

# Heritage Foundation

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*“Some of the finest conservative minds in America today do their work in the Heritage Foundation.” – Rush Limbaugh*



Harvard Model  
Congress Asia

## INTRODUCTION

Dear newest Heritage Foundation lobbyist,

Welcome to the Heritage Foundation! The Heritage Foundation is a conservative **think tank** in which Americans who support **free enterprise**, limited government, individual freedom, traditional American values, and a strong national defense can feel at home. As conservatives, members of the Heritage Foundation believe that the preservation of ideals articulated by the Founding Fathers is an essential political undertaking. The fundamental principles of Heritage are to uphold liberty and faith; to defend self-government and patriotism; and to promote character, responsibility and family. Heritage is delighted that you will be helping unite conservatives in the fight against the welfare state, while simultaneously defending American freedom and opportunity.

You will not fight alone. Heritage’s support runs deep, and the Foundation’s membership of more than 250,000 makes it the largest think tank in the country. All of its members care deeply about promoting a conservative agenda. Though closely aligned with the Republican Party, Heritage is a non-profit organization and is run by an independent board of trustees. The Foundation relies upon the private financial support of the general public — individuals, corporations and other foundations — and does not accept government contributions or perform contract work. That said, Heritage is viewed as one of the most influential lobbyist groups in Washington. Every day, experts from the Heritage Foundation distribute fact-sheets to members of Congress and write op-ed pieces that are reprinted in newspapers across the country.

Heritage analysts perform timely, accurate research on key policy issues, and Heritage staff members market these findings to important audiences: members of Congress, key congressional staff members, policy-makers in the executive branch, the news media, and the academic community. Each year, Heritage publishes more than 200 important and influential studies and holds conferences, meetings, and lectures across the country.

**Think tank**—a group organized to conduct specialized research

**Free enterprise**—private businesses operating freely for a profit with little or no government involvement



## HERITAGE MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Heritage has been making a profound difference in American policy since its establishment in 1973. In its early years, Heritage helped to deflate former President Jimmy Carter's welfare expansion and to defeat a proposed tax hike, as well as to lead American supporters of the Nicaraguan Contra freedom fighters. In 1992, when Heritage criticized over-regulation in former President George H.W. Bush's tax policies during the 1992 election, Bill Clinton quoted the Foundation's analysis, demonstrating the ability of Heritage to appeal to both parties. Later, Heritage developed a free-market health care plan that became the leading alternative to President Clinton's proposal for a government-run health care bureaucracy. Heritage also founded the "Index of Economic Freedom," a widely-quoted annual measurement of free-market policies in more than 100 countries.

After nearly three decades, Heritage remains a leader in promoting the conservative agenda, and Heritage's ongoing programs help lobbyists spread the conservative message. The Foundation recently expanded its Center for Data Analysis, which compiles accurate economic analyses and forecasts. The Center has exposed the prejudice of the **Congressional Budget Office**, which they claim provides Congress with economic estimates that are biased against sensible **free-market economics**. Heritage recently opened its Center for Media and Public Policy, which advises conservatives on how to compete in liberal media markets. Additionally, Heritage is leading the debate on key issues like taxation and education.

The Heritage Foundation's philosophy is straightforward. When the Foundation examines an issue, it looks for ways to reduce the federal government's burdensome bureaucracy. **Obsolete** and repetitive programs must be rooted out. Federal programs must be run efficiently and effectively to promote accountability and responsibility. Most importantly, the federal government should let states and local governments do what they do best, such as administer state welfare programs and run public schools. The federal government can help local governments through aid, but it cannot effectively administrate at the community level, as that is best left to state and local governments. As part of the Heritage Foundation, you are charged with upholding the founding principles of the county by challenging and encouraging lawmakers to adhere to the tenets of government, upon which their very election depends.

**Congressional Budget Office**—a US government agency that provides Congress with nonpartisan advice regarding its budget

**Free-market economics**—a market in which prices of goods and services are arranged by the mutual consent of the parties involved in the transactions

**Obsolete**—no longer useful



## HOT TOPICS

The Heritage Foundation is currently focusing on various issues facing US legislators that deal with its core values, including fiscal policy and big government, health reform, the war in Iraq, strengthening religious/church influence in governmental affairs, and more. Some of the topics that are especially important to the Heritage Foundation are discussed below. Bear in mind that these are not the only issues you will need to research before the conference; instead, they are topics about which Heritage feels particularly passionate. You should remain up-to-date on the Foundation's stance and actions regarding these issues by reading information on its website: <http://www.heritage.org/>.

### *US-Russian Relations*

The Heritage Foundation points to recent significant changes in Russian policy that should be a concern to the US in determining its foreign policy with Russia. Though Russian President Vladimir Putin offered joint cooperation on a missile defense system, the US should critically examine this offer as it may indicate a change in Russia's relationship with Iran. Russia and the US had good relations immediately following September 11th, 2001, through 2002. However, since then, relations have significantly deteriorated. The Heritage Foundation believes that the US should pay close attention to a resurgent Russia because Moscow is trying to reorder the post-Cold War global security architecture and is seeking to do so in ways that are not in America's interests. The Heritage Foundation supports actions and policies that will bolster relations with pro-Western regimes in the Persian Gulf, continue dialogue and cooperation with Russia, and reach out over the heads of the Russian leadership to the Russian people. Considering that Russia is one of the world's few superpowers, it is imperative that the US keeps good relations with the increasingly globally active nation.

### *US-Cuba Relations*

The Heritage Foundation recognizes that Cuba is quickly approaching a crossroads upon the impending death of dictator Fidel Castro. There are many questions that will need to be answered following the end of Castro's dictatorship. Will Cubans finally be free to build a market-based democracy? Will the US lift its longstanding economic sanctions? Who is going to take power after Castro? Will the Cuban people be forced to endure 50 more years of life in a cruel command economy police state under a new dictator? The Heritage Foundation lobbies firmly for policies that will greatly change the lives of the Cuban



people. Not only could such policies improve the lives and interests of Cubans, but they would also surely work in the interest of US trade and industry. Cuba is aggressively spreading anti-Americanism throughout Latin America and is deeply involved in supporting the anti-US regime of Venezuelan dictator-President Hugo Chávez. Since the heightening of the War on Terror, US intelligence has become much less interested in Cuba and has been dedicated elsewhere overseas to monitoring terrorist activities. The Heritage Foundation recommends that the current administration raise the priority of monitoring Cuba within all US defense and intelligence agencies to determine if US-Cuban relations, both political and economic, should move forward or remain as they have since the Cuban Missile Crisis of the 1960s. Further, Congress should seek means to eliminate current threats to US national security as well as means to promote market-based democracy in a stable, post-Castro Cuba.

### *Medicare*

The Heritage Foundation feels strongly about the individual's right to spend his own money as he sees fit. Though this belief applies in several different **realms** (e.g. taxes, social security, etc.), Heritage feels that the US Medicare program particularly threatens this important right. In recent years, Heritage has argued that Congress and the Medicare program have limited the freedom of Medicare beneficiaries to purchase medical services with their own money. This is the same thing as violating an individual's right to privacy. Heritage further argues that such limitations **undermine** a tool that could reduce the burden already imposed on taxpayers and may deny care to **Medicare beneficiaries** outright. Moreover, the Heritage Foundation has scorned Canada's universal healthcare system and cites that country's own Supreme Court's finding that imposing limits on a patient's freedom to spend his or her own money can result in being denied crucial and even life-saving medical services. While the current Medicare program is nowhere near Canada's nationalized coverage, the Heritage Foundation is still very resistant to imposing restrictions on Medicare beneficiaries when it comes to spending their benefits.

*Realm*—domain; subject

*Undermine*—to weaken

*Medicare program*—a program administered by the US government that provides health care to people aged 65 and older

*Beneficiary*—a person intended to receive the proceeds or benefits of something

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

A few years ago, the Heritage Foundation conducted a survey of thousands of its members on many questions concerning government policy and the role of the Foundation. When asked how Heritage could most effectively promote conservative ideas, more than half of respon-



dents singled out this point: Heritage needs to present “a detailed **blueprint** for the conservative agenda” to Congress and the president. They also said that Heritage must **disseminate** its message through radio and television interviews and write editorials for newspapers across the country. The members suggested that Heritage ensure that its allies receive media exposure and form coalitions with other conservative groups. In short, they said that Heritage needs to do exactly what you are going to do at HMCA 2008: lobby, and lobby hard for a clear conservative agenda to the people who make major political decisions.

Your level of effectiveness as a member of the Heritage Foundation’s lobbying staff is up to you. Decision-makers in the House and Senate love information. Intelligent arguments and well-researched presentations can easily **sway** a member who is on the fence. The best lobbyist is not the one who speaks with the loudest voice or knows the most people; rather, it is the person who provides the best and most **insightful** information. Heritage implores you to carefully read and research your assigned topics. If you come to the conference armed with new information to support Heritage’s cause, you will find yourself in a position to help both the organization and society at large.

Now is a promising time for conservatives; America is ready to roll back the liberal **assault** on traditional values. All that conservatives need now is strong, unified leadership. You are Heritage’s connection to Capitol Hill, and you must help unite conservatives in Congress behind a common agenda. With your help, Heritage can bring together conservatives from across the country and help this nation’s leaders return to the fundamental, conservative principles on which this great nation was built.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.heritage.org>.

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*Blueprint*—a plan

*Disseminate*—to spread

*Sway*—to influence

*Insightful*—perceptive

*Assault*—attack



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