

[Atlas Network's Spiderweb](#)

“To answer the question ‘Who is the real customer of a think tank?’” he said, “I will refer to the often ignored passage of Ludwig von Mises, in his book *Bureaucracy*. In it he describes a type of person—**elite**—who I believe is not only the real customer of Atlas and many think tanks, but also our ideal customer, **who benefits us and is served by us.**” - Alejandro Chafuen [5]

2002 Venezuelan coup attempt ([Carmona Decree](#), [Elliott Abrams](#), PNAC) [12]

ATLAS OFFSPRING USED U.S. FUNDS TO OPPOSE CHÁVEZ

In 1984, the Atlas Economic Research Foundation helped set up a think tank in Venezuela called the Center for the Dissemination of Economic Information (or Centro de Divulgación del Conocimiento Económico, CEDICE). But contrary to Atlas' emphasis on independence, CEDICE has received U.S. funds to support the failed attempts to remove Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez from office. In its Summer 2004 *Investor Report*, Atlas writes, “Venezuela is not California, so no matter what happens with the recall referendum . . . the country will continue to face a daunting populist menace. All those involved with CEDICE . . . have been an invaluable and courageous voice for freedom, peace and prosperity.”

CEDICE played a significant role in organizing and publicizing the positions of the opposition movement. CEDICE collaborated with the Center for International Private Enterprise—a Washington-based organization that administers money from the U.S.-funded National Endowment for Democracy, U.S. Agency for International Development, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce to internationally promote “democratic market economies through local business associations, think tanks, and other private sector groups.” Together, CIPE and CEDICE worked “to move the debate in Venezuela from populist rhetoric to concrete reforms that will encourage participatory democracy and a

better business environment,” according to CIPE's 2002 Annual Report.

Relying on official documents obtained through Freedom of Information Act requests concerning the U.S. support of the anti-Chávez movement, the Web site [VenezuelaFOIA.info](#) writes, “Both CEDICE and CIPE [were] engaging in business-oriented efforts in Venezuela, working directly with Fedecámaras, the anti-Chávez business association that co-led the April 2002 coup and the Winter 2003 lockout (Fedecámaras President Pedro Carmona took over the presidency during the April 2002 coup and proceeded to dissolve all of Venezuela's democratic institutions before being forced from his self-imposed government). . . . More than \$80,000 was allocated to CEDICE-CIPE's combined efforts by the NED right before the 2002 coup.”

CEDICE's post referendum work will focus on the topic of business ethics, “specifically in the way it generates competition, efficiency, and productivity in society.” In July 2004, CEDICE announced the creation of the Center for the Ethics and Corporate Citizenship. According to Atlas' Web site, “The Center will seek to promote ethical values that encourage businesses to be socially responsible within the community and develop initiatives that will contribute to progress and a quality of life within the framework of a free and responsible society.”

[12]

[2011 Wisconsin Act 10](#) (Effect on [Unions](#), [Education](#)) [22]

[Acton Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty](#)

[Advance Australia](#) [17]

[ALEC](#): American Legislative Exchange Council ([ALEC Exposed](#)) [22]

[Allegheny Foundation, Carthage Foundation Sarah Scaife Foundation, Scaife Family Foundation \(Germany\)](#) [5] *[2021 Scaife Financials](#)

[American Enterprise Institute](#) [2]

American Fuel and Petrochemical Manufacturers (trade lobbying group) [5]

Americans For Prosperity (Koch Bros, Tea Party, Libre Initiative - [Source Watch](#)) [18][25]

Amway [22]

[Assembly of First Nations](#) (Canada) [1]

[Australian Taxpayers Alliance](#) [5]

BHP Group Limited [5]

BP [5]

[Badger Institute](#) (formerly Wisconsin Policy Research Institute) [23]

[Ballotpedia - Lucy Burns Institute](#) (SPN)

Steve Bannon ([Cambridge Analytica](#), Tea Party)

John Bolton

Bradley Foundation [22]

Brexit (BeLeave, LeaveEU, Vote Leave) - Defunct

Bureau for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (State Department) [4]

[CADAL](#) - Funded by NED ([IRI](#), [NDI](#)), [Ford Foundation](#) (on [WikiSpooks](#)) [Freedom House](#) (on [WikiSpooks](#)) (Buenos Aires, Argentina) [3]

[Cambridge Analytica](#) - Defunct

[Cato Institute](#)

[Cedice Libertad](#): Center for the Dissemination of Economic Information, or CEDICE (Venezuela) [3][5] - Funded by NED ([IRI](#), [NDI](#)) [12] Since 1998 [18]

[Center for African Prosperity](#) (internal) [5]

[Center for International Private Enterprise](#) (CIPE-International) [3] - Funded by NED ([IRI](#), [NDI](#))

[Centre for Independent Studies](#) (Australia) [5][17]

[Centre for Policy Studies](#) (UK) [2]

Centro de Estudios para el Desarrollo (Uruguay) [11]

[Centro Interdisciplinar de Ética e Economia Personalista -CIEEP](#) (Brazil) [3][21]

[Alejandro Chafuen](#) (American Friends of [Institute of Economic Affairs](#), [Acton Institute](#), [Atlas Network](#), [Cedice Libertad](#), [Chase Foundation of Virginia](#), [Fraser Institute](#), [Mont Pelerin Society](#), born in Argentina) [3]

[Charles Koch Foundation](#) (Charles Koch, David Koch, Koch Brothers, Koch Network, Kochtopus) [2]

[Chase Foundation of Virginia](#) [3]

Coca-Cola

[Competitive Enterprise Institute](#) [2]

Rodrigo Constantino [21]

[Cornwall Alliance for the Stewardship of Creation](#) ([IRS Filings](#)) [5]

[Cuban Democratic Directorate](#) (Cuban opposition - member of [Christian Democrat Organization of America](#), [International Democracy Union](#)) [4]

[Donors Trust](#) (on [SourceWatch](#)) [3]

Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (per SourceWatch - Grant to [Reason Foundation](#) for school choice and vouchers)*

Eli Groner (via Koch, Israel) [17]

[ExxonMobil](#), [ExxonMobil Foundation](#) ([ExxonMobil funded orgs](#))

Federalismo y Libertad (Argentina) [11]

[First Nations Major Projects Coalition](#) (Canada) [1]

[Foundation for Economic Education](#) [3]

[Frank Schäffler](#) (Germany)**

[Fraser Institute](#) (Canada)

[Free Brazil Movement](#) [3][5]

Fundación Atlas (Argentina) [11]

[Fundación CADAL](#) (Argentina) [3]

[Fundación Eléutera](#) (Honduras) [3][21]

[Fundación Federalismo y Libertad](#) (Argentina) [11]

Fundacion Libertad (Argentina) [21]

[Fundación para el Desarrollo de Guatemala FUNDESA](#) (Guatemala) [5]

[Fundación para el Progreso](#) [Wikipedia]

[Fundación Pensar](#) (Argentina) [3][21]

Goldwater Institute [22]

[Russell Kirk](#) (Heritage Foundation Distinguished Fellow)

[Leonard Liggio](#) (Atlas Network VA, [Old Right](#))

Grupo Luksic

Nikki Haley [25]

[Heritage Foundation](#) [1]

[Heartland Institute](#) [5]

[Hispanic American Center for Economic Research \(HACER\)](#) [27]



[Source.](#)

[Indian Resource Council](#) (Canada) [1]

[Initiative for Free Trade](#) (UK) [2]

[Institute for Reforming Government](#) (WI, SPN)

[Institute of Economic Affairs](#) (UK) [2]

Institute of Public Affairs [17]

[Institute for Humane Studies](#) [5]

[Institute for Progress](#) [5]

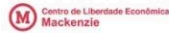
Instituto de Estudos Empresariais (Brazil) [11]

[Instituto Liberal](#) (Brazil) [21]

Advisory Board



Atlantos



The center for Economic Freedom Mackenzie



The Club Of The International Community



IFL Young man



ILISP



Institute Of Ajuricaba



INSTITUTO DE CULTURA DE CIDADANIA



The institute of Business Studies



The institute for leadership development



The institute for Democracy and Freedom



The Institute Libercracia



The Institute For Freedom



The Institute, A Free Market



Institute of Practitioners in the Future



Youth, Radical Sergipe, Brazil



Stop



Mises Brasil



Objetivismo



Students for Liberty Brazil -

[Source.](#)

Instituto Libertad y Democracia (Peru) [4]



[Instituto Millenium](#) (Brazil) [3]

[Instituto Mises Brazil](#) [3]

[International Federation of Liberal Youth \(IFLRY\)](#) - [Liberal International \(LI\)](#)

[International Policy Network](#) (UK) [10] - [Wikipedia](#) says they're defunct.

[Axel Kaiser](#) (Works for [Fundación para el Progreso](#), supported by Quiñenco and Grupo Luksic)
[11]

[Kim Kataguirí](#) [8][9]

Kim Katagui, 19



The young libertarian, who first gained a following from his satirical YouTube videos, is leading the charge against Brazil's President Dilma Rousseff and her Worker's Party, which have been embroiled in a massive corruption scandal. After co-founding the Free Brazil Movement in 2014, Katagui, who cites Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher as inspirations, went on to lead a 200,000-strong demonstration in Sao Paulo earlier this year—the biggest protest Sao Paulo has seen in three decades. —*Tara John*

[Legatum Institute](#) (UK) [2]

[Libertad y Progreso](#) (Instituto Libertad y Progreso)- [Libertad y Progreso YouTube Video \(Rumble\)](#) [11]

LibertyWorks [17]

Alberto Benegas Lynch ([Mont Pelerin Society](#), Fundación Federalismo y Libertad, [Libertad y Progreso](#) - See [Video](#)) [11]

[Macdonald-Laurier Institute](#) (Canada) [1]

Maclver Institute (Scott Walker, State Policy Network, Americans For Prosperity, Kochtopus).

María Corina Machado (Vente Venezuela)

[Mackinac Center for Public Policy](#) (Michigan) [5][22]

MasterCard

Mauricio Macri (Republican Proposal, President of Argentina 2015-2019) [21]

[Manhattan Institute for Policy Research](#) [LoC] [2]

[Mercatus Center](#) [2]

Robert Mercer (Atlas Network, Cambridge Analytica, [SPN](#))

[Michigan's "Financial Martial Law Act"](#) [22]

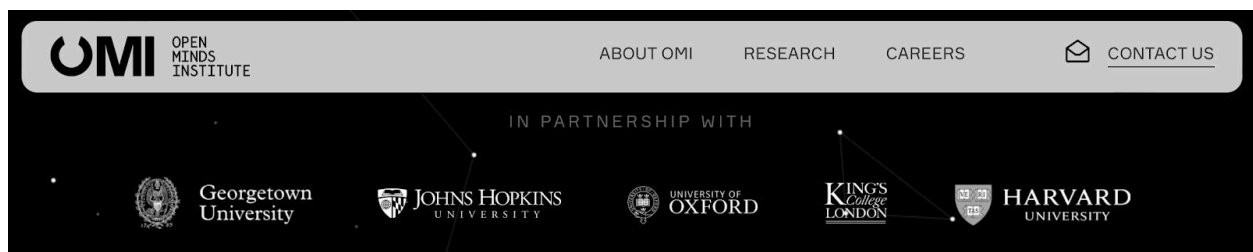
[Mont Pelerin Society](#) [3]

Rupert Murdoch [5]

[National Endowment for Democracy](#)

James O'Keefe

[Open Minds Institute](#) ([Russia](#))



Operação Lava Jato/Operation Car Wash (Brazil) - Lawfare Against Lula

[Pacific Research Institute](#) [5]

[Pan American Development Foundation](#) [4]

Pfizer

Philip Morris

Tim Phillips [26]

[Policy Exchange](#) - [Judicial Power Project](#) (UK)[5]

Procter & Gamble

**Prometheus — Das Freiheitsinstitut (Germany)

Quiñenco

*[Reason Foundation](#) - Reason Magazine

Red Liberal de America Latina RELIAL [11]

[Searle Freedom Trust](#) ([Financials](#))

[School Choice Wisconsin](#) ([SPN](#))

Naomi Seibt (German YouTuber) [5]

Emily Seidel [25]

Shell plc

Donald Stewart Jr [21]

Rishi Sunak [5]

[State Policy Network](#) - SPN (US, UK, Canada),

[TaxPayers' Alliance](#) (UK) [2]

Tea Party movement [26]

John Templeton

Margaret Thatcher

Timbro [5]

Donald Trump (2016 Campaign)

[Rio Tinto \(website\)](#) [5]

US Chamber of Commerce

USAID [3]

US Department of State

[US Information Agency](#) (Now done through Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs-cultural diplomacy, "[independent agencies](#)", International Broadcasting Bureau, Voice of America, Radio y Televisión Martí, USAGM) [4]

Universidad Francisco Marroquín (Guatemala) [11]

Vente Venezuela (Red Liberal de America Latina RELIAL)

Scott Walker (former WI Gov)

Walmart [22]

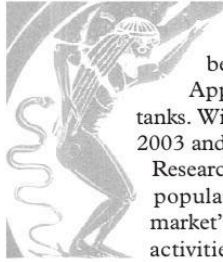
[Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty \(SPN\)](#)([Bradley Foundation](#))

Wisconsin Policy Research Institute (now Badger Institute)

[Workers' Party \(Brazil\)](#) ([Wikipedia](#))

ATLAS ECONOMIC RESEARCH FOUNDATION: THE THINK-TANK BREEDERS

by Bob Burton



For over two decades, a Virginia-based organization has been quietly working as the Johnny Appleseed of conservative think tanks. With a modest \$4 million budget in 2003 and a staff of eight, Atlas Economic Research Foundation is on a mission to populate the world with new “free market” voices. In its 2003 review of activities, quaintly titled its *Investor Report*, Atlas boasted that it worked with “70 new think-tank entrepreneurs from 37 foreign countries, including Lithuania, Greece, Mongolia, Ghana, the Philippines, Brazil and Argentina,” as well as with several American groups.

Briton Antony Fisher founded Atlas as part of his life-long campaign to influence the “climate of ideas” and combat “creeping socialism.” Atlas credits Fisher with assisting in the early stages of development of several conservative think tanks, including the *Manhattan Institute*, *Pacific Research Institute* in San Francisco and *Fraser Institute* in Vancouver, Canada.

Atlas identifies, screens and offers initial support to individuals and groups who want to create local think tanks. “Our ideal ‘intellectual entrepreneur,’” says Atlas, is “someone who communicates effectively with businessmen, academicians and the general public.” By facilitating the establishment of local think tanks, Atlas increases both the reach and local credibility of their “free market” message, thereby having “the most cost-effective impact.”

Since its formation in 1981, Atlas has funnelled over \$20 million in grants to think tanks that have passed its screening process. Atlas aims, it says, to “increase that amount tenfold in the next decade.” In 2003, a little over \$2 million of Atlas’s budget was passed on to other think tanks. While large conservative foundations often make sizable, sustained and general support grants, Atlas believes less is more, giving small grants of \$5,000 or less. Atlas then weans fledgling projects off this modest annual funding within five years, making exception only for specific innovative projects.

While Atlas calculates that its “family” comprises approximately one-third of the world’s 470 “market oriented” think tanks, it worries that “many young think tanks lack know-how regarding reaching the media and communicating a message effectively.” To help build these skills, Atlas recruited Vince Breglio, co-founder and senior executive with the market research and public relations company *Wirthlin Worldwide*. At its mid-August conference in Salt Lake City, Breglio gave PR tips in a

two-hour workshop titled “communicating the message of liberty.” A veteran of the 1980 and 1984 Reagan Presidential campaigns, Breglio is no stranger to helping sell unpopular ideas. Internal tobacco industry documents reveal he advised both R.J. Reynolds and Philip Morris on how to handle public opposition to smoking.

Atlas’ financial support has come from a handful of conservative foundations and corporations, including the *Sarah Scaife Foundation*, *Earhart Foundation* and the *Carthage Foundation*. *ExxonMobil* has contributed over \$500,000 since 1998, according to the Greenpeace Web site *ExxonSecrets.org*.

In 1995, Philip Morris contributed \$475,000 to Atlas according to an internal budget document released as part of the legal settlement with several U.S. states’ attorneys general. In 1997, despite a tight budget, PM staff recommended Atlas receive \$150,000 because of the organization’s ability, through its events and public advocacy work, to “positively impact the regulatory environment, particularly in Latin America.” Atlas’ think tanks, PM staff wrote approvingly, create “an improved operating environment for all PM businesses.”

Ironically, Atlas requires its protégé think tanks to be independent—“That is, independent of corporations, independent of governments, independent of political parties and even independent of universities,” Atlas President Alejandro A. Chaufen said in an April 1999 interview.

In a May 1998 fundraising pitch to tobacco giant Phillip Morris, Chaufen explained that keeping its think tanks off the dole of political parties, universities, government agencies and lobbies “helps keep their ideas and recommendations untainted by real or perceived political or organizational ties” and “helps protect them and us against potential scandal. Think tanks tied to politicians and parties can easily become instruments of corruption. Indeed, in several instances, public officials have enriched themselves and their allies through the ‘think tanks’ they control,” Chaufen wrote.

Atlas’ think tanks, Chaufen continued, have “remarkable successes” even though they were often faced with “unsympathetic local traditions and ideas. Still, these think tanks have become one of the first places opinion leaders and policy makers go when they are looking for market-based solutions to difficult social, economic or environmental problems.” ■

A version of this article is also on Disinfopeedia, the CMD’s online database that anyone—including you—can add to. If you would like to work on this profile on Atlas or its affiliates, go to www.disinfopeedia.org. If you need a hand getting started, drop Bob a line at bob@disinfopeedia.org.

Sources

- [1] [How a conservative US network undermined Indigenous energy rights in Canada](#)
 - [2] [How the right's radical thinktanks reshaped the Conservative Party \(UK\)](#)
 - [3] [Libertarian Atlas Network Pushes Latin America Right](#)
 - [4] [Cadaf, the US-Funded NGO Seeking to Overthrow Cuba's Revolution](#)
 - [5] [Meet the Shadowy Global Network Vilifying Climate Protesters](#)
 - [6] [Jeremy Walker: Big Oil, Whales and Offshore Wind: Fossil-funded Atlas Network 'think-tank' disinformation is driving misinformed community opposition to the vitally important Illawarra Renewable Energy Zone](#)
 - [7] [Silencing the Voice: the fossil-fuelled Atlas Network's campaign against constitutional recognition of Indigenous Australia](#)
 - [8] [Teen Libertarian Is Face of Brazil's Young Free-Market Right](#)
 - [9] [The 30 Most Influential Teens of 2015](#)
- Still have to go through:
- [10] [DeSmog](#)
 - [11] [The Atlas Network and the Building of Argentina's Donald Trump](#)
 - [12] [PR Watch, Volume 11, Number 3](#)
 - [13] [SourceWatch](#)
 - [14] [InfluenceWatch](#)
 - [15] [Tobacco Tactics](#)
 - [16] [Argentina election 2023: what you need to know](#)
 - [17] [Interview: The Koch empire's man in Israel who has unlimited funds to invest in tech](#)
 - [18] [Cambridge Analytica: Who are the Koch Bros](#)
 - [19] [What Is The Atlas Network?](#)

[20] [Who are The Heritage Foundation](#)

[21] [The Koch Brothers and The Atlas Network](#)

[22] [Koch-Funded Mackinac Center Brings Wisconsin Act 10 Provisions to ALEC](#)

[23] [Who's Really Behind Recent Republican Legislation in Wisconsin and Elsewhere? \(Hint: It Didn't Start Here\)](#) (archived)

[24] [Report Exposes 'Corporate America's Trojan Horse In The States'](#)

[25] [Koch Network Endorses Haley to Defeat Trump. But the Biggest Loser Is Ron DeSantis.](#)

[26] [Americans for Prosperity](#)

[27] [HACER Network](#)

[28] [Atlas Network: Think Tank Network Initiative](#)

[29] [Have Mercer! The money man who helped the GOP win](#)

Robert Mercer's midterm political plays

Campaign/Organization	Amount donated
Freedom Partners Action Fund	\$2,500,000
John Bolton Super PAC	\$1,000,000
Club for Growth Action	\$900,000
Women Speak Out PAC	\$500,000
American Heartland PAC	\$350,000
Citizens 4 Ethics in Government	\$300,000
Senate Conservatives Action	\$250,000
New York 2014	\$100,000
USA Super PAC	\$100,000
Portman Victory Committee	\$42,600
National Republican Senatorial Committee	\$32,400

[30] [SPN - ALEC Exposed](#)

Most of these organizations are national right-wing advocacy organizations, many of which have been funded by the Koch family fortune, including [ALEC](#), David Koch's [Americans for Prosperity Foundation](#), Matt Kibbe's [FreedomWorks](#) (Kibbe used to work for David Koch's so-called [Citizens for a Sound Economy](#) (CSE), the predecessor of FreedomWorks), Grover Norquist's [Americans for Tax Reform](#) (which also has strong Koch ties), Charles Koch's [Cato Institute](#), the [Heritage Foundation](#) (which has long been fueled by Koch money), the [Heartland Institute](#) (which used to receive Koch family foundation funding and which has been seeking new Koch funding), and the [Franklin Center](#) (whose funding sources are mostly cloaked). This is in many ways one of the embodiments of the infamous Kochtopus, with its financial tentacles spreading across the states.

ALEC's Biggest Ally in the States?

SPN and its members have become major sponsors and members of the controversial [American Legislative Exchange Council \(ALEC\)](#). As the Center for Media and Democracy documented when it launched the groundbreaking [ALECexposed.org](#) investigation in 2011, through ALEC, corporate lobbyists and special interest group representatives vote as equals with state lawmakers behind closed doors on "model" legislation. These bills are then taken back to the state, where they are introduced in the legislature, cleansed of any reference to the fact that they were pre-voted on by out-of-state special interest corporations and groups. Not surprisingly, ALEC bills often benefit its corporate members' bottom line. All of SPN's member think tanks push parts of ALEC's agenda in their respective states, and [at least 34 SPN members have direct ties to ALEC](#) in addition to their affiliation with SPN, which is an active ALEC member itself.^{xv}

Although there is no direct funding from Koch Industries or any of the Koch family foundations in that document, both Donors funds are connected to the Kochs and operate to conceal the identity of the donor. Is part of the combined \$2 million from the two Donors funds (the biggest donors to SPN itself by far in 2010) from the Koch fortune?

In addition, the following corporations, front groups, and various non-profit organizations sponsored SPN's most recent annual meeting in Oklahoma City on September 24 – 27, 2013, for undisclosed amounts (bolded funders have also funded ALEC):^{cx}

- **Express Scripts**
- **Vernon Kriebel Foundation**
- **The Roe Foundation**
- **Alliance for School Choice**
- Atlas Network
- **RAI Services Company**
- The Liberty Foundation
- Voter Gravity
- **Altria**
- NJOY (electronic cigarettes)
- Charles Koch Institute
- National School Choice Week
- Quick Reliable Printing (QRP)
- R Street
- Taxpayers United of America
- eResources
- *How Money Walks*
- Spark Freedom
- **Franklin Center for Government and Public Integrity**
- **Facebook**
- Jones Public Relations
- **National Cable & Telecommunications Association**
- **Reason Foundation**
- Consumer Healthcare Products Association
- American Legislative Exchange Council
- The Carleson Center Welfare Reform Action Fund
- Stephen Clouse and Associates
- **Comcast**
- A.C. Fitzgerald & Associates
- ClearWord Communications Group, Inc. (donor strategies firm)
- **Time Warner Cable**
- **K12 Inc.**
- Competitive Enterprise Institute
- Frontiers of Freedom
- Ceterus (virtual office company)
- Case Consulting Services
- **DonorsTrust**
- **The Heritage Foundation**
- National Center for Policy Analysis (NCPA)
- Students for Liberty
- Right on Crime
- **Tax Foundation**
- ROC Exposed (an anti-labor front group run by Berman & Co.)^{cxii}
- **Microsoft**
- **Mercatus Center at George Mason University**
- **Mackinac Center for Public Policy**
- **Americans for Tax Reform**
- The Independent Institute
- Americans for Prosperity Foundation
- MP Plumbing Co.
- **American Enterprise Institute**
- **Campaign Marketing Strategies**
- **U.S. Chamber of Commerce Global Intellectual Property Center**
- Generation Opportunity (a Koch-financed group focusing on young voters)^{cxii}
- American Philanthropic
- Young Americans for Liberty

[31] [Conservapedia: Koch Network](#)

[32] [Bannon's Boys: How a Band of Grifters Is Trying to Destroy What Is Left of American Democracy](#) (READ)

[33] [A Potentially Huge Supreme Court Case Has a Hidden Conservative Backer](#)

[34] [The Atlas Network's insidious impact on the ground](#)

Keywords: Astroturfing, Austerity, Climate Change Denial, Color Revolutions, Corporate Interests, Deregulation, Free Markets, Front Groups, Neoliberalism, Privatization, Property rights, Libertad (Spanish for Freedom), Libertarian, Libertarianism, Libertarian Party, Liberty, [Redwashing](#), Regime Change, School Choice, School Vouchers,