

POLITICAL ACTION RÉSUMÉ

of

CHIP FORD

1985-86: First political activity. Petition drive volunteer for a referendum to repeal the original Massachusetts mandatory seat belt law. The drive produced more than sufficient certified signatures collected to put question on 1986 ballot.

1986: Formed *The Committee to Repeal the Mandatory Seat Belt Law* and became chairman (August) and spokesman. Represented repeal position in innumerable media appearances and debates. Guest on dozens of TV and radio talk-shows. Led campaign to 54-46 percent victory in November, despite being outspent \$665,000 to \$9,700.

1987: Founded *Freedom First, Inc.* and *Freedom First (PAC)* to defend individual liberty and responsibility and to promote responsive, representative government. Freedom First initially opposed the "per se" provision of *The Safe Roads Act*, "Breathalyzer" convictions, and implied consent and self-incrimination.

Sponsored constitutional challenge before state *Supreme Judicial Court* to use of DWI roadblocks (*Commonwealth v. Lovelace*).

Testified before the legislature's *Joint Committee on Public Safety* in support of S-1142, a bill to provide for a Motorcycle Safety Education Course and repeal the mandatory use of motorcycle helmets.

Testified before the legislature's *Joint Committee on Public Safety* in support of H-1211, a bill to return sentencing discretion of judicial authorities in cases of *Bartley-Fox Act* firearms possession violations.

Successfully opposed proposed new mandatory seat belt law (H-1031).

Drafted and proposed the "*Buckle-Up Bonus Bill*" (H-4563) to provide incentive for voluntary seat belt use through an insurance premium reduction. Solicited and received the support and testimony of the *Massachusetts Seat Belt Coalition*. Testified before legislature's *Joint Committee on Insurance*. (Bill was opposed and defeated by insurance industry lobbyists.)

Invited by the *Massachusetts Civic Interest Council* to address a delegation of Japanese businessmen (*Sapporo Junior Chamber of Commerce*) in a conference to promote grass-roots citizens political activism in Japan.

Testified before the *New Mexico* state legislature's *Public Safety Committee* in support of a bill to repeal the *New Mexico* mandatory seat belt law. (Invited by repeal bill's sponsor, State Senator Tom Benevediz) Appeared on local TV and radio interview programs. Met with Gov. Carruthers

of NM. Lobbied the Colorado state legislature to help defeat the Colorado state mandatory seat belt law. Appeared on local TV and radio interview programs.

Initiated Freedom First chapters/affiliations in twenty-two states across the nation. Keynote speaker at *Freedom First in Iowa's* effort to defeat the Iowa state mandatory seat belt law. Appeared on local TV and radio interview programs.

Hosted other statewide grass-roots organization leaders at a barbecue to propose a coalition of similar interests.

In response to state legislative/executive pay raise, formed various organizations into *Coalition for Payraise Repeal (CPR)* and launched a repeal petition drive. Served as repeal referendum petition drive coordinator. More than sufficient certified signatures were collected to put repeal question on 1988 ballot.

Keynote speaker at *Libertarian Party of Massachusetts* annual convention.

Joined the initiative petition coalition (*CAMEL*) in its signature drive to limit the length of state legislative sessions to six-months.

1988: Successfully opposed proposed new mandatory seat belt law (S-1042). Served as treasurer and spokesman for *Coalition for Payraise Repeal (CPR)* campaign. Represented our repeal position in countless debates, and in TV, radio and print media interviews. Defeated legislative pay raise by 83-17 percent in November election.

Keynote speaker at first annual *National Mandatory Seat Belt Law Opposition Convention* (Lincoln, Nebraska). Traveled statewide representing our opposition position to a proposed new law in debates, and in TV, radio and print media interviews.

Keynote speaker at the annual convention of the *Libertarian Party of Nebraska*.

Invited to South Dakota to oppose proposed state mandatory seat belt law. Keynote speaker at *ABATE of South Dakota* annual convention to speak against mandatory seat belt and motorcycle helmet laws. Interviewed by local TV, radio and press.

1989: Successfully opposed proposed new mandatory seat belt law (H-3472).

Initiated and filed class-action ten-taxpayer lawsuit (*Ford et. al vs. Secretary of Administration & Finance Lashman*) in Suffolk Superior Court challenging the constitutionality of the governor's (Dukakis) unilateral fee increases.

Organized independent truckers statewide to join in fees challenge through series of statewide rallies and appearances.

Proposed "*Double-or-Nothing*" tax and fees roll-back initiative. Worked with *Citizens for Limited Taxation* to collect initiative referendum signatures to put "Question 3" (Tax and Fees Rollback) on November, 1990 ballot.

Testified in Washington, DC before the *U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Water Resources, Transportation, and Infrastructure of the Committee on Environment and Public Works* (Chairman; Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan) concerning The National Highway Fatality and Injury Reduction Act of 1989 (S.1007). Only mandatory seat belt law opponent in the nation invited to present opposition testimony. (By request I submitted testimony again to the Senate committee in 1990.) A mandatory seat belt law never became a federal law.

1990: Successfully opposed proposed new state mandatory seat belt law.

Organized major non-partisan "*Not One Cent More!*" anti-tax increase rally (with WHDH Radio Boston talk-show host Pat Whitley) on Boston Common.

Built *Freedom First* to 15,000 Massachusetts supporters, with chapters/affiliates in 22 states.

Planned petition drive strategy for constitutional amendment to limit terms of elected officials.

Merged *Freedom First/Freedom First, Inc.* with *LIMITS*, established by Dorothea Thomas-Vitrac as a coalition of grass roots organizations to propose a term limits strategy.

CLT's Question 3 (Tax & Fees Rollback) defeated (60%-40%) on the November statewide ballot.

1991: Successfully opposed proposed new state mandatory seat belt law.

Retained as state consultant and Essex County coordinator for successful *LIMITS* petition drive (72,000 signatures) to limit terms of elected officials by constitutional initiative.

1992: Designated (by the media) opposition spokesman to new mandatory seat belt law (H-2136). Guest op-ed "Counterpoint" article (3 May) opposing same in *Boston Sunday Herald*. Guest on *WRKO Radio* (Jerry Williams) and *WBZ Radio* (Tom Bergeron). Presented testimony to the *Joint Committee on Public Safety* (bill returned to committee for "further study"; in effect killed).

Invited to write "Counterpoint" column (28 Jun) in *Boston Sunday Herald* in opposition to *Mandatory National Service*.

Volunteered (February) to assist and advise *Massachusetts People for Perot* presidential campaign petition drive. Met with Jeff Jacoby, chief editorial writer, *The Boston Herald*, to legitimize and promote Perot candidacy. Used my contacts at *WRKO-AM* to broadcast weekly statewide nomination papers petitioning locations. Petition drive volunteer. Appointed (Tewksbury) town co-coordinator; *Massachusetts People for Perot*. Elected co-coordinator,

(congressional) District 5; appointed state media liaison (spokesman); *United We Stand, America*. Appointed as Perot campaign's Massachusetts "surrogate" for TV debates, op-ed columns.

Invited to write "Counterpoint" column for *Boston Sunday Herald* opposing *Mandatory Metric Conversion*.

Retained as a consultant by the *Committee Against Unfair Taxes* (a ballot question committee opposed to a twenty-five cents a pack cigarette tax increase) to organize grass-roots anti-tax support. Also served as a campaign spokesman. (The tax increase was approved by the voters by 54-46 percent.)

Began initial opposition to a proposed and publicized new mandatory seat belt law.

1993: Founded *No Means No!* to oppose the proposed new mandatory seat belt law, (H 952; later H 5495). Testified against favorable report before the *Joint Committee on Public Safety*. Organized opposition and lobbied against passage.

Became key initial activist (with U.S. Congressman Jim Inhofe [R-OK], and John Fund, editorial page writer for the *Wall Street Journal*) in the national movement to have the *U.S. House of Representatives* sign *Discharge Petition #2*, then adopt H.R. 134 (A U.S. House rule reform making public the signers of discharge petitions). Brought UWSA-MA into the campaign, then Ross Perot and UWSA-National. Organized Boston rally in front of House Rules Committee Chairman Joe Moakley's office attended by Congressman Inhofe (OK), MA Republican Congressmen Blute and Torkildsen. Discharge Petition #2 abruptly received more than sufficient support for release from the House Rules Committee. H.R. 134 was passed by a vote of 384-40 on Sept. 29.

Retained by LIMITS II as its statewide consultant/petition drive field director. Collected 40,000 more certified signatures than the 71,286 required to put the term limits initiative into its second phase toward the 1994 ballot.

Got Governor William Weld to veto H 5495, a new Mandatory Seat Belt Law. Lobbied legislators to sustain Gov. Weld's veto of H 5495, the new mandatory seat belt law. Veto over-ridden, Second MSBL became law.

1994: Launched a referendum petition drive to repeal the *New Mandatory Seat Belt Law*. Filed the *Committee to Repeal the Mandatory Seat Belt Law* for the second time as a ballot question committee. From Jan-Mar collected 15,000 more certified signatures than the required 35,143, putting the referendum on the 1994 statewide ballot. Launched the repeal campaign. (Repeal referendum – Question 2 – failed.)

Retained by *Citizens for Limited Taxation* as consultant/state field director for its campaign to defeat the proposed *Graduated Income Tax* constitutional amendment on the 1994 statewide ballot. (Graduated Income Tax -- Questions 6 & 7 -- defeated.)

Volunteer campaign co-coordinator for LIMITS II term limits ballot question (Question 4 approved).

Member of opposition coalition to post-election 55 percent lameduck legislative pay raise.

1995: Elected chairman of the *Coalition for Payraise Repeal (CPR)* to draft legislative reform/pay raise rollback initiative, help organize a coalition.

Chairman/Executive Director, *Coalition for Payraise Repeal (CPR)*. Organized/coordinated successful statewide petition drive which turned in 87,904 certified signatures (84,197 allowed) - 22,000 more than required.

Sep - Oct: Retained as state field director by the *Free the Pike Coalition* for its petition drive to collect 64,928 certified signatures for its initiative petition to eliminate tolls from the Mass. Turnpike (resigned due to insufficient payment).

1996: Chairman/Executive Director, *Coalition for Payraise Repeal*. Recruited and hired as co-director of *Citizens for Limited Taxation*.

1996: Merged Freedom First with CLT; Co-Director, Citizens for Limited Taxation & Government, (temporarily renamed in recognition of my efforts with Freedom First).

1997-98: Co-Chairman, A Promise to Keep: 5% ballot committee, to roll back the "temporary" state income tax increase, from 5.95 to its original 5 percent, as promised by the Legislature in 1989. (Petition defeated in court challenge by Mass. Teachers Assoc., by its elimination of 26 out of 65,000 signatures.)

1999-2000: Co-Chairman, A Promise to Keep: 5% ballot committee, to again attempt to roll back the "temporary" state income tax increase, this time with the support and leadership of Gov. Paul Cellucci. Question 4 on the November 2000 ballot won with 59 percent of the vote.

2000: Proposed the Voluntary Tax Check-Off bill for those who voted against our income tax rollback so they could win too by continuing to pay more. Adopted by the Legislature in 2002 and appeared beginning on 2003 state tax return forms and remains today.

2002: Legislature "freezes" voters' income tax rollback at 5.3% – CLT decides voter initiatives, referendums, and constitutional amendments are no longer viable in Mass. Instead CLT focuses on electing voter-respectful legislators, takes defensive position against tax hikes.

2010: CLT defeats significant changes to its historic 1980 Proposition 2½ property tax cap.

2015: Became president/executive director of Citizens for Limited Taxation with the failing health of co-director Barbara Anderson (she passed away on April 8, 2016).

2018: Defeated another stealth attack on CLT's Proposition 2½ property tax limitation, this end-run deemed the "Community Benefit Districts" bill which would have created additional neighborhood taxation within municipalities.

Moved to Kentucky in November, continue to run CLT remotely (in absentia) as president and executive director by membership demand.

2019: Opposed next stealth attack on CLT's Proposition 2½, a small change buried in the massive Education Reform Bill unsuccessfully – it remained and passed without Gov. Baker's requested veto. Supported bills to reform the state's onerous estate tax. Stopped the Legislature's "Bifurcated Property Tax" bill.

2020: CLT's successful tax rollback ballot question of 2000 finally forced the state income tax rate to be fully rolled back to its historic 5 percent.

Discovered and successfully opposed another stealth attack on CLT's Proposition 2½, this one secreted within the massive Senate Transportation Bond Bill would have granted municipalities a new transportation infrastructure property tax.

2021: CLT joined the opposition to Gov. Baker's "multi-state" Transportation and Climate Initiative (TCI) that would impose hidden gas/diesel taxes.

Opposition to the Legislature's proposed constitutional amendment, a graduated income tax (The Fair Share Amendment, aka, "The Millionaires Tax") "only on millionaires" is promised this time. (6th time around; CLT has solidly defeated proposed previous incarnations of a graduated income tax twice before, on the 1976 and 1994 statewide ballots.)

Opposition to four new assaults on CLT's Proposition 2½ property tax limitation (H.3039, S.1899, H.3086 and S.1804).

Advisor to Massachusetts Fiscal Alliance's first statewide initiative petition signatures drive that if passed by the voters will remove Massachusetts from the Transportation and Climate Initiative (TCI) multi-state pact (Petition M). 80,239 certified signatures of registered voters required. Also advised/assisted with initiative petitions F (Voter ID) and N (Born Alive). In November, as other states withdrew support, Gov. Baker pulled Massachusetts out of his multi-state TCI compact.

2022: On July 27 it was discovered that a refund of excess revenue was due to all taxpayers, triggered by CLT's successful 1986 Tax Cap ballot question, now law (M.G.L. Chapter 62F). Along with Massachusetts Fiscal Alliance CLT and I led the lobbying campaign to assure that any refund due was enforced according to our law. We retained attorneys and plaintiffs, threatened

a 24-taxpayer lawsuit as provided by our law, if the refund was not forthcoming. In early November the distribution of \$2.95 billion based on CLT's Tax Cap law formula began going out to 3.4 million taxpayers, completed by mid-December.

On that note, at the close of 2022 Citizens for Limited Taxation was permanently shut down as planned in June (due to lack of taxpayers' financial support). After passing on the tax limitation torch to Massachusetts Fiscal Alliance, at the age of 73 I retired.