

**The Minnesota Free Market Institute Weekly Update**  
**Friday, October 30, 2009**

## Election Reform: Is the Cure Worse than the Disease?

Earlier this month, the Center of the American Experiment released a report, entitled "No Longer a National Model: Fifteen Recommendations Fixing Minnesota Election Law and Practice." The report, authored by American Experiment Senior Fellow Dr. Kent Kaiser with the input of numerous (but unnamed) contributors, criticizes aspects of the election system in Minnesota and proposes solutions for some of the problems seen in recent days, especially in the lengthy and controversial recount process in the 2008 US Senate race.

The fifteen proposals have already been lauded by the [Pioneer Press](#) and [Politics in Minnesota](#). Many of the proposals are no-brainers. For example, it's unacceptable that "Military absentee ballots were 16 times more likely to be rejected and that most of them were rejected because they were received after Election Day." Logistical problems and a tight schedule from primary to election day in Minnesota are to blame. Another example: (although the debate often carries a partisan edge) the inability to verify voters at the polls with something as simple as a photo ID requirement is a problem. Allowing voters who vote absentee to "verify" their ballots as valid by running them through a test machine seems like a reasonable idea, although the ability to do that doesn't seem like it would help people mailing in ballots, especially from afar. Yet another example: checking to make sure that people aren't voting in multiple states. If somebody applies for a drivers' license in another state, the license in the other state is automatically cancelled. Why not the voter registration? Many of the technical solutions being proposed are sound and simple and one may ask why haven't they been proposed before? One suggestion is already on the table. Senator Al Franken has just submitted a bill to Congress requiring states to grant at least 45 days for overseas ballots to be issued and returned.

There are other suggestions that may generate more controversy. Not, as you might imagine given the Center's

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conservative bent, with liberals who might find changes to be a handicap to access, but rather to conservatives and libertarians who might well ask, how do these suggestions fit with constitutional principles? We are talking about a basic element in our democratic government, one that defines it, gives it its shape and credibility.

[Read more](#) at the Minnesota Free Market Institute

*Margaret Martin is a policy fellow at the Minnesota Free Market Institute.*

## Lord Monckton Appearance Mentioned in Wall Street Journal

The Lord Monckton appearance sponsored by the Minnesota Free Market Institute earlier this month continues to make news. In Wednesday's *Wall Street Journal*, there's a story by Janet Albrechtsen about the Copenhagen Agreement which features Monckton's comments made in his Bethel University address.



### **Has Anyone Read the Copenhagen Agreement? U.N. plans for a new 'government' are scary.**

*"We can only hope that world leaders will do nothing more than enjoy a pleasant bicycle ride around the charming streets of Copenhagen come December. For if they actually manage to wring out an agreement based on the current draft text of the Copenhagen climate-change treaty, the world is in for some nasty surprises. Draft text, you say? If you haven't heard about it, that's because none of our otherwise talkative political leaders have bothered to tell us what the drafters have already cobbled together for leaders to consider. And neither have the media.*

*Enter Lord Christopher Monckton. The former adviser to Margaret Thatcher gave an address at Bethel University in St. Paul, Minnesota, earlier this month that made quite a splash. For the first time, the public heard about the 181 pages, dated Sept. 15, that comprise the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change—a rough draft of what could be signed come December. So far there have been more than a*

*million hits on the YouTube post of his address. It deserves millions more because Lord Monckton warns that the aim of the Copenhagen draft treaty is to set up a transnational "government" on a scale the world has never before seen."*

[Read the rest of the WSJ Article here](#) (subscription may be required)

If you haven't seen Lord Monckton's talk yet you can still do so [here](#). There are multiple video clips as well as a complete version of the presentation. We will be sending out DVD copies of the talk to anyone who requests it as soon as production is finished.

We've received **many** requests for copies of the DVD of the Monckton event from all over the world. If you'd like to help us defray the cost of production and shipping in order to disseminate this powerful message you can donate using [paypal](#) or call Emily at 651-294-3593.

## Must Read

[YouTube Viral Video heats up Global Warming Debate. \(WCCO\) Video](#)

Wednesday night, WCCO featured the Minnesota Free Market Institute and Lord Christopher Monckton's presentation in their story on the rise of climate skepticism among Americans. The polls at the beginning of the story show a clear shift in attitudes in America, only 57% now believe there is direct evidence for global warming, down from over 70% in April of last year and only 35% believe global warming is a serious threat, as opposed to 44% in 2008. The story also included the viral success of Lord Christopher Monckton's presentation, which has amassed over a million and a half views in two weeks. Monckton has been a guest on numerous TV and radio shows along with speaking engagements at tea parties and other events across the US.

The numbers come at a critical time for global warming activists as the Senate looks to take up cap and trade and White House liaisons ready for a trip to Copenhagen to attend the UN's climate change summit.

Arthur C. Brooks [Why Government Health Care Keeps Falling in the Polls. The health-care debate is part of a larger moral struggle over the free-enterprise system.](#) *Wall Street Journal*

American Enterprise Institute President Arthur Brooks explains the contradictory polling results on the President's health care plan as a pitched battle over whether the free enterprise system works. "Americans deserve more credit. They haven't been

brainwashed, and they aren't upset merely over the budget-busting details. Rather, public resistance stems from the sense that the proposed reforms do violence to three core values of America's free enterprise culture: individual choice, personal accountability, and rewards for ambition."

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*This week is the last edition of the Weekly Update that will be edited by Margaret Martin as she is leaving the Minnesota Free Market Institute. Comments and questions about the update can now be sent to [Adam Axvig](#).*

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[The Minnesota Free Market Institute](#) conducts research and advocates for policy that limits government involvement in individual affairs and promotes competition and consumer choice. By analyzing the actions of the past and applying the enduring lessons of the free market, the Minnesota Free Market Institute creates policy options for the future. To donate click [here](#).

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Minnesota Free Market Institute | P.O. Box 120449 | St. Paul | MN | 55112

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