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Hillsdale College Hosts Free Market Forum

Forum addressed energy, the Federal Reserve, DOGE and the budget, and more.

HILLSDALE, Mich. — Hillsdale College hosted a Free Market Forum in Charlotte, North Carolina, Oct. 16-18. Speakers and panelists discussed a variety of topics related to markets, government, and the common good.

The forum opened with an address from James Freeman of The Wall Street Journal on “The Mamdani Phenomenon in NYC.”

Freeman argued that what Mamdani’s popularity represents is more of a fluke than a trend toward leftist politics.

“Nationwide, and even in liberal New Jersey right next door, many Democratic candidates are now doing their level best to sound like conservatives, who oppose tax and spending hikes, and prioritize law and order,” Freeman said. “While there is still an active debate among elected Democrats on whether they want to govern like socialists, there is at least an emerging consensus that they don’t want to sound like socialists.”

The second day featured panels on energy, the Federal Reserve, and DOGE and the budget.

Panelists:

- Jonathan A. Lesser of the National Center for Energy Analytics
- Willie Soon, astrophysicist and geoscientist
- Ronald Stein of PTS Advance
- John Steele Gordon, author of “An Empire of Wealth”
- Christopher Leonard, author of “The Lords of Easy Money”
- Andrew Levin of Dartmouth College

- Jennica Pounds of Data Republican
- Mark Hemingway of RealClearInvestigations
- Brady Leonard of the No Gimmicks podcast

Pounds, the founder of Data Republican, spoke on the relationship between government departments, big foundations, and the CIA and USAID.

“It’s literally all the same thing, all the same group,” Pounds said. “NGOs are not separate from the State Department. They’re not separate from the billionaires. NGOs are not separate from the Left or the communists. Their goal now is color revolutions, to kick out Trump, and this is why I say that the biggest industry in America is not tech. It’s not finance. The biggest industry in America is spreading democracy.”

The event concluded with lectures by Ken Elzinga on “Teaching Economics” and Sean McMeekin on “The Rise and Fall of Communism.”

The Free Market Forum Series, run by Hillsdale College’s Center for the Study of Monetary Systems and Free Enterprise, seeks to encourage the study of free enterprise by bringing scholars together for dynamic exchanges of ideas on topics related to free market economics.

For recordings from the event, click [here](#). For photos from the event, click [here](#). For photos of Hillsdale College, click [here](#). For a high-resolution copy of the Hillsdale College clocktower logo, click [here](#).

About Hillsdale College

Hillsdale College is an independent, nonsectarian, Christian liberal arts college located in southern Michigan. Founded in 1844, the College has built a national reputation through its classical liberal arts core curriculum and its principled refusal to accept federal or state taxpayer subsidies, even indirectly in the form of student grants or loans. It also conducts an outreach effort promoting civil and religious liberty, including a free monthly speech digest, *Imprimis*, with a circulation of more than 7.1 million. For more information, visit hillsdale.edu.

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