

CATO POLICY REPORT

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“To Be Governed...”

WHO KNEW? TAXES REDUCE DEMAND

[Q:] What are some of the effects of this internet tax on Uganda?

[A:] Well, one of the most striking things is that internet subscriptions have actually gone down. So there are 2.5 million fewer users—people using the internet.

—*MARKETPLACE MORNING REPORT*,
FEBRUARY 19, 2019

SOMEONE SHOULD HAVE WARNED THEM THAT THE SUBSIDIES WOULD END

States that expanded their Medicaid health insurance programs are hunting for ways to fund the new enrollees in 2020 as they face a final drop in federal contributions. . . .

Yesterday, the Oregon House approved a measure backed by Gov. Kate Brown (D) to help fund the state's Medicaid program, which faces a \$950 million shortfall. The bill would extend new taxes on hospitals and insurance plans for an additional six years, which some lawmakers say will give them more time to come up with long-term health-care dollars.

New Hampshire Gov. Chris Sununu (R) signed legislation over the summer earmarking 5 percent of new profits from the sale of liquor for Medicaid expansion, so no direct taxpayer dollars would need to be redirected. Around the same time, Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam (D) approved two new taxes paid by hospitals to fund that state's new expanded Medicaid program.

California, Louisiana, Arizona, Colorado, Indiana and Minnesota have also implemented higher taxes either on health providers or insurers, or on the sale of alcohol or cigarettes.

—*WASHINGTON POST*, FEBRUARY 21, 2019

... AND BY SOCIALISM

Like North Korea now, Vietnam between 1975 and 1995 was crippled by economic sanctions and a U.S. trade embargo.

—*NPR*, FEBRUARY 26, 2019

WE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN AT WAR IN EAST ASIA

Marine recruit Juan Tellez has no memory of the Sept. 11 hijackings that started the war he may soon be fighting. Why would he? He was born two months after the terror attacks took place.

The Afghanistan war, now in its 18th year, has been going on for so long that some of those volunteering to fight it were still in utero when it began.

—*WALL STREET JOURNAL*, FEBRUARY 26, 2019

“CONFISCATE” IS CERTAINLY THE RIGHT WORD HERE

Warren's plan includes an “exit tax,” which would confiscate 40 percent of all a person's wealth over \$50 million if they renounce their citizenship.

—*NPR*, FEBRUARY 26, 2019

NOT ALL MARKETS ARE “FREE MARKETS”

Joo Chang Yang cut her teeth in the jangmadang, or free markets of North Korea's northeast Hamgyong Province, before she defected to the South in 2010 at the age of 19. . . . Joo says that the free market includes luxury goods, such as imported cosmetics, which are sold in many state-run stores discreetly from under the counter. . . . Joo says the real heroes are those who persisted in trading on the free markets despite the risk of arrest and execution.

—*NPR*, FEBRUARY 26, 2019

CLEAR, SIMPLE, AND WRONG

US Democrat Elizabeth Warren has proposed breaking up tech giants like Amazon, Facebook and Google if elected to the US presidency in 2020. Seeking to stand out in a crowded Democratic field, Ms. Warren told a crowd in Queens, New York, that she was “sick of freeloading billionaires. . . .” One woman at the rally, who was undecided about who to vote for, said: “What I like is that she's proposing big ideas.”

—*BBC.COM*, MARCH 9, 2019

QED

An Egyptian singer has been banned from performing in her home country after suggesting that it does not respect free speech.

—*ASSOCIATED PRESS*, MARCH 23, 2019

WELL, YEAH, EXCEPT FOR ALL THE DISCRIMINATION

Until about the 1960s, once you got past some number of legacy admissions and athletes, the bulk of the [college] class got in on merit—grades, test scores and high-school recommendation letters.

—*DANIEL HENNINGER IN THE WALL STREET JOURNAL*, MARCH 21, 2019

I'VE HEARD OF STEALING HORSE RACES, BUT THIS IS RIDICULOUS

In an effort to “preserve” the Preakness Stakes' Baltimore location, Mayor Catherine Pugh filed a lawsuit on Tuesday against the Stronach Group to seize the track and prevent moving the race from Pimlico to Laurel. . . . The lawsuit asks the court to condemn both Pimlico and the Preakness Stakes, so that the city may take ownership.

—*WYPR-FM*, MARCH 20, 2019