



# Constitutional Government

## Principle

The role and jurisdiction of government is clearly prescribed by our constitution and consequently should be restrained from excessive involvement in the lives of citi-

## Founding Fathers

On July 4, 1776, the United States of America was founded upon the Christian principles of liberty and justice. To this day, we have a responsibility to maintain these tenets that our Founding Fathers set up for us. Government was created to manage certain aspects of American life, but other aspects were distinctly left to the American individuals and families.



## Public Opinion

-Only 38% of the American public says that they “generally” trust government when it comes to issues of education, health care, the economy, and Social Security.<sup>1</sup>

## Policy Issues in Virginia

**Charitable Gaming**—In 1973 The General Assembly legalized the operation of charitable gaming in Virginia by allowing the existence of bingo and raffle games under certain circumstances. This created an exception to Virginia’s general prohibition against gambling. Under these rules, voluntary fire departments, rescue squads and certain nonprofit organizations were permitted to conduct bingo and raffle games. Since 1973, nearly every year there is legislation that would expand gambling in Virginia. The Family Foundation opposes such expansion.

**Eminent Domain**—In 2005, the U.S. Supreme Court, in the *Kelo* decision, granted local governments the authority to take private property to increase tax revenues. State’s have the power to restrict the use of eminent domain to ensure that private property rights are protected. Currently, Virginia is one of only 13 states to have not responded to the *Kelo* decision with restrictions on eminent domain.

**State Taxes**—Every year the General Assembly reviews efforts to raise the taxes of citizens. Virginia’s families on average send over one-third of their income to government through taxes. The Family Foundation opposes efforts to increase the tax burden of Virginia’s working families.

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<sup>1</sup>Available at: <http://www.cato.org/dailys/01-31-02.html>