

# The Republican Club of Sun City

## NEWSLETTER

May 2018

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Sun City Texas

(Topics in this newsletter: The Teacher-Pupil Relationship, Due Process in Schools, Conservatives Comment on Welfare Policy)

### TEXAS COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION TO ADDRESS CLUB JUNE 7

Mike Morath, State Commissioner of Education, the person responsible for overseeing the education of more than five million public and charter school students, will address the club during its dinner meeting scheduled for **Thursday, June 7 in the ballroom of the Social Center in Sun City.**

According to *The Educator's Guide to Texas School Law*, "Other than the legislature, the most powerful state-level player is the Texas Commissioner of Education, whom the governor appoints and removes with the advice and consent of the Texas Senate. The legislature designates the commissioner as the educational leader of the state. The commissioner also serves as the executive officer of the TEA and executive secretary of the State Board of Education. Among some forty responsibilities the legislature has assigned to the commissioner are adopting an annual budget for the Foundation School Program, performing duties in connection with the public school accounting system, and imposing interventions and sanctions for low-performing campuses and school districts."

Mike Morath was appointed Texas Commissioner of Education by Gov. Greg Abbott in December 2015 and took office in January of 2016. As Commissioner, he heads the Texas Education Agency, which oversees pre-kindergarten through high school education for more than five million students enrolled in both traditional and charter schools. Prior to becoming the state's Education Commissioner, Morath served on the Dallas Independent School District board of trustees for more than four years. During that time, he focused on academic improvements. And by his final year on the board, DISD witnessed dramatic improvement in the areas of kindergarten readiness, fourth grade math proficiency on the National Assessment of Educational Progress, high school graduation rates, and minority student performance on Advanced Placement tests that outpaced all large urban districts in the country.

A strong advocate of public education, Commissioner Morath graduated from Garland High School in the Garland Independent School. And thanks to the great public school education he received in Texas, he went on to earn a Bachelor of Business Administration degree, summa cum laude, from George Washington University in two-and-a-half years.

During this club meeting, Morath will discuss a number of "hot button" issues, possibly including (1) immigration policy and the challenge to Texas public schools, (2) the present status of the Core Curriculum in Texas and the nation, (3) school choice for today's parents, and (4) Texas' standardized testing plan.

#### INFORMATION ABOUT THE MEETING OF JUNE 7

**BEGINNING TIMES: Doors Open – 5:45 pm; Social Period – 6:00 pm; Dinner – 6:30 pm; Program – 7:00 pm**  
**MENU:** Mexican Frenzy: chicken & beef fajitas, corn & flour tortillas, Mexican rice, charro beans, condiments & garden salad with 2 dressings. Optional is grilled chicken breast on salad.

**COST:** Dinner fee is \$18 per person. Checks made out to "The Republican Club of Sun City" should be mailed to: **The Republican Club of Sun City, 1530 Sun City Blvd., Suite 120, PMB 227, Georgetown, TX 78633**, or left in a special drop box located on the front porch of the home of club treasurer Gene Edwards at 202 Duck Creek Lane. For information, contact Gene at 520-990-1159 or [geneedwards@earthlink.net](mailto:geneedwards@earthlink.net) The deadline for payment or reservations is Friday, June 1.

Attendees are reminded of the request made by the Executive Committee that advanced payments for the dinner be submitted by the payment deadline so that the proper amount of food can be ordered, and that attendees who have made reservations in advance make payments *prior* to the meeting, when possible, so that a "bogging down" of the line at the ballroom entrance can be avoided.

VISITORS ARE WELCOME! Non-members may attend a maximum of two meetings per year – as attendees for the dinner or as observers for the program – without having to pay membership dues.

### HEAD OF TEXAS REPUBLICAN PARTY TO ADDRESS CLUB JUNE 27

James Dickie, who was elected President of the Texas Republican Party by the State Republican Executive Committee (SREC) to fill the unexpired term of former president Tom Melcher who resigned from that post effective May 20, 2017, will address the club during its dinner meetings scheduled for **Thursday, June 27 in the ballroom of the Social Center in Sun City.**

Information about that meeting will be provided in the June newsletter.

## OTHER CLUB NEWS

**Plan to Report Deaths of Club Members Announced.** The Executive Committee, after determining there was a need to report deaths of club members to the club membership, considered two basic plans to satisfy that need. One would be primarily based on the practice of sending to club members notices by email of dates, times, and locations of memorial services of the deceased; however, it was recognized that such plan would, mainly because of problems meeting deadlines, result in inconsistencies with some notices being sent in a timely manner with other notices being sent too late – or perhaps not at all. The Committee believed such inconsistencies should be avoided.

An alternate plan – which was adopted – while not ruling out the possibility of sending out such notices on occasion, would provide for a posting, under a proper heading, the names of deceased club members in the club newsletter. This plan may be more appropriate based on the fact that members are “kindred spirits” having a common interest in other clubs as do their members. The intent is to avoid members receiving multiple death notices.

To carry out this plan, the Committee requests that club members, upon learning of the passing of a club member, inform a club officer or the newsletter editor of that passing.

**Statistics.** VP (for membership) Brian Olson reports that club membership for 2018 currently stands at 351. Club treasurer Gene Edwards reports there were 139 attendees at the dinner meeting of April 19, with an additional person attending as an observer.

## IN MEMORIAM

The following club members of 2018 are now deceased:

**Nancy Moss**

**Darlene Plyter**

**Richard Zipp**

May they rest in peace

## COURTS AND THE TEACHER-PUPIL, PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP

### Can “Respect for Authority” no Longer be Inculcated in the Young?

**Foreword.** During the months of February, March and April, numerous “walkouts” by students throughout the nation and even locally – such as Austin, Leander and Georgetown – ostensibly in support of gun control took place. There were also student walkouts for other reasons, such as the ones reportedly on April 11 to protest legal abortions and government funding to Planned Parenthood. And there could be even more walkouts for a host of other political reasons.

How are schools handling student walkouts? Do they prohibit or condone them? The *Austin American-Statesman* reported that, “Across Texas, the demonstrations have met with varying degrees of resistance from school leaders, some of whom say they won’t condone political activity that disrupts the school day. Students from multiple school districts said on social media they were warned not to participate, and one Houston-area district threatened three-day suspensions for students who protested.”

These protests bring to mind the student protests involving the Viet Nam war of almost 50 years ago which brought about the Supreme Court case of 1969 styled *Tinker v. Des Moines School District*, a case which brought about staggering changes in schools, including the bringing of the Constitution to public school students and an undermining of the doctrine *in loco parentis* which had provided school personnel with the authority of parents when dealing with students.

This report is presented on grounds that the rulings of the *Tinker* case and certain other ancillary rulings should be critically reviewed with the objective of determining if there could be a connection between them and the present dissatisfaction with public schools, the violence in public schools (including shootings), an undermining of a “respect for authority” needed by individual teachers and principals, the family and society.

This report – which is comprehensive, the reader is informed – consists of the following sections: (1) pertinent information about the *Tinker* case, (2) the effect of the federal government’s 2011 “Initiative”, still in effect, aimed at “ending the school-to-prison pipeline,” and (3) excerpts from a wonderfully-written court opinion written by Justice Thomas providing important pedagogical historical and legal information about why the holdings of the *Tinker* case should be abandoned.

**The *Tinker* Case.** In 1965, a group of Des Moines principals became aware of a plan for students, through the use of arm bands, to use the schools as a platform to protest the Vietnam war. The principals, out of fear of disturbance, banned the use of the arm and suspended students who did not comply. Some suspended students sued.

The District Court, using the then-prevailing “reasonableness” test, concluded the action of school authorities was reasonable because it was based upon fear of disturbance, and dismissed the case. But the Supreme Court, in a conclusion which was to have all sorts of ramifications, said, in reversing the District Court, “undifferentiated fear or apprehension are not enough to overcome the right to freedom of expression.” The Supreme Court, also said, “Where there is no finding and no showing that engaging in the forbidden conduct would materially and substantially interfere with the requirements of appropriate discipline in the operation of the the school, the prohibition cannot be sustained.” This meant that judges, who work in settings about as far removed from settings of a classroom as can be imagined, will judge “appropriate discipline” in schools.

There were some dissenting opinions. Justice Stewart stated, “I cannot share the court’s uncritical assumption that...First Amendment rights of children are co-extensive with those of adults.” Justice Black stated, “School discipline, like parental discipline, is an integral and important part of training our children to be good citizens.”

**The Law and the Teacher-Pupil Relationship.** Legal commentator Chaffee makes the following straight-forward contention: “The central idea of our law is relation.” He explains that we speak of the law of principal and agent, landlord and tenant, and vendor and purchases. He also points out that while the written word will describe much of the relation between two parties, the relation is also given definition by unwritten sources such as tradition and usage – in addition to court decisions.

Generally speaking, the *in loco parentis* model gave to teachers the same authority over students as parents over their children, which meant when there was a questioning of a teacher or parental authority the response could be “Because I said so.” That explanation is, surprisingly, still in vogue. An op-ed piece appearing in the March 13 issue of the *Wall Street Journal* spoke approvingly of the citing and application of that phrase. And John Rosemond, a licensed psychologist who now rejects much of psychology’s teachings, approves of the use of that phrase by parents, and has published a book with that phrase as its title.

**Problems Which Have Emerged With Tinker.** Up until the *Tinker* decision, courts were comfortable with *in loco parentis*, but with the erosion of that concept, there has been considerable uncertainty about legal matters. Courts have not in all cases given students full constitutional rights commensurate with adults, despite the court’s language which – except for the term “appropriate discipline” (whatever that means) – suggests they do.

Courts have already found the *Tinker* standards as simply being unworkable in some circumstances as evidenced by the following exceptions to those standards: (1) when a public school student used an explicitly “sexual metaphor” in a speech, (2) when a school newspaper is involved, and (3) when a student sign promotes the use of illegal drugs. Justice Clarence Thomas notes with some sarcasm, “our jurisprudence now says that students have a right to speak in schools except when they don’t.” (There may be other more recent exceptions)

**The “Initiative” to Reduce Jail Populations and the “Respect for Authority.”** In 2011, during the Obama Administration, the Attorney General (Eric Holder) and the Education Secretary (Arne Duncan) launched an “Initiative” aimed at “ending the school-to-prison pipeline” by placing an onus on schools to address the problem of juvenile delinquency. Then in January 2014, the Justice and Education Departments released a joint “Dear Colleague” letter warning that federal officials would investigate schools that failed to address disparate discipline rates for minority students. The intent was to help rule-breaking students avoid permanent blots on their records by reducing referrals to law enforcement. The effect worked. In Chicago, for example, school-based arrests dropped by 63 percent from 2012 to 2016. But there were adverse consequences.

Nikolas Cruz, the person accused of killing 14 students and 3 teachers, was a student at the high school in Parkland, Florida, which had signed an agreement which included “a diversionary program for repeat offender called PROMISE and listed 14 misdemeanors that were no longer subject fo school-based arrest.” This agreement enabled Cruz – who was known to have school-based offenses, including assault and threats – to be transferred to other schools six times in three years, but never punished. His infractions were not on his arrest record.

Questions: Should this student – and other such students in more than 50 large school districts participating in this program – have any “respect for authority?” Should other students, aware of these manipulations, have “respect for authority?”

#### JUSTICE THOMAS' OPINION OF THE TINKER RULING

**Foreword.** The 2007 *Morse v. Frederick* case involved a student who promoted the use of illegal drugs by certain language on a banner which was then confiscated by the principal. The student then sued the school for relief and sued the principal, it should be noted, for damages. The district court upheld the principal while the ninth circuit upheld the student. The case then went to the Supreme Court where the principal was upheld largely on grounds that the issue of the case should be an “exception” to requirement of *Tinker*, as was noted above.

In an usual concurring opinion, Justice Thomas upheld the principal, but then added a special opinion advocating the abandonment of the holdings in *Tinker* case which, it should be noted, was adjudicated in 1969

before Thomas was a member of the Court.

The reader is urged to note that during an earlier era, teachers were expected to inculcate good manners and good behavior in their students. In addition, the reader is urged to reflect on the question of whether the holdings of *Tinker* – which are still in effect – can have contributed to the instability and violence existing in schools and society today.

Excerpts from Thomas' opinion are shown below in italics.

**Background.** *I write separately to state my view that the standard set forth in Tinker is without basis in the Constitution.*

*In my view, the history of public education suggests that the First Amendment, as originally understood, does not protect student speech in public schools. If students in public schools were originally understood as having free-speech rights, one would have expected 19<sup>th</sup> century public schools to have respected those rights and courts to have enforced them. They did not.*

*Like their private counterparts, early public schools were not places for freewheeling debates or exploration of competing ideas. Rather, teachers instilled “a core of common values” in students and taught them self-control.*

*Teachers instilled these values not only by presenting ideas but also through strict discipline. Schools punished students for behavior the school considered disrespectful or wrong. Parkerson noted that children were punished for idleness, talking, profanity, and slovenliness. Rules of etiquette were enforced, and courteous behavior demanded.*

**In loco parentis.** *Through the legal doctrine of in loco parentis, courts upheld the right of schools to discipline students, to enforce rules, and to maintain order. As early as 1837, state courts applied the in loco parentis principle to public schools:*

*“One of the most sacred duties of parents, is to train up and qualify their children, for becoming useful and virtuous members of society; this duty cannot be effectually performed without the ability to command obedience, to control stubbornness, to quicken diligence, and to reform bad habits . . . The teacher is the substitute of the parent . . . and in the exercise of these delegated duties, is invested with his power. [Court citation]*

*Applying in loco parentis, the judiciary was reluctant to interfere in the routine business of school administration, allowing schools and teachers to set and enforce rules and maintain order. Thus, in the early years of public schooling, schools and teachers had considerable discretion in disciplinary matters:*

*“To accomplish the desirable ends [of teaching self-restraint, obedience, and other civic virtues], the master of a school is necessarily invested with much discretionary power . . . He must govern these pupils, quicken the slothful, spur the indolent, restrain the impetuous, and control the stubborn. He must make rules, give commands, and punish disobedience.*

**The Tinker Case.** *Tinker effected a sea change in students' speech rights, extending them well beyond traditional bounds. The case arose when a school punished several students for wearing black armbands to school to protest the Vietnam War. Determining that the punishment infringed the students' First Amendment rights, this Court created a new standard for students' freedom of speech in public schools:*

*“Where there is not finding and no showing that engaging in the forbidden conduct would materially and substantially interfere with the requirement of appropriate discipline in the operation of the school, the prohibition cannot be sustained. [from text of Tinker case]*

*Accordingly, unless a student's speech would disrupt the educational process, students had a fundamental right to speak their minds (or wear their armbands) - even on matters the school disagreed with or found objectionable. “The schools must be able to show that its action was caused by something more than a mere desire to avoid the discomfort and unpleasantness that always accompany an unpopular viewpoint”*

**Conclusions.** *I am afraid that our jurisprudence now says that students have posed a new and malleable standard: Schools could not inhibit student speech unless it “substantially interfered with the requirements of appropriate discipline in the operation of the school. Inherent in the application of that standard are judgment calls about what constitutes interference and what constitutes appropriate discipline. Historically, courts reasoned that only local school districts were entitled to make those calls. The Tinker Court usurped that traditional authority for the judiciary.*

*Justice Black may not have been “a prophet or the son of a prophet,” but his dissent in Tinker has proved prophetic. In the name of the First Amendment, Tinker has undermined the traditional authority of teachers to maintain order in public schools. “Once a society that generally respected the authority of teachers, deferred to their judgment, and trusted them to act in the best interest of school children, we now accept defiance, disrespect, and disorder as daily occurrences in many of our public schools.”*

## COURTS NOW INVOLVED IN SCHOOL DUE PROCESS MATTERS Is “Respect for Authority” no Longer Possible?

The Supreme Court, in the *Goss v. Lopez* case, extended to children Constitutional rights involving Constitutional due process - in addition to First Amendment rights. Author Kay Hymowitz describes that case as follows: “In 1975, the Supreme Court hampered school officials' authority yet further in *Goss v. Lopez*, a decision that expanded the due-process rights of students. The *Goss* case concerned several students suspended for brawling in the school lunchroom. Although the principal who suspended them actually witnessed the fight itself, the court concluded that he failed to give the students an adequate hearing before lowering the boom. Students, pronounced the court, are citizens with a property right to their education. To deny that right requires, at the least, an informal hearing with notice, witnesses, and the like.”

Hymowitz then illustrates the ensuing complexities:

**The principal wants to send [a] kid home, but he's not sure its withing his authority to do so, so he calls the superintendent. The superintendent is also unsure, so he calls the district's lawyer. The lawyer's concern, though, isn't that the child has breached the boundaries of respect and tolerance, and needs an adult to tell him so, but whether disciplining the student would violate the First Amendment.**

Hymowitz then points out some of the deleterious effects which come about when legal considerations replace those emanating from a traditional student-teacher relationship:

- The influence of lawyers over school discipline means that educators speak to children in an unrecognizable language, far removed from the straight talk about right and wrong that most children crave. Students correctly sense that what lies behind such desiccated language is not a moral worldview and a concern for their well-being and character, but fear of lawsuits.
- More important, the mere potential for a lawsuit shrinks the adult in the child's eyes. It transforms the person who should be the teacher and the representative of society's moral and cultural values into a civil servant who may or may not please the young, rights-armed citizen. The natural relationship between adult and child begins to crumble..

## THREE CONSERVATIVE LEADERS WHO EXPERIENCED POVERTY OFFER COMMENTS ON THAT SUBJECT

**Foreword.** President Trump recently signed an executive order on April 10 known as “Reducing Poverty in America by Promoting Opportunity and Economic Mobility” which ordered the department of Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, and six other departments to review certain programs with a view of requiring most recipients to work or enter a serious job training program, according to *World*.

Because there may considerable resistance to the notion of requiring welfare recipients to work or undergo training, a review of the nation's past, present and contemplated welfare program should be considered by the general public so the public can support those requirements. That is the purpose of this report.

Some history of government efforts to deal with poverty can be instructive. The reader may recall that, in 1996, Congress adopted a welfare reform law which was one that dealt with only one program, Aid to Families With Dependent Children. Congress left alone more than 70 others. And then President Obama, in defiance of that law, nullified that work requirement. Marvin Olasky, Editor in Chief of *World*, describes the ensuing situation in his May 12 issue: “While unemployment is low just about everywhere in the US, welfare enrollment among able-bodied adults is at a record high. It's troubling that while organizations across America have trouble filling available jobs, about 16 million able-bodied adults receive food stamps – actually, a food credit card through SNAP. Fifteen million of them do not work.”

Olasky, aware of this history and the incentives of liberals and progressives to give away money with little, if any, regard for cost, is not optimistic about the future – especially when policy is based on executive order – rather than legislation - such as the one Trump just issued. Olasky contends:

**Little of it can be done by executive order as long as the federal bureaucracy is filled with people who see required work as punishment for the poor – and know how to interpret regulations in ways that maximize alternatives to work and exceptions to requirements. Opponents of change can mobilize liberal judges to halt imposition of new standards. They will enlist liberal academics to produce studies claiming that change will hurt children.**

**And yet, it will be a battle to get even simple changes through Congress – and to sustain them through several elections. Many of our legislators think any work requirement is onerous.**

There are, however, at least three influential voices who, having personally experienced the effects poverty, take issue with the notion that recipients of welfare should not have requirements of work or training for a job imposed on them. One might speculate that, generally speaking, advocates of a plan which does not include work or training have not, in their past, had to deal with poverty on a personal level. Their motives therefore could range from altruism, to adherence to a socialist/communist doctrine, to the buying of votes.

The reader is urged to consider the views, presented below, of heads two of the most prestigious and influential conservative think tanks in the nation: Kay Coles James, recently elected President of the Heritage Foundation, and Brooke Rollins, Chief Executive of the Texas Public Policy Foundation, now on leave to serve as Special Assistant to President Trump. And, in addition, the views of Dr. Ben Carson, currently head of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and a past candidate for U. S. president.

But before their views are revealed, some pertinent background information is presented.

**The Beginning of the Welfare State.** Columnist, author and university professor Walter Williams discusses how poverty was handled prior to the advent of the welfare state, and some of the cultural changes which came about with the involvement of the federal government which, it should be noted, comes about without the authorization of the Constitution. There is no provision authorizing such participation.

**Before the massive growth of our welfare state, private charity was the sole option for an individual or family facing insurmountable financial difficulties or other challenges. Respecting the Biblical commandment to honor thy father and mother, children took care of their elderly or infirm parents. Family members and the local church also helped those who had fallen on hard times.**

**During the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, charities started play a major role. In 1887, religious leaders founded the Charity Organization Society, which became the first United Way organization. In 1904, Big Brothers Big Sisters of America started helping at-risk youths reach their full potential. In 1913, the American Cancer Society, dedicated to curing and eliminating cancer, was formed.**

**Before the welfare state, charity embodied both a sense of gratitude on the behalf of the recipient and magnanimity on the behalves of donors. There was a sense of civility by the recipients. They did not feel that they were owed, were entitled to or had a right to the largesse of the donor. In other words, they were reluctant to bite the hand that helped them. With churches and other private agencies helping, people were much likelier to help themselves and less likely to engage in self-destructive behavior.**

**Enter the federal government. Civility and gratitude toward one's benefactors are no longer required in the welfare state. In fact, one can be arrogant and hostile toward the "donors" (taxpayers), as well as the civil servants who dish out the benefits. The handouts that recipients get are no longer called charity; they're called entitlements - as if what is received were earned.**

**The Perception That Government Programs Don't Cost Taxpayers Money.** There are policies and practices of the federal government which, because they have been publicized very little, create the perception in many citizens that government programs, even though expensive, do not cost them anything. Following are 4 illustrations of the those policies and practices – the publicizing of which could affect voter attitude – contributing to that perception:

- The Withholding Tax. Instead of being collected directly from the payer, the government collects "at the source," which is to say that they are collected from the institution that pays wages and salaries – on behalf of the taxpayer – one of the most amazingly brilliant innovations of the modern state. This tinkering with the system – the creation of the institution called withholding – has created the illusion that paying taxes is really about getting free money! Withholding dramatically changed the psychology of paying taxes. It almost feels like you aren't paying anything at all. When tax time arrives there is no more to pay. Instead, you file and find yourself on the receiving end of what seems like an unexpected gift – a refund.
- The Amount of Taxes Paid by the Average American. The Tax Foundation provides an annual report in which it indicates the day when the average American worker can stop donating all his labor to simply pay all his taxes – federal, state, local and municipal – and thereafter keep his money. That day is known as Tax Freedom Day. This year, the average worker had to work until April 19 – 109 days – to pay taxes, possibly while non-working individuals were using those confiscated funds for there benefit.
- Deficit Spending. The costs of today's government programs can be deferred to succeeding generations by borrowing money with the debt being paid off with cheaper money. There is, however, a price to be paid:
  - **The Tax Foundation also added how long it would take the average American taxpayer to pay for the money the federal government borrowed this year. This calculation extends Tax Freedom Day from April 19 out to May 6 (17 days later)**
- Earned Income Tax Credit. According to the Tax Policy Center, in 2015, 77.5 million Americans paid zero federal income tax or had a negative income tax rate which means they receive benefits from the federal government.

Following are some comments about poverty programs made by three conservative individuals who have personally experienced poverty. Their comments are shown in italics.

## **DR. BEN CARSON**

Dr. Carson is currently head of the Department of Housing and Urban Development. He was previously a noted brain surgeon at Johns Hopkins University and a Republican presidential candidate. According to columnist John Fund, "His mother Sonya [who was married at 13 and later divorced] was a single mom in Detroit who was one of 24 children in her family and had only a third-grade education. But Carson says she "refused to be a victim" and "never felt sorry for herself."

Carson's comments are reported by columnist Jason Riley in a recent op-ed piece appearing in the *Wall Street Journal*.

*"...some of America's federal rental-assistance programs have become barriers to upward mobility by effectively discouraging work, marriage and other behaviors that tend to help people advance economically. We have people in public housing not for a few years but for a few generations, with no incentive to come out.*

*In public housing, the more money you make, the more you pay in rent. The incentives couldn't be more perverse, often leading people to hide income and work less.*

*In the real world, two-parent households have clear economic advantages, since everything from child care to transportation to household costs is shared. But in the world created by federal rental-assistance guidelines, people think differently. In a typical scenario, the significant other comes over at night and then sneaks out the next morning to avoid detection by the housing officials.*

## **KAY COLES JAMES**

Kay Coles James was recently elected president of the Heritage Foundation. She previously served as Virginia's Secretary of Health and Human Resources, and as director of the U. S. Office of Personnel Management. Being the daughter of a black welfare recipient, she says she knows of the harm welfare has caused.

*Much of what I am about to share relates to the African-American experience. But this isn't a problem specific to us. When it comes to welfare, the black community is merely America's "canary in the coalmine." What has happened to so many African-Americans can happen and is happening to any American subjected to the same failed liberal policies.*

*So while I speak to the experience of the black community, I know the majority of Americans on welfare aren't African-American. As a result, this appeal has relevance for all Americans, and it's on their behalf that policymakers must confront and come to understand a few vitally important things.*

*Consider: Since the so-called War on Poverty was launched more than 50 years ago: our marriage rate has plummeted and the number of out-of-wedlock births has soared; children are being raised without the security of an intact family or having ever even experienced parental marriage; fathers are routinely rejecting their responsibilities, increasing their children's risk of living in poverty; nearly 1 million black boys and girls are being raised by a grandparent, often because their parents suffer from drug abuse, have passed away, or are in prison.*

*Now, ask yourself: What if I took that kind of "welfare" policy and implemented it in your family? If I said to your sons, "Sweetie, you don't have to work; I'll take care of everything," and if I said to your daughters, "Sugar, you go ahead and have as many babies as you want; I'll give you more money to take care of them," what do you think your family would be like in 20 years?*

*That's why The Heritage Foundation has long called for welfare to be a work-based system, not a one-way handout. Nine out of 10 Americans agree, but today work is almost absent from the welfare system.*

## **BROOKE ROLLINS**

Brooke Rollins is Chief Executive Officer of the Texas Public Policy Foundation and is now on leave to serve as Special Assistant to President Trump, sitting next to him during meetings on subjects for which she has responsibilities. She reports, "Growing up in a small Texas town with a single mom, I have many memories of barely scraping by to make ends meet. I remember my mom taking a job at the Glen Rose Public Library for \$6 an hour to provide for my two sisters and me. Within a year of taking that job, my mom realized she couldn't make it work. So during her lunch hours and after her workday, she leased the small empty space next to the library and transformed it into a flower shop. She was determined to make a better life for her girls."

*Fifty years ago, President Lyndon Johnson inaugurated the "Great Society" - an unprecedented plan to use the power of the federal government to end poverty. Johnson's aspirations were immense. Upon signing the first major piece of Great Society legislation, Johnson said, "Today for the first time in all the history of the human race, a great nation is able to make and is willing to make a commitment to eradicate poverty among its people."*

*Today, a half-century removed from these lofty beginnings, The Great Society has transformed America by permanently expanding the size and scope of the government, redefining the relations between the state and the citizens it was meant to serve.*

*But has it helped the poor? Have we eradicated poverty? No. The official poverty rate hasn't significantly improved since the early 1970s despite a steady increase in welfare spending and profound gains in per capita economic growth. Government welfare now extends to more than 90 million Americans, only 33 million of whom have incomes below the poverty line.*

*The increasing availability of noncash welfare benefits like health care, food stamps and housing assistance all contribute to a widening disconnect between what people earn and how much they consume. Because public welfare now subsidizes so many everyday costs, the incentives for the poor to increase their income are weak. If getting a better job means losing more in welfare benefits than you would earn from a paycheck, why take the job?*

