



Dr. David N. Gibbs, a respected Professor of History at the University of Arizona, is calling for the Republican-financed, Koch-sponsored “Freedom Center” to be kicked out of the university’s academic program. He spoke at the January 26, 2021 meeting of the LD9 Democrats, which was attended by more than 100 participants on Zoom.

Dr. Gibbs set forth three steps to expel the freedom center from university campuses:

- Make it a priority of the Democratic Party to cut state funds to the three freedom centers at Arizona universities.
- Put public pressure on the university to get information on freedom center donor agreements.
- Kick the freedom center off all Arizona campuses.

The freedom center was established in 2008, connected to the philosophy department, as the result of millions in funding from the right-wing Koch foundation. It is now maintained with \$2 million annual funding from the Republican Arizona legislature.

“The freedom center is the academic unit of the Republican party,” Gibbs said. He said that David Schmitz — the despot who runs the center — has been meeting with AZ Rep. Mark Finchem (R-LD11). Finchem is a member of the violent, right-wing Oath Keepers faction, and an apologist for the domestic terror attack on the US Capitol on January 6.

Ideas promulgated by the freedom center include:

- Eliminating public education.
- Not raising taxes on the wealthy.
- Corporations that make a profit are innately ethical.
- Opposition to gun safety laws
- Anti-worker policies, including eliminating the minimum wage.
- Freeing unscrupulous businesses from regulation.
- Opposition to government protections for land, water, air, and wildlife.
- Opposition to public health protections such as social distancing and emergency stay-at-home measures.

Dr. Gibbs explained that the freedom center is the work of deep lobbying by right-wing donors, who are corruptly given control of which professors are hired. “Their ideas are privileged by

money,” he said. “The freedom center focuses on a right-wing economic policy.”

Because of its corrupt practices, the freedom center operates in total secrecy — not revealing donor agreements and surreptitiously sneaking in textbooks for use in high schools.

The center hides behind confusing labels like “the department of Political Economy & Moral Science.” Despite that, the Kochs Off Campus group identifies the freedom center as “a right-wing Libertarian think tank that distorts education to fit its ideology and recruits students to advance its agenda.”