

State Capture:

How Conservative Activists, Big Businesses, and Wealthy Donors Are Reshaping the American States – and the Nation

Alexander Hertel-Fernandez, Columbia University

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WHERE: Shambaugh Auditorium, University of Iowa



In recent years, GOP state legislatures have begun considering and enacting a slew of similar -- and sometimes even identical -- pieces of legislation cutting union rights, restricting access to the ballot, reducing taxes on the wealthy and business, and curbing social programs. Where did this flood of new legislation come from and how did so many states arrive at the same proposals at precisely the same time? This talk describes how, over decades, conservative activists, businesses, and wealthy donors constructed a trio of overlapping and reinforcing cross-state political networks (the American Legislative Exchange Council, the State Policy Network, Americans for Prosperity) that have helped legislatures to enact right-leaning and business-friendly policy priorities.