



## Episode 1,168: Libertarian Victories Do Exist: Here's Exhibit A

Guest: Carla Gericke

**WOODS:** You're extremely active all the time. You've got interesting stuff going on right now. You're still on the board of the Free State Project, where you served as president for a number of years. That's not — well, you know what? That is actually going to be part of what we talk about, isn't it? Because I want to get up to date on what the Free State Project has been doing, and then I want to get into what you individually have been doing. But first of all, introduce the Free State Project to the folks. I would estimate 75% of people listening know about the Free State Project, but that 25% who don't know should know.

**GERICKE:** Absolutely. So the Free State Project is a movement to concentrate libertarians in New Hampshire. We've been around now for more than 10 years, 12 years. I don't know. I moved 10 years ago, so I've been in New Hampshire for 10 years. And what we're trying to do is to concentrate principled people in one state so that we can actually effect change. I think one of the biggest challenges for all of us is we have these great ideas, we actually know they work, we know limited government is the way to go, but because we're sort of all over the place, it's really hard to make effective changes. So the idea is, if we concentrate 20,000 people in the state of New Hampshire, we can actually make a difference.

So a lot of us, we're early movers in typical sort of stubborn libertarian style. We came early. And people have run for office; people have done civil disobedience; I won a really big landmark court case four years ago; people have started businesses; there's a really big crypto community here. And so we triggered the move in 2016, which technically means people now have five years to move here, and we're seeing people come at an amazing clip, and it's really, really exciting.

**WOODS:** That is really great. So let's talk about specifics, then. What are some specific good things that the Free State Project has managed to accomplish, let's just say on a legislative level, and then maybe some bad things that it helped New Hampshire avoid?

**GERICKE:** Sure. So I mean, just in this past legislative session, I mean, our success list is getting long enough where I'm just going to pick and choose sort of what has taken place in the past two years. There are certainly lists, and there's a wonderful new website, actually, called FSP.org, so people can go take a look there. But in this past legislative session, we passed constitutional carry, which means New Hampshire now has the best gun laws in America. We were on par with Vermont, but they recently passed a couple of really bad bills as a result of the school shootings that have been taking place. So constitutional carry: huge.

We have a really big homeschool and unschooling community here, and so we've seen lots of changes and progress made on school choice expansions. Two years ago, Frank Edelblut, who actually ran against Governor Sununu, who's now our sitting Republican governor, and he came within a thousand votes of taking the governor. And I think that surprised Sununu, and so he talked to Frank and he sort of said, "Hey, what would you be interested in?" and Frank was appointed as the Educational Commissioner. And so he's been doing some really amazing work in the actual department. And in fact, Tom, I would highly recommend, if you want me to connect you, he might be a really interesting person to talk to on school choice.

On school choice as well, we had the Croydon decision, which was a case out of a small town up where Bardo Farm is. And basically this is a small school that only went up to middle grades, and from there students had to go to another town. And so several Free Staters served on the school board, and they decided that they would like to send some students who weren't doing well in the public school to private schools like Montessori and that the money that was allocated for them would follow the child. And needless to say, the Department of Education wasn't very happy about that and actually ended up suing the school. It went all the way to the New Hampshire Supreme Court, and Croydon prevailed. So that was a really big deal.

And then another one on school choice that was very good is that there's discretion now with regard to Common Core, so it's not automatically implemented into schools. The schools themselves can decide, and especially I think people are avoiding it with regard to math and science, because, I don't know if you've seen the math Common Core. I mean, it's very Orwellian. It's sort of like  $2+2=5$ .

So that's a couple of them. We had cryptocurrency deregulation. People are not regarded as money lenders if they start crypto businesses here. On the marijuana legalization front, we actually had a decrim bill that went through, so that's decriminalization of up to three-quarters of an ounce. I was recently at a legalization or pro-pot rally up at the State House on 4/20, April 20th, and it was amazing because people were sparking up around me and a trooper came over and he was like, "You can't do that." And one of the state reps who was there was like, "Actually, we can, so if you'd like to write us tickets, feel free. Otherwise, please go away."

Good progress on business tax cuts. So we've been cutting those consistently by 2 to 5% year over year, and as we know, that actually results in more economic activity, all the good stuff that flows from letting people keep more of their money, so it's good hiring. New Hampshire in fact has the lowest unemployment rate in America, and we had \$100,000 surplus this budget round. Of course, the State House being the State House, they were like, "Ooh, let's spend this," so certainly if I get into the Senate that's something I'll be working on.

And one that I'm personally very excited about is a repeal of the death penalty. And my opponent — I'm running for Senate in November — well, I'm running now. Hopefully I will win in November — he's actually pro the death penalty, and unfortunately it looks like the governor might actually veto that. But it did pass the House, it did pass the Senate, and hopefully we can get the governor on the right side of that issue.

**WOODS:** All right, let's talk about — well, let's see. Can we talk about things that were stopped in part, let's say, because of pressure from Free State Project folks?

**GERICKE:** Right, and I should also add — I mean, one of the things I'm really discovering and loving, when I was president of the Free State Project, I sort of tried to keep my head down and just focus on FSP kind of work, and now that I'm sort of out of that day-to-day, I am building a lot of alliances with Granite Staters who are here. And so in some ways, we're sort of reinforcements and I'm building a bigger alliance of people who feel the same way as we do, which of course is kind of why we picked the state, right? Low taxes; no personal income tax; it's beautiful; it has the best quality of living in America. It's really great.

So some of the bills we worked on is there was this family medical leave insurance plan that came out. Now, of course that sounds great. Who's against families? Who's against little babies? And it's sort of a hard one to talk about. But basically, we worked on that bill. We and some other Free Staters went up, we did protests, and the long and the sort of it was this bill would basically have introduced an income tax in New Hampshire. Because they were saying, "Oh, this is voluntary. You can opt in, but you can only opt out once." It's like the mafia [laughing]. It's like something out of *The Godfather*, once we have you, we won't let you go. And so we were just very active. We formed groups. We had people go up there. We talked about the issues with people who were for it. And Governor Sununu sort of came to his senses, took a look at the bill, and said, you know, this actually does not look great.

And just to give you a sense, in the bill itself, first of all, they were like, this bill is great because they have it in California, Rhode Island, Oregon — all these states where it's like, we don't want to be doing anything on that list of states — New York. Because it's like, well, those are the states where we have mass migration. People are leaving because they feel overtaxed and everything's too expensive. And as they were progressing with this bill, at some stage, they actually had to increase the percentage of contribution that you would be making. So before it even passed, they were increasing the tax and sort of saying, well, maybe people won't have to opt in; maybe we'll kind of have to force some people to do this, because otherwise the numbers don't make sense. So I was really excited that we got that one killed.

There was a bump stock reactionary ban that was introduced. That one was just absolutely stopped from the start. And then there was this weird out-of-state Californian guy who wanted to introduce a constitutional amendment to the New Hampshire constitution called Marcy's Law. And once again, on paper, it looked really good. It's like, oh, who's not for victims' rights? If someone had this traumatic thing happen to them, we should protect their rights. You know, one, constitutional amendments. Why? And then two, it just — I don't know, it wasn't a good fit for New Hampshire and really it wasn't really introducing anything that wasn't already there. So there was a big red flag for me on why does this guy want to do this and what's sort of the back door that we're not quite seeing? So Marcy's Law was also killed, killed dead.

**WOODS:** All right, well, this is all very good stuff and this is why I'm glad to be reporting on what's going on with the Free State Project and to support it, and I'm glad that it's had all the success. This is great, and it's an example of actually doing something. Instead of sitting around what we should do, you're actually going out and doing something. And I am guilty of that too. I'm not very good with strategy. I'm good with where we want to go and I'm good with the ideas, but how to get there sometimes stumps me, and you guys have really done some pioneering work on that and I appreciate that.

Now, you're running for office. I want you to tell me about, okay, what office you're running for and who's your opponent.

**GERICKE:** Sure. So I am running again. I ran in 2016 for New Hampshire State Senate in District 20. That's big chunks of Manchester and all of Goffstown. Goffstown is a more Republican-leaning area, and so I do pretty well. Manchester is a bit of a mixed bag, but that's where I own my home, and I do think I'll be able to pick up some independents and undeclareds because my positions aren't maybe 100% typically Republican. So I'm running as a Republican.

I think the shortest way to summarize my position is government that governs least governs best, and I feel really comfortable talking about that, because I do feel like that's something that can resonate across the board. My opponent is Lou D'Allesandro. This is a gentleman who was born before the start of World War II, so he's been around for a long time. He's served in various capacities in New Hampshire for 44 years.

And I mean, to be fair, I don't think the fact that he's 80 should count against him. I'm not an ageist. But his voting record is bad. We have a great organization here in New Hampshire called the New Hampshire Liberty Alliance. It's been around probably now for 10, 12 years. It was started by non-Free Staters, so by locals who were passionate about liberty principles. And they rate all the bills. Every week they bring out a gold standard that basically looks at every bill that's introduced. And to give you an idea of the volume of work, we had more than a thousand bills this legislative session. And I have to ask — I mean, it's 2018 — how many more laws do we actually need?

So Lou is rated a constitutional threat by the NHLA, which means he is not for preserving or expanding liberties. He's a big-government guy. He started as a Republican and then switched to Democrat. And you know, he's been around in office for a long time. He was an educator and a football coach before that. So he's popular. He's obviously really, really well known. I don't think people actually know what his record is; they just kind of vote for him because he's been around for so long.

So when I ran against him in 2016, I did get 40% of the vote, which I'm quite proud of. I mean, I'm running as an out and open Free Stater, and I've done civil disobedience and I've done things that have raised some eyebrows over the years. And so that 40% was out knocking on doors. This time, I started early. I'm fundraising. I'm knocking on doors. I'm making little videos that people can see at [Carla4NHSenate.com](http://Carla4NHSenate.com). And you know, I'm going to take him. I almost feel like I should give him a phone call and be like, "Do you want your legacy to be you lost to a Free Stater? Don't you want to bow out now?"

**WOODS:** Oh, that is funny; that is funny. And by the way, it's [Carla4NHSenate.com](http://Carla4NHSenate.com).

**GERICKE:** Yes.

**WOODS:** I don't know, maybe you have both of them; I don't know. But [Carla4NHSenate.com](http://Carla4NHSenate.com). Let me jump in with an objection that a lot of people have. I don't know if it's an even split among people who listen in, but I think it's roughly even between people who say there's some role for politics — if you don't participate, our ideas aren't going to get worse — and other

people who say it's like a devil's game and it's a waste of time. And so I'll have some people just rolling their eyes, *Oh, somebody running for office*. What do you say to those people?

**GERICKE:** You know, I actually started out more in that camp. I mean, I'm a proud anarchocapitalist for those listeners who understand what that means. But the reality is you have to fight the world we're in, and we have these ideals, but the point is, unless we have people sort of standing on the legislative side and saying, "Let's not do these things," then the reality is things will get worse. And we both know — I mean, the state is violence. The state is force. And it's very idealistic to say, "Well, I'm just going to ignore them," but the reality is you can't. If they're going to come for you, they're going to come for you.

And so we've definitely seen successes where people have staved off really bad things, as in the examples I've just mentioned. And I think if we're going to have people in the State House, let's have people who can arrest, in the stopping sense of the word, some of these erosions of our liberties. So I understand why some people feel that way, but I've looked at the reality of my life in New Hampshire, and I feel like this is where I can make the biggest difference and this is where I can actually make really results-driven difference that we can prove. We can say this state is getting freer because these people are in office.

**WOODS:** With a race like this at this level, you typically don't have public debates, so how do people get to know who you are? You really are literally knocking on doors?

**GERICKE:** I am literally knocking on doors. I am using my social media avenues as I can. I write a lot of letters to the editor on issues. Actually, here's one I have for you, Tom. Maybe you have an insight here that I can't figure out, exactly to your point about should we be in the State House. I recently joined the Right to Know New Hampshire. I'm now a board member there. And that's basically government transparency and government — you know, we have a bill here called 91A and it's supposed to really help us be able to get access to what they're doing on a school board level or on a town level or on a State House level.

And one of the bills they introduced before I was involved was to say: let's create this ombudsman, because the only recourse you currently have is you have to sue all the way to the Supreme Court, which is expensive — you know, it's a barrier to entry and all of that. So let's create this new thing that can solve this problem. And I'm torn, because I'm like, that sounds good on paper. We're going to have this — but it also sounds terrible on paper, because it is growing government. Now we're creating a whole new little division of government to do the work that the courts aren't doing? What are your thoughts on that?

**WOODS:** Yeah, boy, that's a good one.

**GERICKE:** Right?

**WOODS:** That's a good one, because you do want the transparency. Yeah, I don't know. I don't know. I could see going either way on it. In a way, I think it would have to depend on what kind of a job it winds up doing and maybe it winds up justifying itself. I could imagine it justifying itself. But that's one without a clear — I mean, obviously if I want to be super pure, I could say, well, if it's taxpayer funded, then it ain't no good. I get that.

**GERICKE:** Right.

**WOODS:** But they're going to spend that money on something else. They're not going to return the money to you because they didn't have this particular thing to spend it on. So as long as it's sloshing around, then if they were to spend it on some kind of oversight thing that's not a sham — and on the local level, there is more of a chance that it would be genuine and not a sham than, say, a federal oversight, which would just be a joke — then maybe it's worth giving it a try.

Now, here's an interesting thing: normally when people run for the State House, they're running on extremely mundane questions, because at the local level, you're dealing with very, very practical, day-to-day issues. Whatever, there's some annoying traffic light or there's some local tax people don't like or whatever. But you have a section in your issues that's extremely philosophical about the value of using persuasion over using force and that government represents force. This must be highly unusual for a State House run.

**GERICKE:** You know, it probably is, but one of the reasons I feel so strongly about that is I believe in principles over politics. And I was like, look, if I'm going to do this, I want to be true to myself, I want to be true to my philosophy. And we need to get this message out there, and I feel like the message is getting out and it is resonating with more people. And so the more people who hear it consistently who can then look into it more, I think yeah, persuasion, not force.

I mean, we understand that every law is backed by the barrel of a gun and that, the smaller government is, the more peaceful life is. One of the things I see is it seems like everyone is a little upset. Whether people are pro-Trump, anti-Trump, whatever, everyone is mad about something. And the reason for that is because government is too big. They have a finger in every single slice of our lives. They're just hoggin' down that apple pie.

And so I feel strongly that, let's talk about this and let's talk about the fact that persuasion other than force is the way to go. Let's talk about issues. Let's not hurt people. And with social media and technology the way it is now, we live in a really fortunate time. I mean, I half-jokingly sometimes say: all right, let's concede for the 20th century we got the roads. That's what the government gave us, but now we're moving on from the roads, right? So we need to champion ideas through technology that people can understand and people can actually pursue their passions, and they need to learn that we can do these things privately on a community level, on a social-media level, on a church level all of those things. It doesn't have to be the state. Let's get the state out of it. Let's have a limited, constitutional government, and let's do all these other things as people through human action.

**WOODS:** I want to ask you something that's completely unrelated to any of this but that I think will be of interest to folks. And in fact, I really want to urge folks to keep on listening here, because this could help you. This could change your life too. I had a guest on this show quite a while ago, maybe once or twice, and then on *The Peter Schiff Show*, and that's Mark Sisson. And I guess you've gotten to know a bit of what it is that he teaches, and it has had a tremendously positive effect on your health, which is at least as important as politics, so I think we should say a word about that if you wouldn't mind.

**GERICKE:** Absolutely. So I've been doing this liberty stuff for a long time, and you know, there's the politics in the community and everything. But then the sort of human action part of it really sunk in for me, and I think liberty is a lifestyle. So I used to be a lush. I used to be

a fairly heavy drinker. Part of that was I'm actually shy. No one believes that about me, because I grew up in a diplomatic household, so I learned how to play the social game. But herding 20,000 libertarian cats is not the easiest job in life. So I was suffering from anxiety and I kind of got caught in this loop where I would drink because, *Oh, I need a drink. This will help me relax.* And that wasn't the case.

And so last year I read — and I'll get to Mark in a second, but I read this book called *This Naked Mind* by Annie Grace, and the subtitle is *Find Freedom, Discover Happiness, and Change Your Life*. And I was like, eh, I'll give it a shot. And I read the book. It's very science-based about what alcohol actually does to you. And one of the things that really struck me in the book was that alcohol is a neurodepressant and it causes anxiety. So I was actually caught up in this loop where I was like, *I'm anxious. I need to drink. Why am I more anxious?*

And so I was like, you know, I'm just going to give it a shot. I'm going to quit drinking. I'm going to go on Keto Reset by Mark. And I did both those things last fall, and I've lost more than 50 pounds. I feel the best that I have in a really, really long time. I'm very clear about what I want. I feel like I can accomplish those goals. So it was a sort of personal choice where I feel like liberty as a lifestyle means, if I'm going to be a spokesperson and a successful spokesperson for these ideas, I need to get my own house in order. And so I did, and I'm really glad I did.

And I want to add one thing. Something that struck with ending something like an alcohol addiction was I thought, *Ugh, I'm not sure I have the will power.* But it's not actually about willpower. If you switch your thinking from, *Oh, I can't have that, to, Oh, I don't want that,* it really made the difference. I don't miss it. It doesn't bother me. I just was like, I'm changing my life and this is where I'm going and this is what I'm doing and I'm doing it.

**WOODS:** Well, that really is tremendous. What exactly — just very quickly, what does the Sisson regimen call for you to do?

**GERICKE:** Well, don't eat carbs [laughing]. No more potato for you, Carla. It's a low-carb, medium-protein, high-fat diet. High good fats, so lots of avocado, the occasional cream cheese. So really just looking at what you're taking in, avoiding carbs. I had done paleo and low-carb for quite a while, but as I said, I was drinking, so those two things didn't really work that well. But then I would cheat. You know, *Eh, it's the weekend,* or whatever. So this time, I've been really, really strict. I did do my victory cheat this past weekend with a tub of ice cream, and I did gain weight [laughing], so there is that little feedback loop.

But yeah, people can get the book. It's *Keto Reset*, kind of look at that. But the short answer is: eat a medium amount of protein — I eat lots of salads with tuna or mackerel or sardines. I happen to like those things. Not everyone does. And then I do intermittent fasting, so I'll have dinner at 7 o'clock and I won't eat again until the next day after noon. And then someday I might even go a whole day. And for a lot of people, that will sound like, whoa, how do you even do that, right? But once you are feeding your body the energy sources it actually needs to function in a primal and prime way, you don't get that hungry.

**WOODS:** Yeah, that is true. That is true. I mean, I did it for quite a while and it definitely helped me. And in fact, I to this day, years and years and years after I interviewed him on *The Peter Schiff Show*, I have people telling me how much their lives were changed by it, how much healthier they are, how much weight they lost, how much more energy they have.

And the thing is this sounds like an ad. It sounds like I'm being compensated for this. But I'm not. It just has had a very, very good effect on a lot of people, and I was very glad to see — I hadn't realized that you were doing it — that you had also given it a try.

I will say this — I will say this: some people say, "Listen, I know you're going to be dying for pancakes" — and by the way, you can make primal pancakes that are acceptable, but, eh, it's a lot of work. But people say, "You may like pancakes and pasta and whatever, but don't you worry. After a few months of this, you won't miss them." Well, you know what? I guess I like those things a lot more than those people who told me that, because after a few months, I was ready to murder somebody for half a pancake. So it is harder for some of us than it is for others, but on the other hand, the feedback, the results you're getting from your own body are so encouraging that it gives you the stamina and the wherewithal to carry on all the same.

All right, so let's wrap up with a closing thought here. Naturally, you want to win this election. Given that you got 40% last time and this time you're working more systematically, just give us a final thought. What can people do to help you?

**GERICKE:** Of course donations. Unfortunately, the government runs on money, and my opponent has really deep pockets, mostly from monopoly gambling. And I'm not adverse to gambling; I'm just adverse to it being two of his friends. So donations. Certainly people can go to [Carla4NHSenate.com](http://Carla4NHSenate.com). There's a donate link there and some information if people want to send in checks. Maybe follow me at Carla Gericke for NH Senate on Facebook or find me on Twitter. Like and share my stuff, share my videos. That always helps. And you know, just the usual stuff.

I guess the last sort of quick shout-out I want to give is for PorcFest, if you don't mind.

**WOODS:** Yeah, go ahead.

**GERICKE:** That's taking place June 19th through the 24th up in the White Mountains, as it always is. There's a great lineup of people. I know you've had Eric July on your show from Backwordz. He's going to be coming out. We have Patrick Byrne from Overstock coming back. There's one of the writers for Penn and Teller's show, Matt Donnelly, is going to be there, David Friedman, Ben Swann. So I think it's going to be amazing. It's going to be really fun. And it's always a bit of a family reunion. It's great to get everyone together and happy and having fun. It'll be my first sober one, so maybe I'll remember something [laughing]. But people can find tickets at [PorcFest.com](http://PorcFest.com). And I just really appreciate you having me on. It's always great to talk to you, so thank you.

**WOODS:** Well, absolutely. So let me make sure we get the website out there again. So it's [Carla4NHSenate.com](http://Carla4NHSenate.com)?

**GERICKE:** Yes.

**WOODS:** All right, so there it is. I'll link to that of course at [TomWoods.com/1168](http://TomWoods.com/1168). And we send you with our best wishes and all the luck in the world, and we hope to hear a good result. But either way, either way, you're still doing good work and you're spreading an important message. And you know what? Let me just say this. Even as somebody who's a little



bit burned out on politics, at the same time, I look at what you're doing. You're not earning money from this. You're getting a lot of abuse and exhaustion and aggravation and annoyance. I mean, let's face it. There are some rewarding parts of it, no doubt, but this is a hard slog. And you're doing this because you want to help the cause, and whatever your stance on politics is, that's commendable. That's something to be cheered and appreciated. So thank you for that, and I hope you sock it to him.

**GERICKE:** Thank you, Tom.