

## PREC AT NCSL IN BOSTON AUG. 6-9, 2017

By Dr. H. William Batt, Albany, NY

Some seven Georgists stood in for Al Katzenberger to represent PREC, the Public Revenue Education Council, at the annual Summit of the National Conference of State Legislatures. Taking Al's place while he recuperated in St. Louis were Josh Vincent, Brendan Hennigan, Bill Batt, Lindy Davies, Warren Chamberlain, Heather Remoff, and Tom Lyons (a student of both Heather and Lindy). The conference ran from August 6 through 9, held this year in Boston, and attendance was unusually high.

It was well then there were seven of us to meet legislators, staffers, and associated others as they strolled by our booth, as it allows at least three of us to be there at the ready at any given time. Since Al has been representing us, in the name of PREC, for years, the assigned exhibit booth we have each year climbs, and our #529 now gives us a well placed position right up front. Not everyone is interested in property taxes, of course, but our list of contacts this year reached over 100. These are people Josh can follow up with in short order, and a letter has been sent off.

We were especially fortunate to meet Boston U. professor of environmental science Nathan Phillips who was quick to "see the cat." Another was the press officer of the Manhattan Institute since Bill has been less successful in convincing its sister unit in Albany, the staffers of the Empire Center of LVT merit. There were several other exhibitors, both on the progressive and conservative side of the spectrum, who found our ideas fit well with their own agendas.

Several rural states stopped by our booth, as also did the southern states. Reps from Nebraska and Kansas showed little interest, and the southern states typically faced constitutional obstacles. But we had strong interest from the Virgin Islands, from Puerto Rico, and in Maryland, Massachusetts, Hawaii and Seattle. Federal agencies we urged to explore the possibilities of collecting data that might be useful to us — a remote hope perhaps. But ESRI, the GIS mapping company was there; our is hope to interest them in land value maps.

Some contacts were particularly hot prospects — the Senator from Burlington VT., the Rep from Muncie, IN, and the House member from Baton Rouge. The most striking visitors were from Uganda, one from Kampala with the unforgettable name of Okumu Ronald Reagan! But even more important was the visit from Peter Lochert, the Staff Secretary of the Victoria (AU) Parliament, responsible for the following service groups: Resource Management, Precinct and Property Management, and Information Services. He also volunteered that LVT, casinos and red light stops were the best thing Victoria had going for money right now. (Probably joking.)

In the photo below (courtesy of Josh Vincent) are, left to right, Josh Vincent, Heather Remoff, Tom Lyons, Lindy Davies, and Brendan Hennigan. Absent when the photo was taken were Bill Batt and Warren Chamberlain.



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