

EDITORIAL

ESTABLISHED IN 1924

Andrew Kupperts | Assistant managing editor

Franklin D. Roosevelt's Declaration of Independence
When the founders declared Independence from Britain, they were angry — the Declaration of Independence was an angry rant, a political, social and philosophical manifesto, proclaiming they had been cruelly betrayed by a dilettante, deceiving sovereign. If you've not read it, do. The philosophical stuff comes up front, calm and to the point:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness — That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed..."

A sly smack to the autocrat, that "created equal" stuff, and more to the point, the "deriving their... powers from the consent of the governed." Not the stuff monarchs want to hear *at all*.

But then:
"Whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends" (they wrote), "it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government..."

BOOM. Message sent.
What follows is the dirt. The section starts with "when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism..." and the "long train" is then provided in a detailed list, with the sense that they can't be corrected, and that there's no going back.

Gutsy for a bunch of gentlemen farmers writing from a place with few roads, no army, and little more than grit and smarts to push them through it, addressing arguably the most powerful man in the world, along with all his henchmen, armies, navies, and gold to back it all up.

Chancy stuff, and a pretty risky venture. Riskier, in some ways, once we'd actually won and had to create

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Florida's right to privacy

Florida's Constitution defines a right to privacy as: "Every natural person has the right to be let alone and free from governmental intrusion into the person's private life except as otherwise provided herein."

That seems clear. The clause identifies who deserves privacy and it defines the offending organization. Paraphrasing the clause could read: "People in Florida should be free from governmental intrusion."

The idea was put into effect by a federal court's reversal of a Florida law banning medical care for transgender people, maintaining that the state "cannot flatly deny transgender individuals safe and effective medical treatment" when the purpose of that denial "is not to support the patient's transgender identity."

In other words, the Florida legislature cannot intrude upon a person's natural life just because they don't like that nature. As the deciding judge stated, "gender identity is real."

It was a powerful decision, a step toward making life a bit better for all of Florida's transgender population.

I only wish the same would happen with reproductive rights, where an equally unethical intrusion is occurring in the natural lives of women in Florida.

But we can help turn things around in November—please vote "yes" on Amendment 4.
Ben Graffam, Lakeland

Trump's flip-flop backs RINO Laurel Lee

I'm disappointed by Trump's endorsement of a RINO! [Trump endorses Laurel Lee in U.S. House-15 race after previously calling for challenge, June 14, The Ledger]

Lee never responded to our press inquiry asking her to cut our budget's largest pork, as our GOP Platform requires. "The federal government should not be in the business of originating student loans." Student debt's over \$2 trillion. Students have overpaid taxpayers ("US Department of Education, on average, recovers \$1.22 for every dollar paid out in default claims," Forbes). But this won't continue. Students—bled dry—can't continue if loan originations aren't cut.

Forbes reports that "Trump Proposes Limits On Student Loan Borrowing," but even when Trump had a Republican-led House and Senate, he didn't keep his word.

Without restoration of bankruptcy availability to student debt, as a "check" on the DOE, they won't cut loan originations.

Trump—who often gets bankruptcy discharge for billions—holds a "bankruptcy for me, but not for thee" double standard, violating the golden rule of his claimed religion, Christianity.

Border funding won't happen without needed cuts to pork spending, so Lee needs to go.
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More can be done for immigrants

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LETTERS | Opinion *This piece expresses the views of its author(s), separate from those of this publication.*

Voice of the People (June 30, 2024): Vote for Florida's right to privacy

Lakeland Ledger

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Voice of the People (June 23, 2023): US Supreme Court has lost its integrity

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