

## **USA is not free.**

Bob Lynne, Prescott, Az

Libertarian John Stossel laments that the USA ranks 17<sup>th</sup> in Human Freedom Index. The Conservative Cato Institute study on Human Freedom rates Switzerland, Hong Kong on top, measuring low taxes, free trade, regulations, women's rights, and religious freedom. Perhaps the US is ranked so low due to the ideologies of the Conservative Right and the Republican leadership.

Women's rights are under attack in several ways. Republicans will not support equal pay for equal work. Republicans continue to chip away at the legal right for a women's right to choose. In addition, they are sacrificing the health of poor women and their children through their constant attacks on Planned Parenthood.

Voter's rights are under attack in Republican controlled legislatures. Republicans want to make it more difficult to vote. They make registration more difficult, reduce the number of polling places, locate polling places further from poor neighborhoods, and try to sweep voter names from the rolls. All of this is called voter suppression and definitely suppresses freedoms.

People's personal rights have been under attack due to "stop and search", "stand your ground", and laws against carrying small amounts of marijuana. We have more people in prisons than any country in the world and we have no programs to rehabilitate and assist these folks once they are released.

Finally, American's right to healthcare has been rejected by Republicans for ever so we remain the only industrialized nation in the world without universal healthcare.

No wonder we are ranked 17<sup>th</sup>.

