

The Peoples Budget Is Not Socialism

The People's Budget for Iowa reframes the way we look at the role of government from that of just growing the economy to embracing the public trust doctrine. Under this doctrine the government is trustee of all things we share in common which is often called the commons. The commons would include things like schools, parks, universities, clean air, wildlife, clean water, public health, judiciary and infrastructure in the state. The government would thus have the key role in maintaining, protecting and enhancing the commons for the benefit of its citizens. Such investments would also enhance private enterprise through the development of an educated workforce with good leadership and critical thinking skills, sound infrastructure needed to get crops to the market place, clean air, clean water and parks.

The People's Budget stresses that public money should be held in public hands and not transferred to private interests for private gain. Instead of providing research tax credits totaling tens of millions of dollars for corporations that pay no state taxes, why not give that money to public universities to conduct the research?

Invariably there will be criticisms that the People's Budget for Iowa is socialism. In fact, we already have institutions that actually are owned and operated by the government: Police and fire departments, libraries and public schools just to name a few. On the federal level Medicare is a single payer health care system and the Veterans Administration Health Care is funded and operated by the government. In other words, socialized medicine.



There are many different definitions of socialism, but Merriam Webster provides a good one: Advocates for collective or governmental ownership and administration of the means of production and distribution of goods. There is nothing in the People's Budget about the state producing consumer goods and controlling the distribution of such goods. The means of production and distribution of goods remains in the hands of private enterprise. However, The People's Budget aims to keep public money in the public's hands for the public good so as to help promote the well-being of its citizens.

As stated in the Bill of Rights to the Iowa Constitution, Article I, Political Power, Section 2:

All political power is inherent in the people. Government is instituted for the protection, security, and benefit of the people, and they have the right, at all times, to alter or reform the same, whenever the public good may require it.