

Remembering Edward H. Crane

This issue of *Free Society* is dedicated to Ed Crane, cofounder and president emeritus of the Cato Institute, who passed away on February 10, 2026.

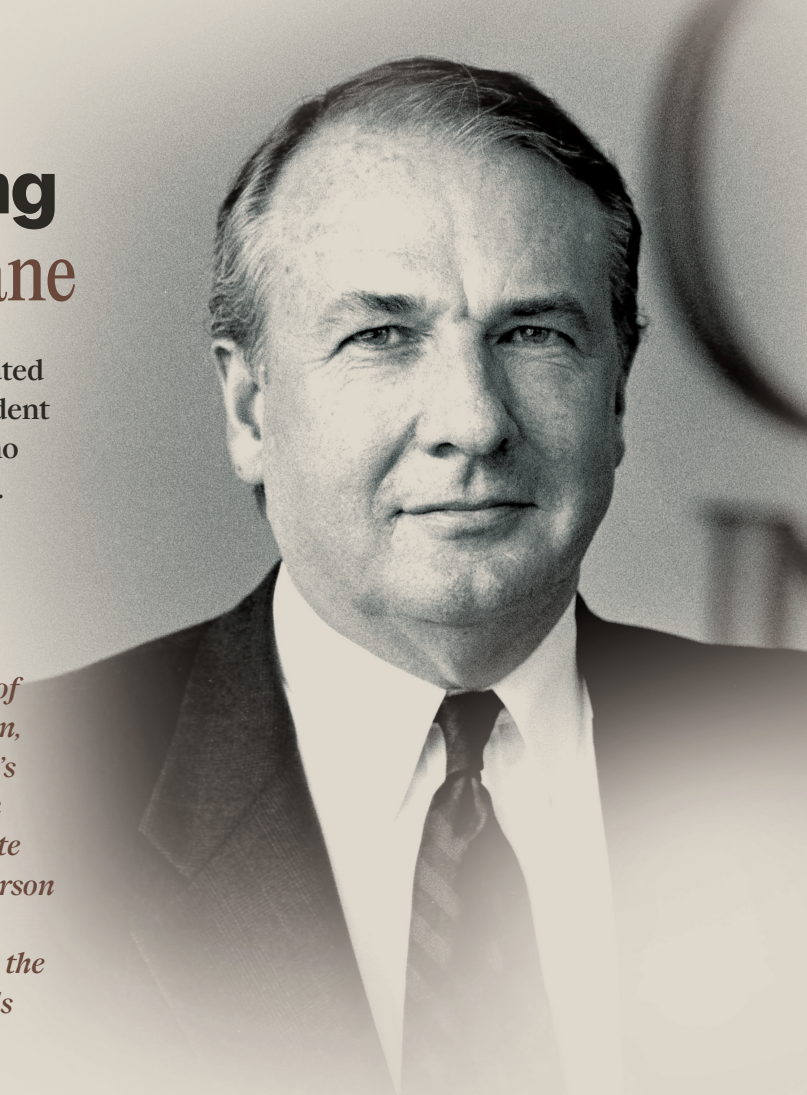
Described by Nobel Prize-winning economist and Cato distinguished senior fellow Vernon L. Smith as “a great American in the tradition of such Founders as Franklin, Madison, Hamilton, and Washington,” Crane’s legacy will live on in the institution he built. He guided the Cato Institute from its 1977 founding as a three-person outfit in San Francisco to the most prominent libertarian think tank in the world. Below, a few longtime friends and colleagues offer their tributes.

“Ed’s true legacy is his advocacy for a free society—from his days as a Berkeley student to his work on the Goldwater campaign, his efforts to reform Social Security and establish term limits, his voluminous writings and speeches and media appearances, and his prodigious fundraising capabilities, without which the success of the Cato Institute would not have been possible.”

—**Robert A. Levy**, chairman emeritus of the board of directors and former senior fellow in constitutional studies at Cato



Scan the QR code
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about Ed Crane’s
life and legacy.



“Ed was a man of great energy, confidence, and intellect. His passion was to defend liberty so that people could thrive in the pursuit of happiness. His presumption of liberty, bounded by a just rule of law protecting persons and property, was the guiding principle for all of Cato’s policy work.”

—**James A. Dorn**, senior fellow emeritus at Cato and former editor of the *Cato Journal*

“Ed was—as his longtime executive vice president, the late, great David Boaz, would never tire of saying—a visionary. He was somebody who saw the potential of bringing classical liberal ideas under one roof, presenting them in a serious and policy-relevant way, and making them a force to be reckoned with in national politics and beyond.”

—**Ian Vásquez**, vice president for international studies, director of the Center for Global Liberty and Prosperity, and David Boaz Chair at Cato