“Severe poverty is very difficult for someone to pull themselves out of. I come from a family of 18 brothers and sisters. I was the only one to graduate high school and have two brothers with GEDs and that’s it. With severe poverty…it’s entitlements, welfare, drugs and incarceration. The real issue is the cost of despair and how we fight that despair. It’s going to be religious and community-based entities that help people fight despair—that’s where the solutions will come from—it’s not going to be done in government. What government can do is create the environment for prosperity.”

-- Paul LePage, Governor of Maine (at FPI’s Maine Substance Abuse Forum)
# Family Prosperity Index

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1 out of 3 counties
“In one of the bluest states in the union, it is often difficult for our Center to break through the entrenched political mindset that normally eschews personal self-sufficiency in favor of government dependency. The national FPI research and the Rhode Island specific report we produced late last year has already paid dividends for us. As we had hoped, a public policy approach that focuses on the family, as opposed to a philosophy, is much more readily accepted by our state’s political class. Further, for the first time in our six-year history, we have successfully been able to reach across the political divide and link arms with new friends from the left to advance issues and solutions of mutual agreement to us.”

-- Mike Stenhouse, CEO, Rhode Island Center for Freedom & Prosperity
Where do we go from here?