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Welcome to the August edition of the NAFSL Newsletter!

In light of the recent flare up of tensions in Southeast Asia, sparked by Chinese Communist Party (CCP) efforts to undermine the national sovereignty of neighboring Republic of China (Taiwan) and exacerbated by our national government's untimely foreign policy, we wish to revisit the concept of state sovereignty and its essential role within our Constitution, namely that of preventing a Chinese-like gargantuan national government.

Since its inception, Taiwan has fought to remain free from the claws of the nationalistic, totalitarian, and autocratic CCP. As such, Taiwan's struggle for national sovereignty from the CCP is comparable to the American struggle for independence from the British Crown.

Once independent, our founders, being wary of creating a government similar to that which they had just separated from, purposefully devised a national government that was dependent on each state government. By doing so, the founders instituted a federal government that respected state sovereignty and simultaneously inherently prevented the unmitigated and uncontrolled growth of the national government.

James Madison stated in Federalist 45 and 46 that the Constitution's outline for the balance of powers will naturally prevent the national government from usurping powers not delegated to it. Madison explains that *"each of the principal branches of the federal government will owe its existence more or less to the favor of the State governments, and must consequently feel a dependence, which is much more likely to beget a disposition too obsequious than too overbearing towards them"* thereby preventing *"schemes of usurpation"* from the national government. Hence, the constitution was infused with a governmental structure that would naturally deflect attacks against the power equilibrium established by it.

However, the national government's continuous aggressions to state sovereignty have upset such balance of powers. Without an active response to these aggressions and usurpations of power, best led by state governments as they have a vested interest in maintaining their sovereignty, our Constitution can be at risk of being trampled and becoming, like the own name of the **"People's Republic of China"**, a complete farce.

Thus, while our Constitution has given us all the tools necessary to maintain a freedom-nurturing and prosperous government, it is up to the Constitution's own signatories, the states, to keep it true to its foundational purpose and intent. Hence, let the international developments discussed above not serve as a cause for our dismay as democracy and western values are internationally mocked, but rather as events that galvanize our resolve to conserve freedom and liberty, guarded by the principles of state sovereignty, balanced federalism, and representative governance.

Other news:

Recently, we participated in the annual conference of the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) in Atlanta, GA. This meeting is attended by state legislators from around the country who gather once a year to share and discuss policy ideas, as well as the principles of limited government, free markets, and federalism. We received numerous visitors at the NAFSL booth and had the opportunity to converse with many former state legislators, some of whom joined the NAFSL. We look forward to getting involved with ALEC's next annual conference.



From Sea to Shining Sea.

Pictured (L to R) State Representative Toby Overdorf (Florida), and State Representative Mike Prax (Alaska)

James Kallinger, President
National Association of Former State Legislators

American federalism means "a proper respect for state functions, a recognition of the fact that the entire country is made up of a Union of separate State governments, and a continuance of the belief that the National Government will fare best if the States and their institutions are left free to perform their separate functions in their separate ways." U.S. Supreme Court Justice Hugo L. Black