

The Maine Alternative to State Robbery

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Around the country, one of the worst predations against people who save money or own property is civil asset forfeiture.

This is the grabbing of the cash and other belongings of innocent people on the basis of a mere suspicion (or feigned suspicion) of wrongdoing. By government.

No evidence is required by law: no arrest; no conviction. Just the willingness of some police officer, sheriff, or other member of law enforcement to grab what doesn't belong to him.

Another hero of the story is Billy Bob Faulkingham, one of my favorite legislators and the main sponsor of the bill.

There's only one cure: state by state, these asset forfeiture laws must be abolished.

The Institute for Justice reports that Maine has now repealed its civil forfeiture law, making it the third state to do so. IJ's own efforts deserve much of the credit.



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The bipartisan “Act to Strengthen Protections Against Asset Forfeiture” — which passed without the governor’s signature — states that “for property to be forfeited under the criminal forfeiture laws, the owner of the property[must] be convicted of a crime in which the property was involved. . . .”

Is this the end of the injustice?

In Maine, maybe.

Being on the books doesn't necessarily mean that a law will be obeyed. But if and when it is violated, victims in the state will now have stronger legal recourse and a much better chance of promptly getting back their stuff.

This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.