

Tony Perkins: Throwing Money at America's Problems Hasn't Worked

President Obama tried to prove that he has the answer to economic stagnation. Unfortunately for America, his solution to the crisis is more of the same: more spending.

However, throwing more money at our problems hasn't worked in the last four years, and there's no reason to believe it will now. It's time for the administration to drop the failed ideology that government is the source of America's greatness and allow the free market, fueled by strong families, get America on the road to economic recovery. While the Left looks for the answer to violence in gun control or poverty in welfare, America's greatest hope continues to be the home.

As Family Research Council's (FRC) research makes clear, an intact married family who worships regularly is the antidote for almost every social ill addressed in this speech. Those growing up in an intact married family have greater educational attainment, are less likely to be involved in crime, and less likely to be poor.

The President's speech included a call for 'stronger families' and 'removing the financial deterrents to marriage for low-income couples' yet his own policies undermine family formation. For example, the President's fiscal cliff deal imposed a new marriage penalty on many American families. As FRC's Marriage and Religion Research Institute (MARRI) reported today, family structure is virtually as important as education in determining favorable social outcomes. If the President was serious about strengthening families and society, he would not be working to further dissuade couples from getting married. We should be encouraging family

formation, not penalizing it at any income level.

The President declared his desire to encourage 'fatherhood.' How can he reconcile this statement with his endorsement for redefining marriage which intentionally deprives a child of a dad or mom?

The President called for more government preschool programs while neglecting to mention that a recent Health and Human Services study found that the Head Start program offered 'little or no' benefit for children. And, by some measures, 'access to Head Start had harmful effects on children.' There are other ways to help low-income children than spending for spending's sake. If President Obama truly believes that education policy should be driven by 'what works,' then it's time to look beyond Head Start to real solutions—like parental choice.

The President referenced his desire to protect 'God-given rights.' It's apparent that he does not consider among these rights, the right of Americans to live out their faith in public according to one's religious beliefs. He is trampling on religious freedom by forcing all insurance plans to carry abortion drugs and contraceptives even if employers have moral objections. He does not have a fundamental understanding of freedom in this country.

In contrast, Senator Marco Rubio's response was refreshing in that he had the courage to talk about society's 'moral breakdown' and the failure of government to address it.

Tony Perkins *is president of the Washington, Family Research Council.*