



Executive Alert Extra®



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WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE NCPA

JULY/AUGUST 2000

New Social Security Calculator

“Whether you’re 25 or 55, it’s never too early to plan for your future retirement,” said NCPA President John Goodman at the May 22 unveiling of the center’s new online Social Security calculator at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C.

The NCPA calculator — found at www.mysocialsecurity.org — makes projections for about 500 different occupations, and allows individuals to compute what they will pay in taxes, what they will receive in benefits, and what they would have received if they had invested the same dollars in a private account.

The calculator also shows workers how high the payroll tax rate will have to reach by the time of their retirement to pay for Social Security, Medicare and all other senior health benefits promised under current law. (See related story on page 8).



Texas A&M University economist and NCPA Senior Fellow Andy Rettenmaier explains what individuals might receive if they were allowed to invest a portion of their income in private retirement accounts at the National Press Club unveiling of the NCPA’s new online calculator.

Goodman Briefs Chinese

NCPA President John Goodman briefed a 23-member delegation from the People’s Republic of China at a June 1 meeting on the future of America’s Social Security system.

The behind-closed-doors, off-the-record meeting was held in the Washington, D.C., office of Pharmacia Upjohn. The delegation consisted of central and provincial government officials who work on Social Security issues.



NCPA President John Goodman briefs a delegation from the People’s Republic of China on America’s Social Security system.

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Doctor Slams Canadian Rx Policy

With members of Congress, state legislators and health policy experts debating the merits of Canadian government-run health care and its price-controlled prescription drug system, the NCPA presented a Capitol Hill briefing in May to expose the hard facts about Canadian health care.



Dr. David Gratzer, a Canadian physician and author of the book "Code Blue," exposes the hard facts about Canadian health care during a recent NCPA briefing on Capitol Hill.

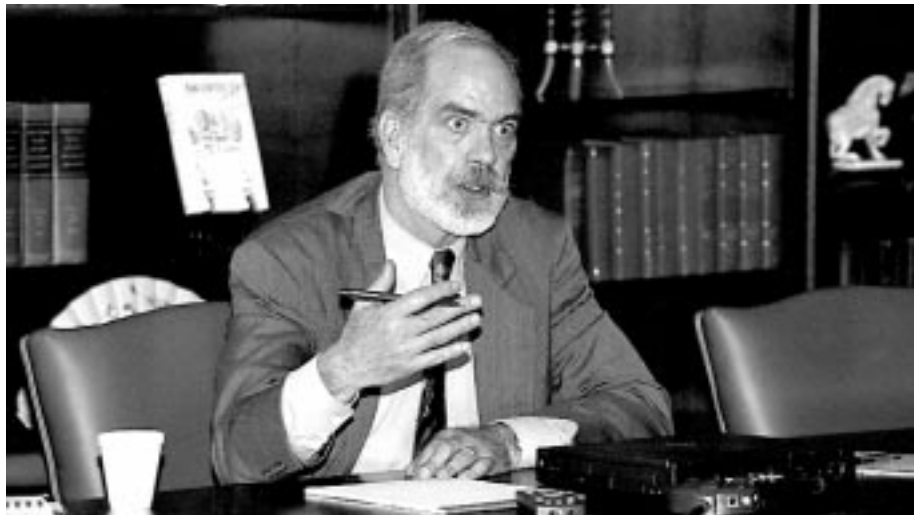
Dr. David Gratzer, a Canadian physician and author of the book "Code Blue: Reviving Canada's Health Care System," said that while Canada's price-controlled prescription drug system, "doesn't look that bad on the surface ... when government meddles, you have unintended consequences."

Gratzer said that price controls in Canada have "effectively killed off research and development." He noted that the nation relies heavily on new drugs being developed in the U.S.

Gratzer's book, winner of the Donner Prize for best book on Canadian public policy, examines the foibles of the Canadian health care system.



Jack Strayer, NCPA vice president of external affairs, and Greg Scandlen, NCPA senior fellow in health policy, introduces an NCPA briefing on drug policy and health care in Canada.



Greg Scandlen discusses defined contributions in health care at a Heritage Foundation briefing in May.

Scandlen Promotes Employee Power

Greg Scandlen, NCPA senior fellow in health care, was the featured speaker at a Heritage Foundation briefing on, "Defined Contributions in Health Care," in May.

Scandlen, one of the nation's leading experts on defined contributions, said companies of all sizes increasingly want to end their role as the middle-man between their employees and the insurance companies they contract with to provide health benefits.

"Employers are tired of being the monkey in the middle in disputes between employees and health plans," he said. "And employees will be better served if they, rather than their employers, choose their own health plans."

Scandlen spoke on "defined contribution plans" to three of the nation's largest business groups, including the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB), U.S. Business and Industrial Council and the employee benefits committee of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Gingrich Salutes NCPA in Houston

Residents from across Southeast Texas gathered in Houston in early May to hear former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich discuss life after government and politics.

Gingrich was a guest at an NCPA breakfast featuring, "A Conversation with Newt Gingrich." Attendees were treated to an informal dialogue between Gingrich and NCPA President John Goodman.

Gingrich praised Goodman and the NCPA for coming up with the core tax ideas in the "Contract with America." He said most of the Contract's planks were signed into law.

A Special Thank You to Houston Host Committee Members

The NCPA would like to extend a special thank you to the following Host Committee members who supported the "Conversation With Newt Gingrich" breakfast in Houston: U.S. Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison, U.S. Reps. Kevin Brady, Tom DeLay and Ron Paul, W. Tom Arnold, M.D., Marjorie Arshat, Louis B. Cushman, Harry Gee, Elizabeth Grist, William S. Kilroy, Jr., Linda and Ken Lay, Charles Miller, Gary Polland, Alice Pratt, Annette and George Strake, Chase Untermeyer, C. Donald Van Wart, Suzanne and Jim Waller, and Ann and Bob Williams.



Former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich "in conversation" with NCPA President John Goodman.

Texas' Uninsured Problem Explained

A large number of people in Texas lack health insurance and the federal government shares a lot of the blame, said NCPA President John Goodman in testimony May 10 before the state's Blue Ribbon Commission on health care.

Goodman — appointed to the commission by Gov. George W. Bush — blamed federal mandates that give states little leeway in spending funds earmarked for health care.

"The uninsured are encouraged to be dependent on government handouts," Goodman said. "Texas is not allowed to use most of its safety net money to help people obtain private health insurance."



NCPA President John Goodman says the federal government is partly to blame for Texas' uninsured population in testimony before the state's Blue Ribbon Commission on the Uninsured.

Sirico Makes Moral Case for Sound Money

"Free-market conservatism is the true compassionate economic model," said the Rev. Robert A. Sirico, president of the Acton Institute, who has dedicated his life to teaching students of religious studies that money is not the "root of all evil."

Speaking at a recent Policy Forum luncheon sponsored by the NCPA and the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, Sirico said, "Money feeds and clothes us and it makes charity possible for the poor. High taxes and spending deprive the American people of the opportunity to provide charity and to contribute to a prosperous society."



The Rev. Robert Sirico talks with Rena Pederson, editorial page editor of the Dallas Morning News, at a recent Policy Forum luncheon.

NCPA Welcomes 4 Dallas Interns

Four summer interns joined the NCPA staff in Dallas in May to experience the inter-workings of a think tank firsthand.

Blake Bailey recently completed his sophomore year at Trinity University in San Antonio, majoring in economics and history. This summer, Blake is working with Senior Policy Analyst Sterling Burnett on research involving environment and gun policies.



Blake Bailey

this summer in the Marketing and Public Affairs Department on media-related activities.

Melanie Looney is seeking a Master's degree in Political Science, specializing in Public Policy from Utah State University. She is spending much of the summer working in the Publications Department researching education-related issues.



Melanie Looney



Raluca Bragarea

Raluca Bragarea is a second year student in the Master of Communication Arts and Sciences program at California State University in Chico. A native of Romania, Raluca is working



Cindy Stanfield

Cindy Stanfield, a first year student in the Master of Public Service and Administration program at the George Bush School of Government at Texas A&M University, is working in the Development Department helping with fundraising projects.

Burnett: Concealed Carry Works

On May 26, NCPA Senior Policy Analyst Sterling Burnett helped mark the fifth anniversary of Texas' concealed-carry legislation at an Austin rally with state lawmakers.

"Many predicted that minor incidents would escalate into bloody shootouts if Texas passed a concealed-carry law," Burnett said. "They were dead wrong."

In 1995, Texas Gov. George W. Bush signed a law granting Texans the

right to carry concealed firearms. This made Texas the twenty-third state to pass a concealed carry law since 1986.

According to Burnett, the more than 200,000 Texans who have become licensed to carry a concealed firearm are much more law-abiding than the average person. "Far from recreating the Wild West, concealed carry laws create a safer society," he said. "The law allows law-abiding citizens to protect themselves."

NCPA 2000 EVENT SCHEDULE

The NCPA is pleased to announce the following events for 2000. Details for each event listed below will be forthcoming.

July 13

John Raybould

The Adam Smith Institute
NCPA/Federal Reserve Policy Forum Tribute to Friedrich von Hayek, Dallas

October 20

Kenneth Starr

Former Independent Counsel
Summers Lecture, Dallas

November 9

James R. Lilley

Former U.S. Ambassador to China
NCPA/Federal Reserve Bank Policy Forum, Dallas

November 12-15

Chairman's Club Conference

Rough Creek Lodge, Glen Rose, Texas

December 4

James A. Baker III

Former Secretary of State
Summers Lecture, Dallas

Call the NCPA Events Department at 972-386-6272 for details.

Daily Policy Digest: Hot Summer Reading

The NCPA has an online, daily public policy briefing called Daily Policy Digest. Every business morning, we summarize some of the country's hottest public policy research findings that appear in major newspapers such as the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Investor's Business Daily, Washington Post and Washington Times; in magazines, including Reason and National Review; and in studies released by think tanks like the Heritage Foundation, the Cato Institute and the American Enterprise Institute.

If you would like to receive Daily Policy Digest, log on to our web site at www.ncpa.org and fill out the online subscription form.

Executive Alert Extra®

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