



STATE LEGISLATORS FOR LEGAL IMMIGRATION

State Legislators for Legal Immigration is a coalition of anti-immigrant state-elected officials. As a partner of the John Tanton Network, a web of controversial anti-immigrant organizations orchestrated by John Tanton, State Legislators for Legal Immigration (SLLI) serves as the legislative arm of the network, and works closely with the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR).

FAIR and John Tanton (a Petoskey, Michigan-based retired ophthalmologist) have a long history of working with and financially supporting far-right extremist groups and individuals with virulent anti-immigration agendas and ties to white nationalism. Despite its claims to represent the “mainstream” of the American anti-immigrant movement, FAIR’s history is far from benign.

In 1997, Tanton solicited and received \$1.2 million from the white supremacist Pioneer Fund to build his anti-immigrant powerhouse, FAIR. The Pioneer Fund was founded to promote the pseudo-science called eugenics, which purports to show that African Americans are mentally inferior to whites because of their genetic makeup. FAIR founder and current board member John Tanton has also supported and published the works of racial eugenics authors, such as the well-known white nationalist leader Samuel Francis.

Two former FAIR employees have been publicly associated with the Council of Conservative Citizens, the organization that reconstituted the 1950’s (segregationist) White Citizens’ Councils. FAIR’s former Deputy Director K. C. McAlpin, now current executive director of Tanton’s English-only organization, Pro-English was a “featured speaker” at the memorial forum held for white nationalist Dr. Samuel Francis in 2007.

SLLI works hand-in-hand with the John Tanton Network to distort the issue of immigration and undermine America’s values of equality and liberty. In February 2008, FAIR stated that SLLI “has worked closely with FAIR and the Immigration Reform Law Institute to develop state laws and to generate grassroots support for state enforcement efforts.”

FAIR’s legal arm, Immigration Reform Law Institute (IRLI), supplies “model” legislation for members of SLLI and has developed an “online model legislation clearing house” for state legislators. In a press statement, Pennsylvania state representative Daryl Metcalfe, the founder of SLLI, also acknowledged its “working partnership with the Immigration Reform Law Institute (IRLI).”

The SLLI-IRLI relationship will help “to create a comprehensive package of model National Security Begins at Home legislative reform solutions that any state lawmaker can introduce to

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effectively shut off all economic attractions and incentives for illegal alien invaders," Metcalfe was quoted as saying in the press release.

Examples of SLLI legislation influenced by FAIR and IRLI include:

- Missouri--In March 2009, SLLI member Rep. Brian Neives co-sponsored HB 390, a bill developed by IRLI lawyer Kris Kobach;
- Oklahoma--In 2007, SLLI member Rep. Randy Terrill (OK-53) sponsored Oklahoma HB 1804 and worked closely with FAIR and IRLI to develop the bill.

Unlike FAIR's mainstream veneer, Metcalfe employs extremist rhetoric by calling immigrants "illegal alien invaders." On March 17, 2009 Metcalfe aligned himself with the the states sovereignty movement as a featured speaker in a rally for states' rights, a key issue championed in white supremacist circles to support slavery during the American Civil War and segregation in the 1950s.

During the rally, Metcalfe thanked an Oklahoma senator for "leading the charge for [states rights] and hopes that Pennsylvania will follow." Metcalfe closed with urging "people to rise up and serve those politicians with notice that we will not stand for a violation of our constitution any longer."

In a 2008 press release, Metcalfe went on to say that, "It's no secret that our federal government has been AWOL for decades in doing their (sic) job of defending our nation from illegal alien invaders."

Metcalfe encourages state legislators to intervene in immigration issues, although Constitutional scholars have, for many years, said that immigration enforcement falls exclusively within the domain of the federal government.

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