

CATO POLICY REPORT

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“To Be Governed...”

IT WAS BETTER WHEN HE FORGOT THE DEPARTMENT EXISTS

The government's been picking winners and losers since government was created. We do it by tax policy, we do it by regulation, we do it by permits. Pick good! Be smart! Use the right kind of technical people to help you decide where to invest and pick the winners, pick them right. Government's going to continue to do that.

—**SECRETARY OF ENERGY RICK PERRY,**
AUGUST 14, 2018

ONLY MOSTLY ARBITRARY

When Uber and Lyft first entered the market, offering a ride-hailing service that would come to include tens of thousands of amateur drivers, most major American cities had been tightly controlling the competition. New York City allowed exactly 13,637 licenses for taxicabs. Chicago permitted 6,904, Boston 1,825 and Philadelphia 1,600.

These numbers weren't entirely arbitrary. Cities had spent decades trying to set numbers that would keep drivers and passengers satisfied and streets safe.

—**NEW YORK TIMES,** AUGUST 10, 2018

MICRON-LENDING

Micron, a [\$60 billion] publicly traded semiconductor manufacturer based in Boise, Idaho, announced Wednesday that it plans to spend \$3 billion to expand production at its plant in Northern Virginia. . . .

The company is eligible for a \$70 million grant to cover site preparation and facility costs, according to Micron and the governor's office. . . .

The city already offers Micron a continuous tax savings on a local machine and

tool tax, something that is to be extended with the new investment.

—**WASHINGTON POST,** AUGUST 29, 2018

THEY'RE NOT GOING TO STOP CONTROLLING

Montgomery County officials are hoping to change the name of the county's Department of Liquor Control to something, well, a little less controlling.

The proposed name—Alcohol Beverage Services—reflects an effort to move the department's image away from its regulatory focus and toward customer service, said director Robert Dorfman. . . .

“The old name does not have the right connotation,” Dorfman said. “We're not about controlling how people do business. Our job is to make sure our customers are well taken care of.”

Montgomery County is the most populous jurisdiction in Maryland, and the only one that directly controls the wholesale distribution of all alcohol in its borders—a vestige dating to the end of Prohibition.

—**WASHINGTON POST,** AUGUST 6, 2018

THE ARC OF ILLIBERALISM

[Vladimir Poluboyarenko is] hoping to lure white South Africans to move 8,000 miles away to rural Russia. . . .

General director Mikhail Baranov told the father and son: “You can be sure of one thing. You won't find liberalism here, but family values instead.”

—**WASHINGTON POST,** SEPTEMBER 23, 2018

MAYBE GUN CONTROL WASN'T THE ANSWER

As of Monday, there have been 115 homicides in D.C. in 2018—just one fewer than

the yearly total for 2017. This despite a citywide crackdown on illegal firearms.

—**COREY ROBIN,** *NEW YORK TIMES,* AUGUST 24, 2018

TAKE HER SERIOUSLY, NOT LITERALLY

[Cynthia] Nixon also pushed her plan for a state universal health care program that estimates suggest could cost initially anywhere from \$96 billion to \$200 billion. The state budget currently is \$170 billion.

Nixon said she does not have a plan to pay for it, though she suggested a recent Rand report raised the idea of higher payroll and other taxes.

“Pass it and then figure out how to fund it,” Nixon said.

—**NEW YORK DAILY NEWS,** SEPTEMBER 5, 2018

CHANNELING HILLARY CLINTON, 1993: I CAN'T SAVE EVERY UNDERCAPITALIZED ENTREPRENEUR IN AMERICA

When [South Dakota senator John] Thune warned that the drop in soybean prices (caused by China's retaliatory tariffs) was costing South Dakota soybean farmers hundreds of millions of dollars, [Secretary of Commerce Wilbur] Ross responded by saying he heard the price drop “has been exaggerated.” . . .

Ross told Sen. Mike Enzi (R-Wyo.) that he's heard the rising cost of newsprint for rural newspapers “is a very trivial thing,” and he told Sen. Benjamin L. Cardin (D-Md.) that it's tough luck if small businesses don't have lawyers to apply for exemptions: “It's not our fault if people file late.”

—**WASHINGTON POST,** JUNE 20, 2018