

DATA DELAWARE: Monday, April 13, 2020  
SUBJECT: Tax Freedom Day! (Part 1 transcripts)

DISCLAIMER: This transcript is produced from Data Delaware podcast electronically; the conversion is being offered on a best-efforts basis.

Dace Blaskovitz:

Welcome back to Money in Politics in Delaware. One of my favorite people. Welcome back Charlie Copeland.

Charlie Copeland:

Dace. Thank you for having me. It's always a pleasure.

Dace Blaskovitz:

And you have a loyal following. But we do get first time listeners, so you know how we play the game. 30 seconds about you, 30 seconds about what you do for a living these days.

Charlie Copeland:

Yeah, so I was raised here in Delaware. Moved here when I was around one and have lived the vast majority of my life within three miles of the statue Rodney Square. So certainly Delaware is my state, my home and Wilmington is my city. And despite the fact that I live outside the city limits, that's more of an artificial construct by the state's general assembly. So, in that period of time for about 25 years, I ran a family business of marketing services, direct mail, commercial print company and three plus years ago took over the leadership as president of the Intercollegiate Studies Institute and we serve as a para university, para meaning next to, and we come in next to university curriculum and classes and provide educational details and engagement opportunities in limited government, free markets, property rights, individual liberty. All those foundational principles are what makes a society free and prosperous. And we're on about 40% of America's college campuses.

Dace Blaskovitz:

All right, let me pick it apart. You provide educational opportunities. What is it that you're provide Charlie Copeland?

Charlie Copeland:

So debates, lectures, conferences, curriculum material, societies that are reading groups, where a group of students, five, 10, 20 up to 200 actually will meet one, two, three times a month to discuss books like Plato's Republic or the Road to Serfdom, or Richard Weaver's Ideas have Consequences. And really go through these things in a very, very deep dive. These are very bright, intelligent, curious students who will go on to do great things. Matter of fact, Sam Alito and Neil Gorsuch were both ISI alumni, as was Peter Teal, the first outside investor in Facebook and PayPal, founder, co-founder. As well as a couple of senators and people in business, and nonprofit, and the law all over the country.

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Dace Blaskovitz:

You ready to go?

Charlie Copeland:

Yes sir.

Dace Blaskovitz:

Tax Freedom Day. Ring the bell. Tell the story.

Charlie Copeland:

So Tax Freedom Day is the first day each year that Americans can finally work for themselves. In other words, the Tax Foundation, which really came up with this idea, calculates it by using all of the taxes that the country pays divided by the income of it that the country makes, and you come up with a number. You can look at it this way. In January, you work to pay off the federal income tax. In February, you work to pay social security, Medicare and other payroll taxes, maybe some state income taxes. And in March, you then pay your state income taxes, sales taxes, excise taxes, and property taxes. And in April, you finish off by getting your county taxes and this kind of stuff. And eventually, you reach around. This year in Delaware, it's Saturday the 12th. Once you've reached Saturday, April 12th in Delaware, the rest of the year you are finally working for yourself. It is Tax Freedom Day.

Charlie Copeland:

And this is an item of note. Delaware ranks 41st in the nation. So ninth worst in individual income tax. We pay some of the highest income tax percentages in the nation. What offsets that is that we don't have sales tax to an extent. We've got a gross receipts tax. So businesses actually do pay a sales tax. But our property taxes are low. And then, of course, our unemployment insurance taxes are low. But unless you own a business, that really doesn't affect you. So at the end of the day, Delaware is a pretty high tax place, and Delawareans have worked the vast majority ... Well, up until today or yeah, tomorrow, they've been working for ... Actually Sunday, I'm sorry, they've be working for the government.

Dace Blaskovitz:

And to play fair, we tape on Friday air on Saturday. My memory, this is a question in its memory. Tax Foundation Institute has Delaware ranked 50th in corporate income tax, is that correct?

Charlie Copeland:

That is correct. That is correct. It's worst in the nation in corporate income tax. Ninth worst in the nation in individual income tax. We get a much higher ranking with them, because the property tax and sales tax are so low, and as is the unemployment insurance tax. But I always quibble with the unemployment insurance tax because businesses pay that, individuals do not. So end of the day, Delaware is a pretty high tax state when it comes down to the places that it matters.

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Dace Blaskovitz:

Next subject. It's really why you showed up today, beyond the Tax Freedom Day headline. You had some really strong opinions and some great insights and I'm going to need your help to tease the story before you launch. The virus has shown what the left has been undone. Help me with ... Give it a recap and then go.

Charlie Copeland:

Yeah. For, I don't know, 10 years, 15 years, 20 years, whatever it's been, the left has been touting this set of policy proposals that we'll make the C's recede and the earth heal, to use Obama's phrasing. To make it a better place, to be fairer. Whatever you want to call it. They've had all these policies and proposals. Things like uncontrolled and open borders. We're not going to build a wall. That's terrible. That's xenophobic. That's racist. That's bad. We should not ... We should have open borders. Everyone should be able to come anytime they want. Global institutions, the UN, we should be listening to them. We should stay with all these multinational organizations, and not worry about America. That's being a racist, and mean spirited, and hatred. We shouldn't have plastic bags because they're destroying the environment, and they're killing people, and it's terrible.

Charlie Copeland:

All these kinds of things. And what we've found is when the real world reinterjects itself into our very protected little cocoons, in this blessed place called America, we find that these liberal policies are a horrible, horrible idea and even liberals are running to the fences to try to unwind them. For instance, let's look at open and uncontrolled borders. For the entire Trump presidency, the left has been fighting his efforts to protect the southern border. I mean, it was less than a year ago, that left wing darling Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez said, "It's the ability to move and be. It's the freedom to be really is what we're talking about. And I think that all people should be free to be here, and in our communities." She went on to say, "When people say, 'Oh, you want to talk about dismantling the Department of Homeland Security or abolishing ICE,' these are such radical ideas."

Charlie Copeland:

She said, "No, I think that reorganizing and get rid of the Department of Homeland Security is not a radical idea. It was radical to create it." By the way, now Delaware, the State of Delaware has been stopping Pennsylvanians who have been trying to come over the border to buy liquor here, because they closed all the liquor stores in Pennsylvania. The State of New Jersey won't let me go to property that I own in New Jersey, and pay property taxes on. So I've been banned from traveling from one American state to another American state, from Delaware to Jersey. And both of those states are controlled by liberal Democrats, who for the last 20 years, have been touting open borders. We should let anybody who wants to come into the country come into the country. And now, because of the virus, because the real world has reinserted itself, they've realized that was a nutty idea.

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Charlie Copeland:

So nutty, left wing position number one, open borders. Everybody go anywhere they want, at anytime they want, has been destroyed by COVID-19 and the real world. We could go on. Global institutions are better for America than America leadership. So let's talk about the World Health Organization. The WHO, W-H-O. Remember back in 2009 days? The Obamacare debate, and WHO ranked the United States 57th, I think, in their healthcare listing. And that they had six different criteria when they ranked it.

Charlie Copeland:

And I forget what four of the criteria were, but I do remember, I believe, what two of them were. One was where your country ranked in healthcare delivery. And one of the other ones was financing of your healthcare system. And they ranked the United States number one in the world in health care delivery. And we ranked near the bottom and how we "finance" our healthcare system. Now, I don't know about you, but when I have a global pandemic, I want to be in the country that has the best healthcare delivery in the world.

Dace Blaskovitz:

Yeah, with that, let me jump in one second. To the audience, we do two segments with Charlie. We got to take a break.