2014 Freedom Index – Rating Criteria

Tier 1 – Three Points:

This category includes legislation that creates or eliminates a new agency, program, or function, creates new regulatory burdens or is hostile to constitutional principles.

1) Does it create or eliminate an agency, program or function of government?

2) Does it give the government new power to prohibit or restrict activities in the free market? Examples may include licensure and other restrictions on legal business practices.

3) Is it unconstitutional or does it violate the principles of federalism or separation of powers? Does it restrict property, speech, gun or other constitutionally-recognized rights or freedoms? Conversely, does it restore balance between the state and federal government, resume state authority over an issue under the 10th Amendment, or remove restrictions on constitutionally-protected rights?

Tier 2 – One Point:

This category includes legislation that interacts with the free market or expands or contracts existing government functions (without creating new ones.)

4) Does it increase or decrease government redistribution of wealth using tax policy or other incentives to reward specific interest groups, politicians or government employees with special favors or perks?

5) Does it transfer a function of the private sector to the government, or does it restore a function to the private sector?

6) Does it grow or shrink the scope of government through rules, regulation or statute?

7) Does it directly or indirectly create/reduce taxes, fees or other assessments?

8) Does it increase or decrease long-term debt, or override or restore statutory or constitutional protections against long-term debt?

9) Does it restrict access to information that should be in the public domain or does it promote government transparency?