

Opportunity, responsibility, and security: A consensus plan for reducing poverty and restoring the American Dream

9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Thursday, December 3, 2015

There is now widespread agreement that the nation should more effectively fight poverty and promote economic mobility. Republicans and Democrats, including the presidential candidates, are offering proposals for attacking both problems. But political polarization and legislative gridlock in the nation's capital make action seem unlikely.

Determined to show that people of good faith could work together, scholars from AEI and The Brookings Institution convened a working group of experts representing the left, right, and center of the political spectrum to see if they could craft a comprehensive plan that all contributors could support. After 14 months of work, the group succeeded. The plan draws from the best ideas proposed by the left and the right. It addresses the domains of family, work, and education simultaneously. And it is based on common values supported by nearly all Americans: opportunity, responsibility, and security.

On December 3, AEI and Brookings will release the working group's plan. The report proposes to strengthen families in ways that prepare children for success in education and work; to improve the quantity and quality of work in ways that enable young people to fulfill the responsibilities of adult life and parenthood; and to improve education in ways that help poor children capitalize on opportunities for self-advancement.

The event will begin with a summary of the report and its recommendations presented by two scholars who participated in its preparation. New York Times columnist David Brooks will then present a keynote address, followed by critical analysis of the report and its recommendations by a distinguished group of panelists. All speakers will take questions from the audience.

Agenda

8:30 AM Registration and Breakfast

9:00 AM Welcome:
Robert Doar, AEI

Introduction:
Jonathan Haidt, New York University

Overview of the Report:
David Ellwood, Harvard University
Ron Haskins, The Brookings Institution

Keynote Address:
David Brooks, New York Times

Panel Discussion:
Moderator:
David Wessel, The Brookings Institution

Panelists:

Tamar Jacoby, Opportunity America

Joseph T. Jones, Center for Urban Families

Robert Greenstein, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities

Douglas Holtz-Eakin, American Action Forum

Monique Rizer, Opportunity Nation

11:00 AM

Adjournment

Members of the AEI/Brookings Working Group on Poverty and Opportunity

Lawrence Aber, Willner Family Professor of Psychology and Public Policy, New York University

Stuart Butler, Senior Fellow in Economic Studies, Brookings Institution

Sheldon Danziger, President, Russell Sage Foundation

Robert Doar, Morgridge Fellow in Poverty Studies, American Enterprise Institute

David T. Ellwood, Scott M. Black Professor of Political Economy, Harvard University

Judith M. Gueron, President Emerita, MDRC

Jonathan Haidt, Thomas Cooley Professor of Ethical Leadership, New York University

Ron Haskins, Cabot Family Chair and Senior Fellow, Economic Studies, Brookings Institution

Harry J. Holzer, Professor of Public Policy, Georgetown University

Kay Hymowitz, William E. Simon Fellow, Manhattan Institute for Policy Research

Lawrence Mead, Professor of Politics and Public Policy, New York University

Ronald Mincy, Maurice V. Russell Professor of Social Work and Social Work Practice, Columbia University

Richard V. Reeves, Senior Fellow in Economic Studies, Brookings Institution

Michael R. Strain, Deputy Director of Economic Policy Studies and Resident Scholar, American Enterprise Institute

Jane Waldfogel, Compton Foundation Centennial Professor for the Prevention of Children and Youth Problems, Columbia University



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Available online:

- Speaker biographies
 - Audio and video of the event
- <http://www.aei.org/events/opportunity-responsibility-and-security-a-consensus-plan-for-reducing-poverty-and-restoring-the-american-dream>

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Economic Studies
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SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Opportunity, responsibility, and security: A consensus plan for reducing poverty and restoring the American Dream

David Brooks

David Brooks became an op-ed columnist for The New York Times in September 2003. His column appears every Tuesday and Friday. He is currently a commentator on “PBS NewsHour,” NPR’s “All Things Considered,” and NBC’s “Meet the Press.” He is the author of “Bobos in Paradise: The New Upper Class and How They Got There” (Simon & Schuster, 2001) and “On Paradise Drive: How We Live Now (And Always Have) in the Future Tense” (Simon & Schuster, 2005). In March 2011 he came out with his third book, “The Social Animal: The Hidden Sources of Love, Character, and Achievement” (Random House, 2011), which was a number 1 New York Times best-seller. Mr. Brooks also teaches at Yale University and is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Robert Doar

Robert Doar is the Morgridge Fellow in Poverty Studies at AEI, where he studies and evaluates how free enterprise and improved federal policies and programs can reduce poverty and provide opportunities for vulnerable Americans. Before joining AEI, Mr. Doar worked for Mayor Michael Bloomberg as commissioner of New York City’s Human Resources Administration, where he administered 12 public assistance programs, including welfare, food assistance, public health insurance, and help for people living with HIV/AIDS. Before joining the Bloomberg administration, Mr. Doar was New York State commissioner of social services, helping make New York a model for the implementation of welfare reform.

David Ellwood

David Ellwood is the Scott M. Black Professor of Political Economy at Harvard’s John F. Kennedy School of Government. From 2004 to 2015, he was dean of the school. From 1993 to 1995, he served as assistant secretary for planning and evaluation at the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), where he served as cochair of President Clinton’s Working Group on Welfare Reform, Family Support, and Independence.

Robert Greenstein

Robert Greenstein is the founder and president of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. He is considered an expert on the federal budget and a range of domestic policy issues, including antipoverty programs, various aspects of tax policy, health reform, and Social Security. Before founding the center, he was administrator of the Food and Nutrition Service at the US Department of Agriculture under President Carter. While there, he directed the agency that operates federal food assistance programs, such as the food stamp and school lunch programs, and helped design the landmark Food Stamp Act of 1977, generally regarded as the Carter administration’s principal antipoverty achievement. He was appointed by President Clinton in 1994 to serve on the Bipartisan Commission on Entitlement and Tax Reform and headed the federal budget policy component of the transition team for President Obama.

Jonathan Haidt

Jonathan Haidt is the Thomas Cooley Professor of Ethical Leadership at New York University’s Stern School of Business. He is a social psychologist whose research examines the intuitive foundations of moral and political views. He has run numerous projects to promote political civility and cross-partisan understanding. He is the author of “The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion” (Vintage, 2013).

Ron Haskins

Ron Haskins is the Cabot Family Chair of Economic Studies at the Brookings Institution in Washington, DC, and a senior consultant at the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Formerly, he was a senior adviser for welfare policy to President George W. Bush, a senior staffer for the House Committee on Ways and Means, and a research professor at the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute at the University of North Carolina. Dr. Haskins is a developmental psychologist.

Douglas Holtz-Eakin

Douglas Holtz-Eakin is president of the American Action Forum. He is codirector of the Partnership for the Future of Medicare, serves on the board of the Tax Foundation, and is on the research advisory board of the Center for Economic Development. Previously, he was a commissioner on the congressionally chartered Financial Crisis Inquiry Commission. During 2007 and 2008, he served as director of domestic and economic policy for John McCain's presidential campaign. He was the sixth director of the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office.

Tamar Jacoby

Tamar Jacoby is president of Opportunity America, a Washington, DC-based nonprofit working to promote economic mobility. A former journalist and author, she was a senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute from 1989 to 2007. Before that, she was a senior writer and justice editor at Newsweek. From 1981 to 1987, she was the deputy editor of The New York Times op-ed page. Her articles have appeared in The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, The Weekly Standard, and Foreign Affairs, among other publications. She is the author of "Someone Else's House: America's Unfinished Struggle for Integration" (Basic Books, 1998) and editor of "Reinventing the Melting Pot: The New Immigrants and What It Means to Be American" (Basic Books, 2004).

Joseph T. Jones

Joseph T. Jones is the founder of the Center for Urban Families (CFUF), a Baltimore, Maryland, nonprofit service organization established to empower low-income families by enhancing the ability of both women and men to contribute to their families as wage earners and of men to fulfill their roles as fathers. Before founding CFUF, Mr. Jones developed and directed the men's services program for the federally funded Baltimore Healthy Start initiative and replicated the Baltimore affiliate of the nationally recognized STRIVE employment services program. His ability to engage and provide hands-on services to fathers garnered him the reputation of a trailblazer in the field. Mr. Jones is now a national leader in workforce development, fatherhood, and family services programming, and through his professional and civic involvement he influences policy direction nationwide.

Monique Rizer

Monique Rizer was appointed Opportunity Nation's executive director in September 2015. Before this role, she served as Be The Change Inc.'s (BTC) chief of staff and brings an organization-wide understanding of BTC's three bipartisan, issue-based campaigns: ServiceNation, Opportunity Nation, and Got Your 6, which are focused on national service, economic mobility, and veteran empowerment, respectively.

David Wessel

David Wessel is director of the Hutchins Center on Fiscal and Monetary Policy, which provides independent, nonpartisan analysis of fiscal and monetary policy issues to further public understanding and improve the quality and effectiveness of those policies. He joined the Brookings Institution in December 2013 after 30 years on the staff of The Wall Street Journal where, most recently, he was economics editor and wrote the weekly Capital column. He is a contributing correspondent to The Wall Street Journal and appears frequently on NPR's "Morning Edition."

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