



To: Americans for Prosperity Staff and Activists
From: Emily Seidel, CEO, Americans for Prosperity; Senior Advisor, AFP Action
Re: A New Approach to Public Policy and Political Engagement
Date: June 6, 2019

I want to thank you for your commitment to breaking the barriers in public policy that are holding too many people back.

Our team at Americans for Prosperity, representing people in all 50 states who want to make a difference for our country, is coming off the most effective state legislative session we've ever had. And at the federal level over the past 12 months, AFP has elevated the voices of millions of Americans to help pass landmark public policy that is already helping people improve their lives.

These recent experiences have shown when AFP unites with anyone to do right – regardless of political party – we can lead effective and diverse coalitions of people and groups to help achieve meaningful public policy victories.

This is what it took to achieve once-in-a-generation criminal justice reform and significant reforms to the FDA and veterans' health care in 2018. And today, it's what's helping us – in partnership with dozens of other groups – push back against proposals to increase cronyism in the federal tax code by extending costly and unfair loopholes.

Thanks to input from activists, donors, and partners across the country, we are now in a position to do even more. Today, I'm excited to announce two new ways we plan to dramatically expand this proven model for building policy coalitions that get results. We will:

- **Make major investments to help policymakers lead with a positive vision on critical issues.** When policymakers lead principled policy coalitions, they can count on the grassroots activists at AFP – including Concerned Veterans for America and LIBRE – to let the country know about the good work they're doing. We'll bring our full capabilities to bear including major digital and TV advertisements, nation-wide phone calls, door-to-door citizen engagement, grassroots rallies, and more.
- **Expand the AFP team to do even more to provide bold, actionable policy ideas.** Focusing on what's "politically possible" is insufficient for breaking the biggest policy barriers. We will bolster our team to help equip and support policymakers who share that commitment to lead.

These enhancements will help us build stronger policy coalitions based on the ideals of equal rights and opportunity for all, articulated in the Declaration of Independence. They'll improve our abilities to drive reforms applied to issues ranging from economic policy to criminal justice reform, from trade to immigration, free speech to health care, and other issues that matter most to the American people.

One of the biggest challenges to this approach is that those who work to lead nonpartisan coalitions are threatened by people in both parties who prize partisanship over policy outcomes. This makes it difficult for policymakers who want to do what's best for the country to stick their necks out.

Today, AFP and AFP Action are announcing three new ways we will help make good policy, good politics by supporting the election of those who lead when it is the politically difficult thing to do. We will:

- **Redouble our commitment to build diverse policy coalitions by supporting candidates who lead and unite people to achieve principled public policy.** We are committed to unite with anyone to do right and no one to do wrong, regardless of party. Over the coming weeks and months, we expect to announce those candidates that AFP or AFP Action will support in the 2019 and 2020 elections.
- **Support the primary election of lawmakers, regardless of political party, who stick their necks out to lead diverse policy coalitions.** The threat of being primaried prevents policymakers from leading on difficult issues and driving principled policy reforms. AFP or AFP Action will be ready to engage contested U.S. Senate, U.S. House, and state-level primary races, including Republican, Democrat, Independent or otherwise, to support sitting legislators who lead by uniting with others to pass principled policy and get good things done.
- **Elevate civil discourse.** AFP and AFP Action’s advocacy efforts will lead with a positive vision and focus on the issues. Going forward, we will expect the same of candidates we support politically. Addressing complex issues requires working with people who hold different points of view. If candidates engage in personal, *ad hominem* attacks and other divisive tactics during their election, it makes it difficult for them to work productively with others after the election. We can disagree without being disagreeable and AFP is committed to helping chart a new way forward toward civil, political discourse and we encourage others to join us.

Four new issue specific Political Action Committees (PACs) will be created to make contributions directly to candidates. We know that candidates will seldom agree with Americans for Prosperity on every issue. But for those who do the politically difficult job of leading on a critical issue, these issue-specific PACs will make it clear why millions of Americans support them on that issue, even if they have principled disagreements on others. The PACs, which will launch in the coming weeks as new entities working with our broader community, are: Uniting for Economic Opportunity, Uniting for Free Expression, Uniting for Free Trade, and Uniting for Immigration Reform.

While these announcements will help facilitate bipartisan solutions, they are about much more than that. This is about finding *nonpartisan* solutions that enable people who are passionate about the issues that matter to stand more firmly on their principles rather than be forced to abandon them for the sake of helping one or the other political party win the next election. The recent success with criminal justice reform demonstrates that it is not necessary for groups to sacrifice their principles in order to find common ground and policy success.

This won’t be easy. We expect skepticism from those who say it can’t be done. But thanks to you, AFP has often accomplished what others had previously said was impossible. As one of our activists said before leading a successful charge against cronyism in Mississippi, “Just because something is, doesn’t mean that’s the way it has to be.”

We have been blown away by the support from so many of you – our activists, our donors, as well as the response from many other groups who want to partner to expand on these efforts going forward.

I am proud to stand together with you as we help to chart this new chapter in our great nation’s story. Together, we’re extending an invitation to all people to tackle this challenge with us – to join this important new approach to public policy and political engagement in America.