

2012
Better
Government
Competition



Your idea for better government could win



PIONEER INSTITUTE
PUBLIC POLICY RESEARCH

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Competition
Entry Guidelines
85 Devonshire Street, 8th Floor
Boston, MA 02109-3504

Enter Pioneer's
2012
Better
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Competition!

\$10,000!



The federal government has increasingly gained control over a number of traditional state roles. This control has the effect of stifling innovation in the states and further separating government decisionmakers from the governed.

What is the Better Government Competition?

The Competition is an annual citizens' idea contest that seeks out and rewards the most innovative public policy ideas. Since 1991, the Competition has provided a public forum where promising new ideas and tested reforms can be discussed and promoted. Since the Competition's establishment, implementation of winning entries has saved Massachusetts taxpayers well over half a billion dollars.

The 2012 competition will focus on federal programs that can be devolved to the states — with benefits like cost savings, more effective delivery of services, or innovation as a result.

Sample topics include:

- **Regulations** — Are there federal regulations that can be devolved to the states, resulting in job creation or increased economic vitality?
- **Urban Redevelopment** — Are there federal programs aimed at helping revive older, industrial cities that would be better provided by state and/or local governments?
- **Transportation** — Currently the federal government collects taxes and redistributes transportation funding back to the states with strict limitations on expenditures. Is there a better way?
- **Interstate Commerce** — Are there federal restrictions on interstate commerce that harm job creation?
- **Banking and Finance** — The Sarbanes-Oxley and Dodd-Frank laws aimed to address failings in the banking and financial services industries. Could a state-based approach be more effective?
- **Health Care and Insurance** — Since World War II, the federal government has expanded its role in financing and regulating health care delivery and insurance. Are there more effective ways to insure and care for Americans through state policy?
- **Education** — Since its establishment in 1979, the U.S. Department of Education has gained control over reporting, spending, behavior, academic content, testing, special education, and more. Are there better ways to achieve common goals at the state and local level?
- **Other ideas to explore?** — Just ask. We're probably open to it.

Should I Enter?

Yes! The Competition grand prize winner is \$10,000; three runners-up receive \$1,000 each. The contest is open to all people and organizations—academics, non-profits, entrepreneurs, government officials, and all concerned citizens. Entrants from outside Massachusetts are eligible. Ordinary citizens will not be at a disadvantage, because Pioneer Institute will work to provide quality entrants with the resources to develop their ideas. We protect the identity of anyone who prefers anonymity.

How to Enter

Send Pioneer Institute an idea paper of no more than five pages describing a problem and your idea for solving it. The "idea" can be a new concept or a recently implemented program that shows promising results. We do not expect great detail in the initial submission, but be sure to touch briefly on the following elements:

- **A description of the problem to be addressed**, including relevant background on the nature of the problem.
- **An explanation of the proposed solution and how it would change current practice.** If appropriate, you may cite examples of similar approaches that are in place elsewhere. If possible, discuss the costs and benefits of your approach compared to current practice; potential obstacles to implementation; and the potential for replication in Massachusetts. Please note: We do not consider legal obstacles or the need for new legislation barriers to entry.

Competition Schedule

- **Entry Deadline:** Idea papers of up to five pages due by **Monday, April 9, 2012, 4:00 pm ET**
- **Fax:** 617-723-1880
- **Mail or hand-deliver to:**
 Shawni Littlehale, Director, Better Government Competition
 Pioneer Institute, 85 Devonshire Street, 8th Floor
 Boston, MA 02109
 Phone: 617-723-2277 ext. 207
- **Email:** bgc@pioneerinstitute.org (include your idea paper as an attachment)
- **Submit online:** http://www.pioneerinstitute.org/programs_bgc_Enter.php, or by downloading our **Word template:** www.pioneerinstitute.org/bgc/template2012.doc
- **Preliminary Winner and Runners Up Announcement:** **Monday, May 7, 2012**
- **BGC Compendium and Awards Dinner:** In **mid- to late June 2012**, winning entries are published in a compendium distributed to policy makers and opinion leaders, and awards presented at a dinner ceremony.

