



Written by [Staff](#) on February 7, 2023

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Inside Track

Texas Bill Would Create Process for Nullification



(Medley of Photography/iStock/Getty Images Plus)

On January 10, legislation was introduced in the Texas Legislature to nullify unconstitutional federal actions. If passed, the Texas Sovereignty Act (H.B. 384 and S.B. 313) would create a Joint Legislative Committee on Constitutional Enforcement to “review federal actions that challenge the sovereignty of the state and of the people for the purpose of determining if the federal action is unconstitutional.” “Federal actions” would include federal laws, executive orders, executive-branch regulations, federal-court rulings, and treaties. Both bills are awaiting committee assignments.

To determine whether a federal action is unconstitutional, the committee would “consider the plain reading and reasoning of the text of the United States Constitution and the understood definitions at the time of [its] framing and construction.”

If the House, Senate, and governor concur with the committee’s findings on a particular action, that federal action would be declared unconstitutional and legally null in Texas, making it illegal to enforce it in any way on the state or local level. The two bills would require state courts to “rely on the plain meaning of” the U.S. Constitution “and any applicable constitutional doctrine as understood by” the Founding Fathers when hearing cases challenging the constitutionality of federal laws.

The act is firmly grounded in the text of the U.S. Constitution. Article VI states, “This Constitution, and the Laws of the United States which shall be made in Pursuance thereof ... shall be the supreme Law of the Land,” and declares that state legislators, executive officials, and judges “shall be bound by Oath or Affirmation, to support this Constitution.” Any federal action violating or contradicting the Constitution is not “made in Pursuance thereof” and, thus, is not “the supreme Law of the Land” — and state officials are duty-bound to nullify it.

The Texas Legislature would be wise to enact the Texas Sovereignty Act. It takes courage to push back against federal usurpations, but with it, state officials can effectively uphold and protect the Constitution.

— *Peter Rykowski*



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France Revives Nuclear Energy to Tackle Energy Crisis



(STEPHANE ETIENNE/iStock/Getty Images Plus)

Due to the gravity of the energy crisis in Europe, including the lack of resources due to the war in Ukraine, France is now forced by circumstances to relaunch an ambitious nuclear investment program. On January 17, the French Senate began considering a bill to allow construction of new nuclear reactors.

In February 2022, French President Emmanuel Macron had declared the necessity for France to revert to an “ambitious and sustainable” nuclear policy. To address “energy independence and achieve our objectives, in particular carbon neutrality in 2050, we will for the first time in decades relaunch the construction of nuclear reactors in our country.”

The Fessenheim nuclear power plant in northeast France was closed in 2020 during Macron’s first term as president, but is now being restarted, with plans to reboot 45 out of 56 reactors early this year.

Overall, public opinion in France seems to support the country’s about-face in its nuclear policy, with 60 percent of French people regarding nuclear power in a positive light.

Some analysts contend that the industry is in serious crisis, however, as several years of disengagement of the French state with energy infrastructure have resulted in a loss of competence and know-how. Jean-Bernard Lévy, former CEO of French utility company EDF, declared in December, “It is not possible to be competent and efficient when you build a reactor every fifteen years.”

It is estimated the country will need to hire and train at least 10,000 workers yearly until 2030 to implement the new plans, and the utility companies will face challenges in absorbing the costs due to ailing finances. For example, as a consequence of the previous closures and problems with maintenance, EDF produced only 65 percent of its usual electricity output in 2022, resulting in a substantial financial shortfall.

Because of the length of time required to construct new plants and implement the plan, however, the country must still concentrate on renewable energy in the interim.

— *Angeline Tan*



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Recycling Hurting Economy, Environment



(Daisy-Daisy/iStock/Getty Images Plus)

Many millions of Americans dutifully sort their trash, believing that recycling saves the environment and facilitates sustainability. But what if this greentopian ritual not only doesn't help the Earth, but actually harms it and the economy to boot?

In a January 17 video, famed journalist John Stossel visited a recycling facility and learned that "huge amounts" of material "from people's recycling carts ... is going to leave as trash." "The worst is plastic, which for years has been marked with a recycling symbol" though most of it is not recyclable. Plastic bags clog the recycling machines, forcing workers to spend hours cutting them from the mechanisms. Kite & Key Media reported last year that "There are so many different varieties of plastic that they're almost impossible to sort efficiently.... Most of it degrades with each reuse. Making new plastic is actually cheaper than recycling old plastic. And the newest, high-tech methods of recycling it generate carbon emissions 55 times higher than just putting it in a landfill."

So how much of our plastic actually is recycled? Approximately five percent, Stossel found.

"Much [waste] is shipped overseas to countries like Malaysia, where it's just piled up," Stossel adds. Its fate? What "they don't burn, they sometimes dump in the ocean." In fact, every minute, one garbage truck full of plastic is dumped into the sea.

This has led to the Great Pacific Garbage Patch, a vast, floating, Texas-sized conglomeration of plastics and other debris. Ironically, if you care about saving the environment, science writer John Tierney told Stossel in the video, "put your plastic bottle in the garbage."

The lesson here is simple: If the market doesn't warrant something's (e.g., recycling's) existence, we should think twice about it. Apart from basic laws, an idea that must be enforced by government usually isn't a good idea.

None of this means recycling will end anytime soon, though, as pushing it brings virtue-signaling pleasure. "It's a sacrament of the green religion," says Tierney.

— *Selwyn Duke*



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U.S., Allies Sending Tanks to Ukraine



President Biden announced on January 25 that the United States will be sending 31 M1 Abrams tanks to Ukraine, the equivalent of one Ukrainian battalion, to assist their forces in defending the territory they hold and to prepare for additional counteroffensives. The decision is a reversal for top U.S. officials, and is tied to Germany agreeing to send its Leopard 2 tanks to the country.

The United States is also providing 500 armored vehicles in addition to the tanks, as part of the support package. Biden shared, “Together with our Allies and partners, we’ve sent more than 3,000 armored vehicles, more than [800] artillery systems, more than 2 million rounds of artillery ammunition, and more than 50 advanced multi-launch rocket systems, anti-ship and air defense systems, all to help counter Ukraine’s [Ukraine counter] brutal aggression that is happening because of Russia.”

The *Daily Mail* reported on January 25 that “Biden called the M1 Abrams tanks ‘the most capable tanks in the world’ and said they would ‘enhance Ukraine’s capacity to defend its territory to achieve its strategic objectives.’ He added that the Ukrainian military would use the armor to ‘liberate their land.’”

Biden’s decision to send the tanks came as German Chancellor Olaf Scholz announced the same day that his country would provide Ukraine with a company of 14 Leopard 2 A6 tanks as a first step. Britain will send 14 of its Challenger 2s.

What Biden failed to mention was the cost of continuing support to Ukraine. Including humanitarian, financial, and military aid, American taxpayers have provided about \$50 billion in assistance to the country. What’s even more concerning is the reported corruption of recently ousted top Ukrainian officials as billions of dollars continue to flow into the country.

No one knows what the future holds in Ukraine. What we do know is that, as the West increases its involvement in this proxy war, the worst-case consequences could be devastating and everlasting.

— *David Kelly*



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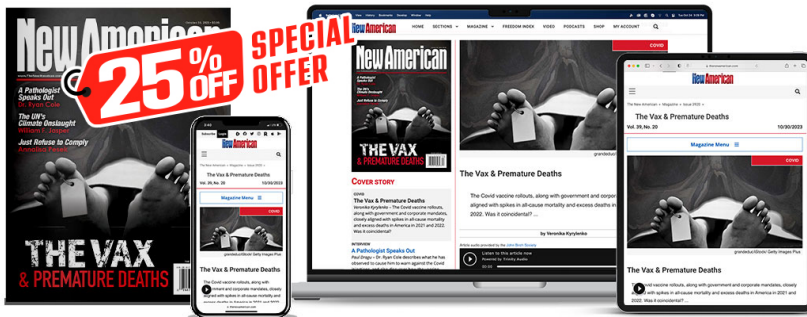
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