



## Philanthropy in a Time of Polarization

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Foundations have tried to remain above the partisan fray, but growing political polarization renders old approaches ineffective. As SSN member Steven Teles and his collaborators show, philanthropists must look for new opportunities – and deploy fresh strategies – if they want to spur fundamental shifts in public policy today.

This [important article](#) by Teles along with Heather Hurlburt and Mark Schmitt appears in the summer 2014 issue of the *Stanford Social Innovation Review*.

An associate professor of political science at Johns Hopkins University, [Steven M. Teles](#) studies the organizational features and strategies of movements for change and probes their ultimate impact on what government does. He is the author of *The Rise of the Conservative Legal Movement*, published in 2008 by Princeton University Press. Teles serves on the editorial board of *The Washington Monthly* and speaks regularly to conservative as well as other audiences.

Teles's [most recent SSN brief](#), co-authored with David Dagan, examines how conservatives and liberals can work together to roll back and limit the socially destructive consequences of America's late twentieth-century prison boom.

Among the case studies probed by Teles and his co-authors are the successful 2009-10 campaign for comprehensive health reform and the failed 2009-10 effort to get Congress to enact cap and trade legislation to fight global warming. Both of these episodes, and the role of foundations in them, are also discussed in SSN member Theda Skocpol's 2013 report, ["Naming the Problem."](#)