Agenda Meeting

Thursday March 26, 2026 6:00 PM Formal Meeting

Agenda and Formal Meetings will take place at the Mercer County Administration Building, Room 211, 640 South Broad St., Trenton, NJ unless otherwise stated.

In order to encourage full participation of these meetings, please submit any requests for accommodations of people with disabilities to the Clerk to the Board, Mercer County Administration Building, PO Box 8068, Trenton, NJ 08650

(609) 989-6584 {V/TTY} {Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 101-336}

TruthBTold



At the Movies, Bookstores

Climate Porn: How And Why Anti-Population Zealots Fabricate Science, While Targeting American Capitalism, Freedom, And Independence

Author: Kevin J. Mooney - **Foreword by:** John Berlau

Publisher: Bombardier Books - **Publication Date:** February 12, 2026

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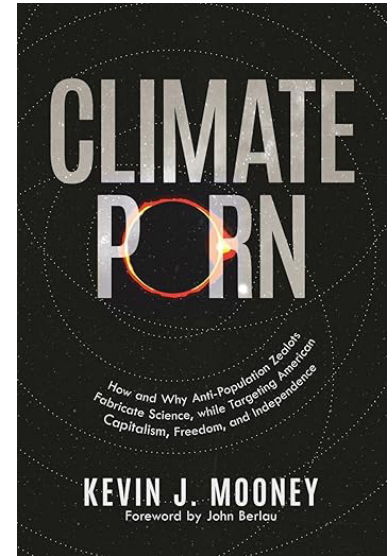
Overview: Climate activists inside and outside of government know full well their schemes do not work as advertised, but they also know they are effective tools for dismantling constitutional limited government while victimizing the broader population. Here, in the Age of Trump, a countermovement has emerged rooted in an "America First" agenda that could either produce enduring lasting changes, or fizzle in the form of a mere speedbump along the way toward the end of the Republic.

Did you know that if you build a pond on your property that runs afoul of centralized planners in Washington, DC, or speak out in favor of sound science, you could become the target of prosecution or even incarceration? This was the norm when the climate movement reached its apex under Presidents Obama and Biden. What's the way out? The restoration of American independence timed with the 250th anniversary of Thomas Jefferson's Declaration is the only sure way. But this means having the US withdraw entirely from the United Nations so that the American people are no longer subjugated beneath anti-constitutional climate measures.

Climate Porn reveals how everyday Americans—from farmers and small business owners to scientists and local officials—have been unfairly penalized by policies driven more by ideology than evidence. By exposing these hidden tactics, this book offers readers a clear understanding of how deeply entrenched globalist agendas have interfered with American self-determination and what it will take to reclaim it.

To purchase: Amazon, Bookshop

About the author: <https://kevinmooney.info/>



Sight & Sound Films: A Great Awakening

Before the revolution, there was a revelation.

EASTER WEEKEND April 3 2026 ONLY IN THEATERS

Genre: Drama - **Release Date:** April 3 2026

Director: Joshua Enck - **Duration:** 2h 9mins

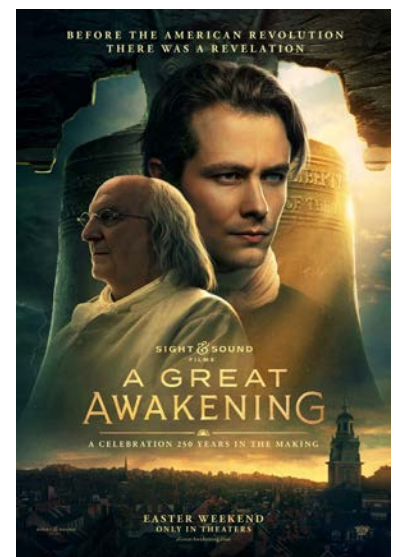
Cast: Jonathan Blair, John Paul Sneed, Josh Bates

Film Synopsis: In honor of America's 250th anniversary, A GREAT AWAKENING tells the true story of an unlikely friendship that resulted in one of the most defining moments in American history.

With the colonies on the brink of collapse, the Reverend George Whitefield sparks the first Great Awakening, uniting an entire generation with his thundering proclamation of liberty in Christ. In a miraculous turn of events, one of Whitefield's closest friends and greatest promoters becomes none other than Benjamin Franklin. With the nation's freedom hanging in the balance, Franklin discovers true liberty cannot only be written into law - it must be awakened in the hearts of the people.

Watch trailer, more information: <https://www.agreatawakening.com/>

Get tickets: <https://www.agreatawakening.com/tickets/>, Fandango, AMC



Sight & Sound Explores Biblical Liberty In 'A Great Awakening'

By Leah MarieAnn Klett, Assistant Editor originally published in *The Christian Post* (February 23 2026)

NASHVILLE, Tennessee — As the United States approaches its 250th anniversary, the word “liberty” is resurfacing in cultural debates, but for Sight & Sound President Joshua Enck, it carries a deeper meaning, inspiring the ministry’s new film, “A Great Awakening.”

“What this film really depicts is the biblical definition of liberty,” Enck told *The Christian Post* of Sight & Sound’s upcoming feature, starring John Paul Sneed and Jonathan Blair.

“On the Liberty Bell, it says, ‘Proclaim liberty throughout all the land and to all the inhabitants thereof.’ I want that liberty to ring out over this nation once again in the hearts of men and women.”

The film, set to open in movie theatres on April 3, centers on the unlikely friendship between 18th-century evangelist George Whitefield and Founding Father Benjamin Franklin, a relationship Enck said surprised him during research.



Photo courtesy of Sight & Sound

“This story really found us,” Enck, who directed the film, said. “It’s not that I had aspirations as a young child to do a film on George Whitefield. But when I started diving into the 250th anniversary and the concept of liberty, I found this incredible friendship.”

Whitefield, widely regarded as one of the most influential preachers of the Great Awakening, traveled thousands of miles on horseback throughout the American colonies. Franklin, though often described as a deist, became one of Whitefield’s greatest promoters, using his printing press to spread the preacher’s sermons.

“They were a team,” Enck said. “Franklin was the greatest promoter of the greatest event in American history. There were many preachers leading up to 1776, but there were none like Whitefield, and when you combined the power of his voice with Franklin’s ability to get the word out, it unified the colonies.”

According to Enck, before the political revolution came spiritual awakening: “Our tagline says it all: ‘Before the revolution, there was a revelation,’” he said.

In the film, Whitefield delivers a line that encapsulates Enck’s understanding of biblical liberty: “Blood will be shed for the liberty you’re talking about, but blood was already shed for the liberty.”

“The biblical definition of liberty,” Enck explained, “is that blood was already shed for us, freedom from sin so that we can serve the Lord freely. This film doesn’t shy away from the Gospel. We don’t soft-shoe anything.”

Rather than portraying historical figures as flawless icons, the film highlights their humanity and need for a Savior.

“We show the flaws of Ben Franklin. We show the flaws of George Whitefield,” Enck said. “God uses imperfect leaders to transform the world. That’s what happened in the Great Awakening.”

The timing, Enck believes, is significant. The original Great Awakening unfolded during a time of division among denominations and colonies, a time not unlike today. There’s a parallel, he emphasized, in today’s cultural climate marked by division and questions about truth.

“It was the first shared experience across the colonies,” he said. “Eighty percent of colonists didn’t just hear about Whitefield; they heard him preach. They were unified by something they could all believe in.”

“We need something that brings us back together as a nation,” he said. “This film doesn’t have a political agenda. We’re not trying to prove whether every founding father was a Christian. We’re simply telling how this powerful friendship ignited an awakening.”

Though the story has lessons relevant in today’s cultural climate, Enck emphasized that it also serves as a message to the Church.

“The big-C Church needs an awakening,” Enck said. “Before the fireworks and confetti are thrown for the 250th anniversary, we need to come back to the core of what true liberty really is.”

Whitefield himself, Enck noted, was an unlikely leader. Fatherless and raised by a mother who ran a tavern, he trained as an actor at Oxford before experiencing a religious conversion and turning his theatrical voice toward preaching.

“Because of his style, he was kicked out of the Anglican Church,” Enck said. “So he built his own traveling pulpit on horseback.”

One scene depicted in the film shows Whitefield preaching in a coal field in Bristol, England, drawing miners from underground.

“He wrote in his diary that he saw white streaks down their blackened cheeks from tears,” Enck said. “That’s the kind of revolution we’re talking about.”

The project marks another milestone for Sight & Sound, which has spent more than five decades building a reputation for large-scale, immersive biblical stage productions seen by millions of people in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and Branson, Missouri.

Founded in the 1970s by Glenn and Shirley Eshelman, the company is best known for epic live productions such as “Jesus,” “Esther” and “Noah,” featuring massive sets, original music and live animals. In March, the company will premiere a stage version of Joshua.

Today, Sight & Sound employs more than 800 people and reaches audiences worldwide through its theaters, touring productions and Sight & Sound TV, a streaming platform viewed in more than 165 countries.

Its expansion into feature films accelerated during pandemic shutdowns, when live performances were forced to pause.

“When our theaters were closed, the world couldn’t come to us, so we decided to go to them,” Enck, who joined the organization in 1995 as a stagehand and now oversees creative direction as president and chief story officer, said. Their first feature, “I Heard the Bells,” created on a shoestring budget, debuted at No. 2 at the box office.

“Our stage productions have always been very panoramic and cinematic,” Enck said. “The biggest adjustment was learning how to convey truthful moments when the camera comes close and personal.”

He recalled filming a pivotal six-minute speech delivered by Franklin in one continuous take, repeated eight times without error by a theatrically trained actor.

“That’s why I love working with theater actors,” Enck said.

Looking ahead, Enck attributes Sight & Sound’s longevity to discernment rather than trend-chasing. He summed up the ministry’s philosophy with an acronym: EGO, “Edging God Out.”

“We try to say no to hundreds of good ideas and yes to the God idea,” he said. “Once we know, we don’t look back.”

“We are anti-ego,” Enck said. “None of this is about us. It’s about bringing the Bible to life on stage and now on screen and getting out of the way of what God is doing.”

Access the article: <https://www.christianpost.com/news/sight-sound-explores-biblical-liberty-in-the-great-awakening.html>

America 250: Presidential Message On The Birthday Of Benjamin Franklin

By The White House originally published in The White House (January 17 2026)

Today, we celebrate the towering life and legacy of Benjamin Franklin—printer and philosopher, inventor and diplomat, public servant and patriot, and one of the most consequential Americans to ever live. On what would have been his 320th birthday, we honor his restless genius, his steadfast devotion to liberty, and his legendary contributions to our national story.

Born on January 17, 1706, in Boston, Massachusetts, Franklin grew up the 15th of 17 children. Raised with little formal education, he taught himself how to read and write, emerging at age 23 as one of the most successful and influential publishers in the Colonies. He was also a passionate innovator, always striving to improve the lives of his fellow citizens through public service and the marvels of science. Throughout his life, he invented the lightning rod and the first bifocal glasses, harnessed the power of electricity with his famous “key and kite” experiment, established the first public library and volunteer fire department, and served as the first Postmaster General, binding the Colonies together with an organized mail system long before they were bound together as one Nation.

Of his countless triumphs and successes, his most epic contributions to our Republic were those that fortified the cause of freedom. While living in England as an ambassador for the Pennsylvania Assembly, Franklin witnessed firsthand the growing British hostility toward the Colonies. In 1775, Franklin was selected as a delegate to the Second Continental Congress, where, together with fellow patriots John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, he helped draft the Declaration of Independence, suggesting to Jefferson that he include the immortal phrase: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.”

Franklin’s unshakable commitment to the causes of the Revolution ultimately led him across the Atlantic once more, where he played a pivotal role in securing French support for the patriot cause against the British Empire and acted as a principal negotiator of the 1783 Treaty of Paris, which ended the Revolutionary War. After American independence was finally won, he played a vital role in rallying support for the ratification of the Constitution in 1788. Franklin is one of only six men to have signed both the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

Benjamin Franklin is often remembered as the “First American”—a title that reflects a life devoted to curiosity, industry, and the cause of human freedom. His intellect and character helped shape an American identity grounded in courage, self-reliance, and civic duty. Franklin gave the young country confidence and direction, demonstrating how knowledge and public service could advance the cause of liberty. His legacy endures in our institutions, our Constitution, and the very character of our Republic—a testament to how one man’s ideas and actions can echo through the history of a nation for 250 glorious years.

Happy birthday, Benjamin Franklin!

Access the Presidential Message: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/2026/01/america-250-presidential-message-on-the-birthday-of-benjamin-franklin/>

Hillsdale College: The Story Of America - Episode 14: Forgotten Heroes Of The American Revolution

By Hillsdale College. Hillsdale College President Larry Arnn introduces a new video series, "The Story of America," created in partnership with the White House.

Stories that shaped a nation. Faced with a choice between freedom and tyranny, courageous men and women risked their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor to form a more perfect union—the United States of America. As our nation marks its 250th anniversary, we invite you to watch and learn from these fascinating stories that celebrate the American spirit.

Episode 14 (10mins 26secs): Forgotten Heroes of the American Revolution | Scott Turner | United States Secretary of Housing and Urban Development

Prince Estabrook. James Armistead Lafayette. Lemuel Haynes. These voices may be largely unknown, but their sacrifice was no less important. Join Scott Turner, Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, as we delve into the stories behind these forgotten heroes.

Access the video (10mins 26secs): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7UV2Vo5JtqY>
Watch the series so far! https://storyofamerica.hillsdale.edu/#watch_series

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Learn from our online courses: <http://online.hillsdale.edu>
Read Imprimis: <https://imprimis.hillsdale.edu/>

Hillsdale College is an independent institution of higher learning founded in 1844 by men and women "grateful to God for the inestimable blessings" resulting from civil and religious liberty and "believing that the diffusion of learning is essential to the perpetuity of these blessings." It pursues the stated object of the founders: "to furnish all persons who wish, irrespective of nation, color, or sex, a literary, scientific, [and] theological education" outstanding among American colleges "and to combine with this such moral and social instruction as will best develop the minds and improve the hearts of its pupils." As a nonsectarian Christian institution, Hillsdale College maintains "by precept and example" the immemorial teachings and practices of the Christian faith.

The College also considers itself a trustee of our Western philosophical and theological inheritance tracing to Athens and Jerusalem, a heritage finding its clearest expression in the American experiment of self-government under law.

By training the young in the liberal arts, Hillsdale College prepares students to become leaders worthy of that legacy. By encouraging the scholarship of its faculty, it contributes to the preservation of that legacy for future generations. By publicly defending that legacy, it enlists the aid of other friends of free civilization and thus secures the conditions of its own survival and independence.

We the People of Interest

Our New Jersey Signers Of The Declaration Of Independence

Publishers note: As we near July 2026, our 250th Semiquincentennial, we wanted to encourage getting to know our esteemed New Jersey Signers of the Declaration of Independence. This month we feature our 5th and final NJ Signer, Richard Stockton, who was one of the most eloquent attorneys in the colonies and the first person from NJ to sign the Declaration. They truly did pledge their Lives, their Fortunes and their Sacred Honor. We should all learn, remember and pass on their stories and legacy of these forgotten heroes of American history.

- **Abraham Clark** (featured in January 2026: <https://hvragep.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/0126-MercerWe-revised.pdf>)
- **John Hart** (featured in November 2025: <https://hvragep.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/1125-MercerWe.pdf>)
- **Francis Hopkinson** (featured in February 2026: <https://mercervethepeople.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/0226-MercerWe-revised.pdf>)
- **Richard Stockton** (featured in this newsletter)
- **John Witherspoon** (featured in December 2025: <https://hvragep.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/1225-MercerWe.pdf>)



Richard Stockton (1730-1781) Signer Of The Declaration Of Independence

By John C. Glynn, Jr. and Kathryn Glynn 2008 on *Descendants of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence* website

Judge Richard Stockton was the only signer to be put in irons, starved, and imprisoned under brutal conditions by the British four months after signing the Declaration of Independence. He paid the supreme price for placing his signature on the Declaration and pledging his life, his fortune, and his Sacred Honor.

Stockton's great-grandfather was Richard Stockton, 1630-1707, who arrived in New York with his wife Abigail and son Richard II in 1655. He was a descendant of Sir John Stockton (lord mayor of London in 1470) the Lord of Stockton Manor of Malpas Parish in Chester, England. They settled in Flushing on Long Island. In 1691 he became a member of the Society of Friends (Quakers) and purchased 2000 acres of land in Burlington, New Jersey. In 1701 his son Richard II bought 5,500 acres of land from William Penn in Princeton, New Jersey and settled there with his wife Susannah Witham Robinson. The fifth son of Richard II, eight-year-old John Stockton inherited much of his father's land after Richard II died in 1709. Susannah later married Thomas Leonard and remained in Princeton after her husband's death. John Stockton married his cousin Abigail and assumed his wife's Presbyterian faith. John later became a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas. In 1752 John Stockton and his stepfather Thomas Leonard gave money and land to establish the College of New Jersey (later Princeton University) in Princeton, New Jersey.

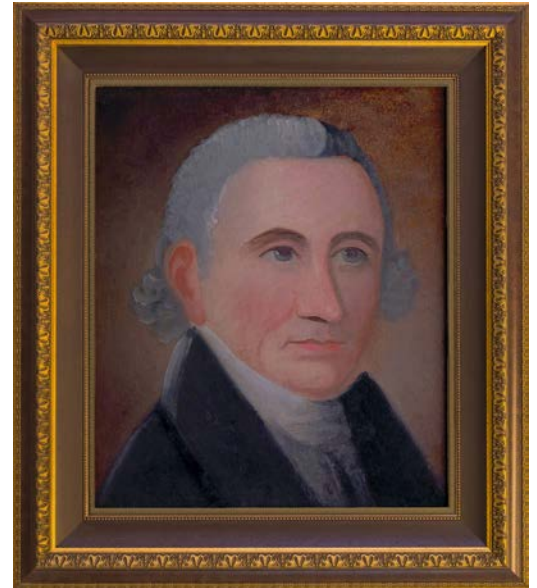
Richard Stockton the signer of the Declaration of Independence was born October 1, 1730 the eldest of eight children born to John and Abigail Stockton. He was educated in the early years by Rev. Doctor Samuel Finley at Nottingham Academy in Maryland, and then attended the College of New Jersey at Newark graduating in 1748 before the college relocated to Princeton. He applied himself to the study of law under the honorable David Ogden of Newark, at that time the most eminent lawyer in the province.

Stockton was admitted to the bar in 1754, to the grade of counselor in 1758, and in 1763 he received the degree of Sergeant-at-Law the highest degree of law attainable. He opened his law practice in Princeton in 1754, and later another in Newark and was recognized as one of the most eloquent lawyers in the colonies.

Stockton was six feet tall, with green eyes and a slender yet powerful build of an accomplished swordsman and horseman. In 1757 he wed Annis Boudinot, built their home Morven, and later had two sons and four daughters. Annis was descended from French Huguenots; her grandfather fled France at the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 and settled in New York. Her father Elias Boudinot Sr, apprenticed as a silversmith and merchant, then traveled to the West Indies to run a plantation. There he married Catherine Williams, the daughter of a Welsh planter in Antigua, West Indies. From Antigua they moved to Darby, Pennsylvania where Annis was born in 1736, then moved to Philadelphia where her father established a shop and home next door to Benjamin Franklin. Annis and her brothers attended Franklin's Academy. Stockton's oldest daughter Julia wed Dr. Benjamin Rush in January 1776; six months later Rush signed the Declaration of Independence. In 1764 Stockton became the Grand Master of the first chartered Masonic lodge (St. John's No 1) in Princeton, New Jersey.

In June 1766, Richard Stockton sailed to London and for fifteen months traveled in England, Scotland, and Ireland. His handsome features and highly polished manners made him very popular. A young English woman Esther DeBerdt, engaged to Stockton's former law student Joseph Reed remarked, "I like Mr. Stockton exceedingly. He is certainly the cleverest man I have yet seen from America." In London he attended the Queen's birthday ball and was presented to King George III, later he had the honor of giving a speech to the King acknowledging the repeal of the Stamp Act and the King was impressed by Stockton. Stockton acquired his personal coat of arms and motto: *Omnia Deo Pendent* — all depends on God.

Stockton's high character and distinguished abilities preceded him and he was received by the most eminent men of the kingdom. American affairs assumed great importance in England at that time and the opinions of so distinguished an American were sought after. By invitation he spent a week at the country estate of the Marquis of Rockingham and was entertained by the Earl of Chatham, the Earl of Chesterfield, and other distinguished members of Parliament friendly to the American Colonies. When Stockton was questioned about America by the secretary of state, he rejoiced that he had nothing to ask of the government "and therefore dare speak my sentiments without cringing. Whenever I can serve my native country, I leave no occasion untried." He frequently attended Westminster Hall and advised all who would listen that the colonies would never submit to be taxed by the British parliament without representation. While in London Stockton met with Benjamin Franklin and conferred with London merchants on the issue of paper money by the colonies and an act of Parliament forbidding it.



Title: Portraits of signers of the Declaration of Independence – Call Number: MSS 12130 – Citation: Robert Edge Pine. Copies of Pine's Portraits of Signers of the Declaration of Independence, 1820, Accession #12130, Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Va.

On his visit to Scotland, he was entertained by the Earl of Leven and other noblemen at Edinburgh Castle and the freedom of the city was conferred on him. While in Scotland as a trustee of the College of New Jersey, Stockton visited Reverend John Witherspoon. Witherspoon had declined the appointment as president of the college because his wife was reluctant to emigrate. Persuaded by Stockton and Benjamin Rush (a medical student in Edinburgh) Witherspoon accepted and became the president of the College, and ten years later signed the Declaration of Independence alongside Stockton and Dr. Benjamin Rush (then Stockton's son-in-law). Like his father, John Stockton a founder of the College and trustee, Richard served as a trustee of the College of New Jersey for 24 years, as would his eldest son Richard.

Two incidents occurred during Stockton's travels that placed his life in peril. He was attacked one night in Edinburgh by a desperate robber and defended himself skillfully with a small sword. The second time his life was preserved was in Ireland. He booked passage on a ship to cross the Irish channel, his baggage was delayed but it proved to be his preservation as the ship sank in a violent storm and all aboard perished, he later crossed safely. In August 1767 he boarded a ship in London and 26 days later arrived in New York.

In 1768, Stockton was elevated to a seat in the royal executive council of New Jersey; in 1774 he was placed on the bench of the Supreme Court. Dreading the possibility of war, on December 12, 1774; he drew up and sent to Lord Dartmouth, Secretary for the Colonies "An Expedient for the Settlement of the American Disputes", a plan for self-government of America, independent of Parliament but owing allegiance to the Crown. "If something of the kind was not done, he warned Lord Dartmouth, the result would be an obstinate, awful, and tremendous war".

When at last all his attempts to change the minds of the British failed, he decided he must, when given a choice of King or country, choose his native country. He resigned his royal appointments and New Jersey elected him to the Continental Congress in June 1776.

On July 1, 1776, Richard Stockton and his good friend Rev. John Witherspoon arrived in Philadelphia to take their place as new members of Congress meeting at the State House (now Independence Hall). It had been a long and muddy ride from Princeton, they had been caught in a violent thunderstorm, and their clothes were soaking wet. Because of the storm they had arrived late, at the end of a speech John Adams was giving in favor of independence. As they had not been present for the entire speech Richard asked Adams to repeat what they had missed. Adams at first refused, but when Stockton again repeated his request and at the urging of Edward Rutledge who said "only Adams had the facts at his command" Adams rose to the occasion and gave a stirring speech in favor of independence. Richard was silent during Adams speech and then listened with thoughtful and respectful attention to the arguments that were offered by supporters and opponents of the declaration under consideration. After hearing the irresistible and conclusive arguments of the honorable John Adams for independence, Richard fully concurred in the final vote in favor of that bold and decisive measure. Richard gave a short but energetic speech at the close of the debate. Richard Stockton later declared Adams "the Atlas of the hour, the man to whom the country is most indebted for the great measure of independency. He who sustained the debate, and by the force of reasoning demonstrated not only the justice, but the expediency of the measure."

In late August 1776, Stockton received an equal number of votes with Mr. Livingston, for Governor of New Jersey; when informed Stockton replied "he had not the least inclination to serve in the office of Governor." He was then elected Chief Justice of the State and again declined the honor, preferring to remain in Congress and was re-elected to Congress in November 1776.

Stockton was an active and influential member of Congress. On September 26th, 1776 he and fellow signer George Clymer of Pennsylvania were sent on an arduous journey of nearly two months duration to inspect the northern army. They were empowered by Congress to contract for provisions, provide barracks, make regulations for hospitals and report back to Congress on the state of the army. They traveled to Albany, Saratoga, Ticonderoga, and every facility necessary to implement their mission, aided by General Schuler, who commanded the northern army. They found the army in need of all necessary things and Stockton reported this to John Hancock. There was no place to acquire these items and unfortunately no money to purchase them with if they were to be found. The continental army had to depend on Congress and the states to provide for them, and help for the army was slow in coming if it came at all.

Stockton wrote fellow signer Abraham Clark "Dear Sir, Before I left Philadelphia Congress appointed a committee, consisting of one member from each state, to devise ways and means for furnishing the Army with clothing etc. As the member appointed for New Jersey, I laid the resolution before our Legislature then sitting at Princeton, and recommended to them the great importance of their approaching persons in every county. They were pleased to take up the matter with that zeal which the nature of it required and determined to take every step that they might in this endeavor to execute the business more effectually and speedily. I hope therefore that already a considerable quantity of shoes and stockings at least may be provided and that you will take immediate order for the sending of the parcels. Col. Dayton's Regiment is moved from Fort Stanwix to Tyconderoga the Col and Major Barber came here last evening and the Regiment is now a few miles of this place, marching with cheerfulness, but a great part of the men barefooted and barelegged. My heart melts with compassion for my brave countrymen who are thus venturing their lives in the public service and yet so distressed. There is not a single shoe or stocking to be had in this part of the world, or I would ride a hundred miles through the woods, and purchase them with my own money—for you'll consider that the weather here must be different from that in New Jersey; it is very cold now I assure

you. For God's sake my dear sir, upon the receipt of this collect all the shoes and stockings you can, and send them off for Albany in light wagons; a couple of two horse wagons will bring a great many, which may be distributed among our several Regiments who will be all together at Tyconderoga in a few days – if any breeches, gloves and coats be ready send them along; but do not wait for them if the shoes and stockings are ready, and the others not—we have dispatches from General Gates this morning informing that he hourly expects to be attacked by the Enemy; but our works are very strong and a Boom thrown across the water from Tyconderoga to prevent the enemies shipping from getting below us, therefore I trust with the blessing of Almighty God, that we shall disappoint their wishes and sanguinary purposes—But shall the brave troops from New Jersey stand in lines half leg deep in snow without shoes or stocking—God forbid. I shall empty my portmanteau of the stockings I have for my own use on this journey, excepting a pair to take back home, but this is a drop of water in the Ocean.” Richard Stockton's heartfelt compassion for his fellow countrymen in dire need of everything was apparent in his letter as he was one of the few signers that actually traveled with the Continental Army.

The British invaded New Jersey and Stockton rushed home and moved his family to the home of a friend thirty miles from Princeton. He was captured there November 30, 1776 by loyalists in the dead of night, drug from his bed and marched in freezing weather clad only in a nightshirt and breeches. He was turned over to the British and jailed in Perth Amboy first, then sent on to prison in New York. The darkest days of his life were spent locked in irons, starving, and shivering in the cold winter of 1776-77 in the notorious Provost prison in New York City. Conditions were horrific in prison where over 12,000 men died in prison ships and prisons in New York compared with 4,435 battle casualties during the entire war.



Morven, Princeton NJ (Preserved public)

On January 3, 1777, General George Washington was directed by Congress to protest “the shocking and inhuman treatment” of the honorable Richard Stockton to General William Howe. Stockton was given a parole by General Howe in mid-January, requiring him to no longer participate in the war effort as was common on both sides. Stockton was sick and near death when he returned home. A week later Stockton's son-in-law and fellow signer Dr. Benjamin Rush wrote “At Princeton I met my wife's father who had been plundered of all his household furniture and stock by the British army, and carried a prisoner to New York, from whence he was permitted to return to his family upon parole.”

Lately Stockton has been maligned by a few writers claiming that Stockton took a pardon from General Howe and swore allegiance to the king. This claim is based on a private letter quoting a rumor spread by an enemy of Stockton. There is no proof this occurred. In March 1777, only two months after Stockton's release, in a letter to British Parliament General Howe wrote “at no time had a leading rebel sought pardon.” The book *His Sacred Honor* comes to Stockton's defense against these revisionist writers using rumors and innuendo to spread this false claim against a founding father.

Stockton's home “Morven” had been occupied by British General Cornwallis. Dr. Benjamin Rush wrote: “The whole of Mr. Stockton's furniture, apparel, and even valuable writings have been burnt. All his cattle, horses, hogs, sheep, grain, and forage have been carried away by them. His losses cannot amount to less than five thousand pounds.” Stockton's library one of the finest in the colonies was burned and he was forced to accept help from his family and friends to survive. Because of Stockton's poor health and the parole requiring him not to participate in the war effort he resigned from Congress. Dr. Rush wrote that it took Stockton nearly two years to recover his health.

Stockton slowly regained his health and returned to his law practice to support his family but later developed cancer. He would not live see his country win independence. He died February 28, 1781; his remains were conveyed to Nassau Hall and eulogized by the President of the College of New Jersey, Dr. Samuel Smith “If what honors this young country can bestow, if many and great personal talents could save man from the grave...Behold here ‘the end of all perfection...to have been a son of this college and it was one the first honors of this college to have given birth to such a son... a man who has long been foremost in his country, for power, for wisdom, and for fortune... Another of the fathers of learning and eloquence is gone. In council he was wise and firm, but always prudent and moderate...The office of Judge of the province was never filled with more integrity and learning that it was by him for several years before the revolution. Since that period, he hath represented New Jersey in the Congress of the United States. But a declining health and constitution worn out with application and with service obliged him, shortly after, to retire from the line of public duty, and hath at length dismissed him from the world.” He was buried at Stony Brook Quaker Cemetery in Princeton, New Jersey among his Quaker ancestors. In 1913 a handsome bronze marker was placed at the site by the Sons of the American Revolution.

Annis Boudinot Stockton was one of America's first female published poets. She was a close friend and favorite correspondent of General George Washington. One of her poems about General Washington, on the surrender of Lord Cornwallis, shows how highly Washington esteemed these complimentary writings by the letter he wrote Annis. “Philadelphia, July 22, 1782. Madam, Your favor of the 17th, conveying to me your pastoral on the subject of Lord Cornwallis' capture, has given me great satisfaction. Had you known the pleasure it would have communicated, I flatter myself, your diffidence would not

have delayed it to this time. Amidst all the compliments which have been made on this occasion, be assured, madam, that the agreeable manner, and the very pleasing sentiments in which yours is conveyed, have affected my mind with the liveliest sensations of joy and satisfaction. This address, from a person of your refined taste and elegance of expression, affords a pleasure beyond my powers of utterance, and I have only to lament that the hero of your pastoral is not more deserving of your pen; but the circumstance shall be placed among the happiest events of my life. I have the honor to be, madam you're most obedient and respectful servant, G. Washington." Many of the letters they wrote are included in Stockton's Biography His Sacred Honor. Annis was the only woman to be made a member of the American Whig Society. Annis Boudinot Stockton died February 6, 1801 surviving her beloved Richard by nearly twenty years.



Annis Boudinot Stockton

Elias Boudinot, brother of Annis, married Stockton's sister Hannah, and was trained as a lawyer by Stockton. In 1772, fifteen-year-old Alexander Hamilton arrived from the West Indies and lived with Elias and Hanna for two years. Boudinot was appointed by General Washington to be commissary general of prisoners in the Revolutionary Army 1776-1779. Boudinot became a member of the Continental Congress in 1778, and President of Congress in 1782-83. On August 23, 1783 George Washington attended the public reception by Congress in Princeton. The black gowned students of Princeton surrounded the door to Nassau Hall and cheered as Washington entered. The gallery was crowded; the floor was reserved for members of Congress; and on the wall hung the empty frame of the portrait of George II, which Alexander Hamilton's cannon ball had destroyed in the fighting of January 3rd at the battle of Princeton six years before. Two members conducted Washington to a chair beside President Elias Boudinot, who remained seated on the platform, with his hat on his head to symbolize the superiority of the civil authority over the military. When the General had seated himself, Boudinot proceeded to read an address of welcome. From the pocket of his close-fitting coat Washington drew his carefully written reply. He read it, and the simple ceremony was over. Paintings of Richard Stockton, George Washington and Elias Boudinot hang in Nassau Hall to this day. Boudinot again served in Congress from 1789-1795. Elias Boudinot is responsible for our Thanksgiving Holiday, he proposed in 1789 in the United States House of Representatives, a resolution that we officially celebrate a day of public thanksgiving. President Washington later issued a proclamation designating a day of prayer and thanksgiving. Boudinot also served as Director of the Mint, and became the first president of the American Bible Society in 1816. Elias Boudinot served his country in many positions during the difficult times of the American Revolution. He died October 24, 1821.

A statue of Richard Stockton by Henry Kirke Brown was dedicated by congressional proceedings in 1888 and placed in Statuary Hall in the Capitol Building in Washington, D.C. Stockton is one of only six signers to be so honored. In the famous painting "The Declaration of Independence" by John Trumbull in the Rotunda of the U.S. Capitol, Richard Stockton is standing on the far-left side of the painting the third figure from the left. In Washington, D.C. near the Washington Monument there is a memorial park to the signers with 56 granite boulders, each engraved with the name of a signer.

There is a Richard Stockton Rest stop on the New Jersey Turnpike with his portrait and a short story.

The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey is named in his honor.

Richard Stockton's home "Morven" became the New Jersey Governor's Mansion from 1954-1981. Morven is now a State-owned Museum, a magnificent home which stands today as a testimonial to the Stockton family. Richard Stockton's eldest son Richard became a New Jersey senator and Stockton's served in Congress for four generations. Richard Stockton's grandson Commodore Robert Field Stockton conquered California, became its first military governor in 1846, and in 1851 served as a Senator from New Jersey.

Access the biography: <https://www.dsdi1776.com/signer/richard-stockton/>



Richard Stockton Statue, Artist: Henry Kirke Brown, 1888, Capitol Crypt, <https://www.aoc.gov/explore-capitol-campus/art/richard-stockton-statue>

Their Lives, Fortunes and Sacred Honor: Richard Stockton - Will Of Richard Stockton

By Wallbuilders (May 29 2023)

The signers of the Declaration of Independence pledged their "lives, fortunes, and sacred honor" so that they and their posterity (us!) could enjoy both spiritual and civil liberties to a degree unknown in the world at that time. That pledge literally cost many of them their lives and fortunes. Some of the 56 signers who sacrificed much include John Hancock, Robert Morris, and John Hart. Richard Stockton was another who paid a great price.

Richard Stockton left us a legacy of patriotism, bravery, and of unwavering devotion to the Christian faith. In fact, in his last will and testament, he pointedly set forth for his children, who at that point were being deprived of their father as a result of the cruel British treatment, the central tenets of Christianity, strongly encouraging them to embrace and follow them.

Access the above information: <https://wallbuilders.com/resource/their-lives-fortunes-and-sacred-honor-richard-stockton/#>

The text and image below are from Richard Stockton's May 20, 1780 will. The complete 1780 will is held by the New Jersey State Archives.

"...And as my children will have frequent occasion of perusing this instrument, and may probably be particularly impressed with the last words of their father, I think it proper here not only to subscribe to the entire belief of the great and leading doctrines of the Christian Religion, such as the Being of God, the universal defection and depravity of human nature, the divinity of the person and the completeness of the redemption purchased by the blessed Saviour, the necessity of the operations of the divine Spirit; of divine Faith, accompanied with an habitual virtuous life, and the universality of the divine Providence: but also, in the bowels of a father's affection, to exhort and charge them, that the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, that the way of life held up in the Christian system, is calculated for the most complete happiness that can be enjoyed in this mortal state; that all occasions of vice and immorality is injurious either immediately or consequentially; even in this life; that as Almighty God hath not been pleased in the holy Scriptures to prescribe any precise mode in which he is to be publicly worshipped, all contention about it generally arises from want of knowledge or want of virtue. I have therefore no particular advice to leave with my children upon this subject, saving that they deliberately and conscientiously, in the beginning of life, determine for themselves, with which denomination of Christians they can, the most devoutly and profitably worship God; that after such determination they steadily adhere to such denomination without being given to change; and without contending with or judging others who may think or act differently upon a matter so immaterial to substantial virtue and piety. That distinguished abilities, stations and authority are only desirable as occasions of doing greater private and public good, but that their footsteps being invariably masked with envy and opposition, make them enemies to private peace, and therefore unless public life is evidently pointed out by divine providence it should rather be avoided than coveted. Of the temporal estate with which it hath pleased Almighty God in his bountiful providence to bless me, I hereby make the disposition following..."



Access the information: <https://wallbuilders.com/resource/will-of-richard-stockton/>

"that the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom"

Further information:

- The White House: Signers of the Declaration of Independence: Watch Video on Richard Stockton (1min 55secs): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pQseDXLdEKM>
- Richard Stockton | The Signers of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution: <https://constitutioncenter.org/signers/richard-stockton>
- U.S. Capitol Richard Stockton Statue (This statue of Richard Stockton was given to the National Statuary Hall Collection by New Jersey in 1888): <https://www.aoc.gov/explore-capitol-campus/art/richard-stockton-statue>
- Meet Richard Stockton: The Imprisoned Founding Father: <https://savejersey.com/2024/07/meet-richard-stockton-the-imprisoned-founding-father/>

- Morven: Our History - As home to one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence and five New Jersey governors, Morven has played a role in the history of New Jersey and the nation for more than 200 years. <https://www.morven.org/history>
- Richard Stockton Historical Marker (Princeton in Mercer County, New Jersey): <https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=44844>

Richard Stockton Books/Collections:

- His Sacred Honor: Judge Richard Stockton: A Signer of the Declaration of Independence (Paperback; January 1, 2006; Authors: John C Glynn Jr., Kathryn Glynn; pages 213)
- Charles L. Goodrich, "Richard Stockton," in Lives of the Signers to the Declaration of Independence, 1856

RICHARD STOCKTON
A SIGNER OF THE
DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE
IS BURIED IN THESE GROUNDS
1730 – 1781

ERECTED BY
THE NEW JERSEY SOCIETY OF THE
SONS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
1913



Richard Stockton Marker, Photographed by Bill Coughlin, July 17, 2011

Presidential Message On Ash Wednesday

By The White House originally published in The White House (February 18 2026)

Today, the First Lady and I join the millions of Christians in the United States and around the world in observing Ash Wednesday—a solemn day of prayer and repentance and the beginning of the Lenten season.

Every Ash Wednesday, Christians receive ashes in the shape of a cross on their foreheads as a visible reminder of our belonging to Jesus Christ and our enduring need for penance. For the next 40 days, in remembrance of Jesus' 40 days of temptation in the desert, followers of Christ will pray, fast, and give alms to deepen their faith, reflect on His redeeming Passion and death, and prepare their hearts for the coming Easter miracle.

As the holy season of Lent begins, we are reminded that the practices of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving have been foundational to our strength from the earliest days of our national story. From the Colonists who turned to prayer and fasting in the heart of the Revolutionary War to the unmatched compassion and generosity of America's churches, hospitals, and charitable institutions, these righteous acts of faith over the centuries have always stood at the center of our identity, our heritage, and our way of life.

This Ash Wednesday, as we remember the Passion and ultimate sacrifice of Christ on the cross, we send our best wishes for a meaningful Lenten season. Above all, as we prepare for the triumphant resurrection of Jesus Christ on Easter Sunday—the greatest miracle in the history of mankind—we pause to remember those sacred words: **"This is the time of fulfillment. The Kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the Gospel."**

Access the Presidential Message: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/2026/02/presidential-message-on-ash-wednesday/>

AMEN. GOD BLESS AMERICA!

Mercer We the People of Hopewell Valley Newsletters:

Access previous issues at: <https://hvrageop.org/merceroe-the-people/>

To report a correction or share feedback, please email us at info@merceroethepeople.com

Mercer We the People

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