

My Original Letter	Published Letter
<p>Mr. Gary Brunk, executive director of Kansas Action for Children, wrote a letter published in The Wichita Eagle on February 23, 2005, opposing a taxpayer bill of rights, or TABOR, in Kansas. As evidence of TABOR's failure in Colorado, he cites the low rate of childhood immunization in that state.</p> <p>It is unfortunate that so many Colorado children don't receive immunizations. Mr. Brunk, however, presents no evidence that Colorado's TABOR is the cause. It is tempting to conclude that when both x and y are present that x must be the cause of y, but this is not evidence of actual causation. It is possible that other factors are responsible.</p> <p>Besides, we might ask this question: Why should the taxpayers of Colorado pay to immunize others' children? I think the answer many might give is that if the state supplies relatively inexpensive immunizations, the state can avoid paying the substantial healthcare costs for children who become ill with diseases the immunizations prevent.</p> <p>This is undeniably true, and leads to the even-larger question: Why have states become responsible for providing healthcare (and other services) for so many? Mr. Brunk makes a case for what he terms a "fair" tax system. I submit that a tax system that takes money from one group of people and gives it to another group to whom it does not belong, no matter how noble the intent, is not in any sense fair. That is, if by fair Mr. Brunk means moral.</p> <p>The economist Walter E. Williams makes the case succinctly: "Can a moral case be made for taking the rightful property of one American and giving it to another to whom it does not belong? I think not. That's why socialism is evil. It uses evil means (coercion) to achieve what are seen as good ends (helping people). We might also</p>	<p>Among the evidence of the taxpayer bill of right's failure in Colorado, Gary Brunk, the executive director of Kansas Action for Children, cited the low rate of childhood immunization in that state ("TABOR is really bait and switch scheme," Feb. 23 Opinion).</p> <p>However, Mr. Brunk presented no evidence that Colorado's TABOR is the cause.</p> <p>Besides, we might ask this question: Why should taxpayers pay to immunize others' children? The answer many might give is that if the state supplies relatively inexpensive immunizations, it can avoid paying the health care costs for children who become ill.</p> <p>This is undeniably true and leads to the even-larger question: Why have states become responsible for providing health care for so many? Mr. Brunk made a case for what he terms a "fair" tax system. I submit that a tax system that takes money from one group of people and gives it to another group to whom it does not belong, no matter how noble the intent, is not in any sense fair.</p>

note that an act that is inherently evil does not become moral simply because there's a majority consensus."

It is the runaway growth in taxes and spending -- the taking of one person's property and giving it to another -- that a TABOR seeks to stem. A TABOR does not tell legislators how they must allocate state funds; it merely places a limit on how much they can spend. Legislators can still make judgments each year as to which programs are most important. Spending will most likely keep growing, but slower than it has.

The forces that want to increase taxes and spending by increasing amounts are always working and must be restrained. For example, Mr. Brunk, in his letter, advocates legislation that will require "a biannual report on the proportion of their income that people in different income levels pay in taxes." Reading this, I get the strong impression that Mr. Brunk believes we do not pay enough tax. But for those who believe that state government is already large enough, a TABOR is the best way to manage its growth.

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