



The Citizens' Project 2025: A Manifesto for Ethical, Inclusive Governance

This manifesto does not pretend that there is only one path forward. It insists only that the path must be ethical, inclusive, and rooted in shared responsibility. Our solutions are ambitious—but not absolute. They are invitations to move together—not mandates to move all at once. A movement rooted not in left or right, but in listening, repair, and responsible stewardship.

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Chapter 1: The People's Presidency

Overview

The executive branch was never intended to operate like a monarchy. Yet over the past several decades, unchecked executive power has grown—through executive orders, emergency declarations, and agency overreach—undermining both Congress and the will of the people. The presidency must be re-centered as a servant leadership role, accountable not only to law, but to the citizens whose lives it affects.

What's Broken

- Executive Overreach: National emergencies declared without constraint. Foreign wars launched without congressional approval.
- Opacity: Shielding the public from health conditions, cognitive capacity, or financial entanglements of sitting presidents.
- Permanence: The "imperial presidency" has become a career capstone, insulated from public consequence—even in failure.
- Agency Politicization: Executive control over departments like DOJ, EPA, or DHS has led to abuses of power or intentional dismantling of their missions.

What We Propose

 Cognitive and Health Transparency Mandatory, nonpartisan health and cognitive evaluations for all presidential candidates over 75—publicly disclosed.	 Civic Accountability Reviews Bi-annual citizen reviews of executive performance, led by independent civic panels with public town halls.	 Limits on Emergency Powers Strict 90-day limits on emergency declarations unless extended by Congress with public input.
 Cabinet Review Process Senate confirmation must include civic impact statements on each nominee's track record, values, and independence.	 Presidential Library Reform All federal funding for presidential libraries must include a citizens' truth and reconciliation archive—highlighting both achievement and harm.	

Civic Tools and Safeguards



Digital Dashboard

A public-facing "Civic Executive Dashboard" showing executive orders, emergency declarations, vetoes, and policy shifts in real time.



Citizen Oversight Commission

A permanent, publicly funded, independent body with the power to investigate executive conduct and advise Congress on impeachment or censure.



Conflict of Interest Disclosure

Full release of tax returns, assets, and foreign business ties prior to ballot eligibility.

Vision for the Future

The president must no longer be a celebrity, a CEO, or a symbol of power. The future executive must be a custodian of the republic—guided not by partisanship or self-image, but by humility, competence, and civic responsibility. The office must be restored not in glory, but in clarity.



Chapter 2: The Legislative Branch

From Gridlock to Guardianship: Reclaiming the People's House

Overview

The U.S. Congress was designed to be the most representative and responsive branch of government. Yet today, it is one of the least trusted. Lifelong incumbency, gerrymandering, corporate lobbying, and performative partisanship have transformed the halls of legislation into a theater of obstruction, far removed from the lives of everyday Americans.

Congress was meant to be a citizen's chamber—a body of rotating public servants representing evolving public will. Instead, it has become a place where power calcifies, money dominates, and public interest is negotiated away.

What's Broken

- **Lack of Term Limits:** Members serve for decades, often unchallenged, accumulating influence without corresponding accountability.
- **Gerrymandering:** Districts drawn to protect incumbents rather than represent constituents have entrenched partisanship and discouraged voter turnout.
- **Lobbyist Capture:** Special interest groups have outsized influence on legislation, often writing bills behind closed doors.
- **Stagnation and Spectacle:** Hearings and votes are increasingly performative, designed for cable news sound bites instead of deliberative problem-solving.
- **Non-Representative Composition:** Congress is disproportionately wealthy, male, and white compared to the nation it claims to serve.

What We Propose

Term Limits for All Members

Maximum of 12 years total (e.g., 6 terms in the House, 2 terms in the Senate).

Publicly Funded Elections

End corporate donations and PAC spending in federal legislative races.

National Independent Redistricting Commission

Eliminate gerrymandering by establishing a citizen-led, transparent, nonpartisan district-drawing process.

Civic Performance Reviews

Mandated mid-term town halls, constituent report cards, and recorded voting accountability for each member.

Diversity Parity Goals

Public reporting and voluntary targets to make Congress reflect national demographics in race, gender, income, and life experience.

Civic Tools and Safeguards

- Legislative Transparency Portal: Every bill, amendment, and vote easily searchable with plain-language summaries.
- Ethics Oversight Expansion: Strengthen the Office of Congressional Ethics with independent prosecutorial power.
- Civic Match Fund: Small-dollar donations matched 10:1 to level the playing field for candidates without wealth or elite backers.

Vision for the Future

Imagine a Congress where teachers, nurses, small business owners, and community organizers serve alongside attorneys and economists—not as tokens, but as equals. A chamber that legislates with moral clarity, fiscal integrity, and human impact in mind—not media cycles or campaign coffers.

A legislative branch worthy of its constitutional promise: not to represent power, but to represent the people.

Chapter 3: The Judiciary and Justice Department

Justice, Not Power: Rebuilding Trust in the Courts and Law

Overview

A fair and independent judiciary is the cornerstone of democracy. The Department of Justice and the federal court system exist to uphold the law impartially, protect civil liberties, and serve the public—not political parties or powerful interests. Yet in recent decades, these institutions have become politicized, weaponized, and increasingly inaccessible to the very people they were created to protect.

When justice becomes a tool for those in power, it ceases to be justice. Restoring integrity, independence, and public trust in our legal system is essential to preserving the republic.

What's Broken

- **Lifetime Appointments Without Accountability:** Federal judges—including Supreme Court justices—can serve for decades, shaping law long after they are in step with the people.
- **Partisan Confirmation Process:** Judicial nominees are chosen less for legal acumen than ideological alignment, eroding judicial neutrality.
- **DOJ Politicization:** Administration after administration has used the Department of Justice as a political tool, undermining its independence.
- **Prosecutorial Overreach:** Communities of color, the poor, and the mentally ill bear the brunt of harsh sentencing, plea coercion, and mass incarceration.
- **Public Access Barriers:** Legal representation and access to justice remain prohibitively expensive and difficult for most Americans.

What We Propose



Term Limits for Federal Judges and Justices

Establish 18-year staggered terms for Supreme Court justices, with rotating appointments every two years.



Judicial Confirmation Transparency

Require nominee disclosure of prior rulings, writings, and affiliations in plain-language formats for public review.



DOJ Independence Charter

Codify protections that insulate the DOJ from executive pressure, ensuring investigative and prosecutorial integrity.



Civil Rights Restoration Division

Rebuild the DOJ's capacity to protect voting rights, reproductive access, disability rights, and protections against gender-based violence.



Expand Legal Access

Federally fund public defender offices and pro bono legal aid in every U.S. district.

Civic Tools and Safeguards

- **Judicial Oversight Council:** Establish an independent body of legal scholars, retired judges, and citizen representatives to review judicial conduct and issue public reports.
- **Civic Jury Project:** Pilot citizen juries to assess community-based sentencing, restorative justice outcomes, and legal system performance.
- **Digital Docket Transparency:** Make all federal court proceedings searchable and streamable, with multilingual summaries for public understanding.

Vision for the Future

The law should not be feared—it should be trusted. We envision a justice system where judges serve with humility, where prosecutors uphold fairness over conviction rates, and where access to justice is not determined by wealth or influence.

True justice isn't blind. It is vigilant, compassionate, and accountable to the people.

Chapter 4: The Federal Election Commission

Elections Without Integrity Are Just Performance: Securing the Right to Choose

Overview

Free and fair elections are the bedrock of democratic governance. The Federal Election Commission (FEC) was established to enforce campaign finance laws and ensure transparency and accountability in federal elections. Yet today, the FEC is paralyzed by partisan deadlock, hollowed out by deregulation, and increasingly powerless in the face of dark money, disinformation, and voter suppression.

When elections lose credibility, democracy loses consent. The people must not only cast votes—they must trust that those votes matter.

What's Broken

- **Deadlocked Governance:** With three Democratic and three Republican commissioners, the FEC often fails to take action—even in the face of blatant violations.
- **Dark Money Loopholes:** Super PACs, 501(c)(4) nonprofits, and shell organizations funnel billions into elections without meaningful oversight.
- **Disinformation and Digital Sabotage:** Online platforms continue to allow false election narratives, micro targeted voter suppression, and foreign influence campaigns with minimal consequence.
- **Outdated Enforcement Tools:** The FEC's enforcement mechanisms are slow, weak, and often toothless—penalizing violations long after elections have concluded.
- **Voter Suppression Laws:** While not under the FEC's direct jurisdiction, the lack of a coordinated federal standard leaves millions vulnerable to disenfranchisement through ID laws, purges, and limited polling access.

What We Propose



Reform FEC Structure

Expand to seven commissioners with a nonpartisan tiebreaking chair, selected through a transparent public vetting process.



Real-Time Transparency Laws

Require same-day digital reporting of all donations above \$200, including the identity of donors and recipients.



Ban on Foreign Digital Interference

Mandate that all platforms hosting election-related content adhere to U.S. civic integrity standards with clear accountability for violations.



Public Financing Option

Establish a voluntary public financing program for congressional races to reduce dependence on private money.



Uniform Federal Voting Standards

Support companion legislation requiring universal access to vote-by-mail, early voting, and same-day registration.

Civic Tools and Safeguards

- Civic Integrity Dashboard: Track real-time campaign funding, FEC complaints, violations, and enforcement outcomes in a public-facing platform.
- AI-Powered Ad Archive: Require all political ads to be filed in a searchable, public archive with creator, funder, targeting data, and distribution metrics.
- Civic Literacy Campaigns: Launch nonpartisan national initiatives to educate voters on ballot access, gerrymandering, and how campaign financing shapes policy.

Vision for the Future

A democracy cannot function if the act of voting feels symbolic or futile. We imagine an electoral system where truth matters, influence is earned—not bought—and voters have equal voice, equal access, and equal protection.

Elections are not just contests. They are contracts between the governed and those who would govern. We must make the process worthy of that power.

Chapter 5: The Census and Representation

Every Person Counts: Representation Rooted in Reality

Overview

The decennial U.S. Census is more than a population count—it's the foundation of democracy. It determines how congressional seats are apportioned, how billions in federal funds are distributed, and how communities are seen, supported, or sidelined. Yet in recent years, political interference, underfunding, and deliberate disinformation have compromised the integrity of the Census and with it, the promise of fair representation.

We cannot govern what we refuse to fully see. A republic rooted in people power must count all its people—without bias, manipulation, or erasure.

What's Broken

- **Undercounting of Marginalized Communities:** Black, brown, immigrant, Indigenous, rural, and low-income communities are historically undercounted, leading to reduced resources and representation.
- **Political Interference:** Attempts to add a citizenship question or suppress immigrant participation reveal a dangerous willingness to distort the process for partisan gain.
- **Data Manipulation Threats:** Advances in AI, facial recognition, and data analytics increase risks of cross-agency surveillance and misuse of personally identifiable information.
- **Resource-Starved Operations:** Chronic underfunding of the U.S. Census Bureau weakens field efforts and public outreach, especially in hard-to-reach communities.
- **Outdated Technology & Accessibility:** Language barriers, digital divides, and privacy fears continue to deter millions from participating.

What We Propose



Codify a Fair Count Mandate

Pass federal legislation guaranteeing a nonpartisan, privacy-protected, and fully funded Census free from political tampering.



Permanent Community Count Corps

Establish a standing body of multilingual, local community ambassadors embedded in every district to support data collection year-round.



Ban Citizenship Question in Federal Census

Explicitly prohibit the addition of any question that deters full participation from immigrant communities.



Decentralize Census Education

Provide grants to local media, faith-based groups, schools, and grassroots organizations to drive outreach and trust-building efforts.



Strengthen Tribal and Territorial Representation

Partner with sovereign tribal nations and U.S. territories to co-design culturally relevant, legally respected enumeration methods.

Civic Tools and Safeguards

- **Census Transparency Dashboard:** A real-time, publicly accessible platform showing participation rates by district, race/ethnicity, language, and geographic region—updated throughout the count.
- **Open-Source Enumeration Tools:** Develop and release digital tools and guides that communities can use independently to validate count integrity.
- **Whistleblower Protection Expansion:** Strengthen legal protections for Census workers and contractors reporting manipulation, political pressure, or data breaches.

Vision for the Future

We envision a country where every person—documented or undocumented, housed or unhoused, rural or urban—is counted with dignity and without fear. A country where power flows from data that reflects reality, not partisan distortion.

Representation is not an abstract idea. It's a mathematical equation. If we fail to count, we fail to care. If we fail to care, we fail to govern.

Chapter 6: Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

Health Is a Human Right: From Profit to Public Good

Overview

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is the largest civilian department in the federal government, overseeing everything from Medicaid and Medicare to the FDA, the CDC, and Head Start. It plays a central role in public health, healthcare access, disease prevention, and social services. In theory, it should be the nation's frontline agency for wellness and equity. In reality, it has become a fragmented bureaucracy strained by underfunding, politicization, and profit-driven influence.

To heal our nation, we must first recognize that public health is not a commodity—it is a public good.

What's Broken

- **Medical Corporatization:** HHS programs increasingly serve as gatekeepers for private profit rather than protectors of public well-being. Corporate lobbyists shape drug pricing, Medicare negotiations, and insurance rules.
- **Maternal Mortality and Reproductive Access:** The U.S. has one of the highest maternal mortality rates in the developed world, with Black women facing disproportionately high risks. Post-Roe legislation has further endangered reproductive autonomy and basic OB/GYN access.
- **Mental Health Crisis:** There is no nationally coordinated system for accessible, affordable mental health care. Insurance coverage remains uneven and reactive.
- **Data Gaps and Fragmentation:** Health disparities persist in part because of inconsistent, politically compromised, or incomplete public health data.
- **Disability and Elder Care:** Programs meant to support the aging and disabled often subject them to bureaucratic obstacles, under-resourced support services, or privatized neglect.

What We Propose

Codify Healthcare as a Public Mandate

Shift HHS's mission to explicitly prioritize health equity, access, and outcomes over cost efficiency or industry alignment.

National Maternal Health and Reproductive Autonomy Act

Establish guaranteed access to comprehensive reproductive care, invest in maternal mortality prevention, and protect bodily autonomy as a civil right.

Mental Health as Core Care

Require mental health parity in all federal health programs and fund a national network of community-based mental health centers.

Data Justice and Transparency

Mandate real-time public reporting on health disparities, outcomes, and state-level interventions disaggregated by race, gender, income, and geography.

Expand and Protect Medicare and Medicaid

Cover dental, vision, hearing, and long-term care. Streamline bureaucracy. Block privatization efforts that erode patient protections.

Civic Tools and Safeguards

- Public Health Equity Scorecard: Require HHS to publish annual equity reports for each program, highlighting impact gaps and corrective actions.
- Reproductive Care Bill of Rights: Create a standardized set of protections and access guarantees available across all states regardless of local legislation.
- National Health Ombudsman Office: An independent, public-facing office where patients can file complaints, access resources, and navigate federal health programs without political interference.

Vision for the Future

We imagine a nation where health is not a privilege tied to employment, geography, or insurance status. Where families don't face financial ruin for life-saving care. Where public health decisions are rooted in evidence, not ideology.

A healthy nation is a free nation. And freedom without healthcare is just another illusion.

Chapter 7: Department of Veterans Affairs

From Thanks to Action: Honoring Veterans with Dignity, Not Delay

Overview

The Department of Veterans Affairs exists to fulfill a solemn promise: that those who served the country will not be forgotten when they return home. Yet for decades, veterans have faced waitlists, bureaucratic barriers, mental health neglect, and systemic underinvestment. Too often, the phrase "thank you for your service" rings hollow when paired with homelessness, inadequate healthcare, and moral injury.

True patriotism requires more than ceremony—it requires systems that work.

What's Broken

- **Delays and Backlogs:** Veterans face months-long waits for appointments, benefits processing, and appeals. Digital systems are fragmented, and case managers are overburdened.
- **Mental Health Crisis:** PTSD, depression, addiction, and suicide remain at epidemic levels. VA mental health resources are inconsistent, stigmatized, or inaccessible.
- **Homelessness and Housing Insecurity:** Thousands of veterans remain unhoused. Black, Native, LGBTQ+, and female veterans are disproportionately affected and underserved.
- **Over Reliance on Privatization:** Outsourcing care to for-profit networks has diluted quality, consistency, and accountability—especially in rural areas.
- **Moral Injury and Reintegration:** Veterans returning from unjust wars, discriminatory service experiences, or institutional failures often carry deep moral and psychological wounds.

What We Propose

Veteran Dignity Guarantee Act

Mandate same-day intake for new claims and a 30-day maximum wait for any medical or mental health service.

Veterans' Reentry and Purpose Program

Expand post-service educational and employment pathways—including paid service roles in disaster response, civic education, and climate resilience.



Permanent Supportive Housing for All Veterans

Guarantee housing as a basic right. Use federal land and funds to build or convert community-based veteran housing, co-located with services.

National VA Mental Health Corps

Establish a dedicated, federally funded mental health team embedded in VA hospitals, crisis centers, and partner orgs—available in-person and virtually.

Civic Tools and Safeguards

- Veterans Accountability Dashboard: Publish real-time data on wait times, benefit processing, and service outcomes by zip code and demographic group.
- VA User Bill of Rights: Require every facility to post and uphold transparent user protections—including anti-discrimination clauses for LGBTQ+, minority, and women veterans.
- Independent Veterans Oversight Council: Empower a rotating citizen-veteran body to audit services, elevate grievances, and issue public reports to Congress.

Vision for the Future

A grateful nation doesn't just remember its veterans—it listens to them. It invests in their healing. It honors their sacrifice with policies that reflect dignity, not delay. Security, stability, and purpose must be guaranteed—not earned again through bureaucratic survival.

We envision a future where no veteran feels discarded. Where service is met not just with applause, but with infrastructure. Where the words thank you translate into systems that care.

Chapter 8: Department of Education

Knowledge as a Right, Not a Commodity

Overview

The Department of Education exists to ensure equal access to quality education for every American. Yet for decades, structural disinvestment, testing culture, privatization, and politicized curricula have deepened inequality and weakened civic foundations. Public schools are expected to solve social crises—from hunger to trauma to workforce readiness—while being underfunded and overregulated.

A democracy cannot function if its citizens are not taught to think critically, care deeply, and participate meaningfully. Education must be liberated from profit motives and political agendas and returned to its civic purpose.

What's Broken

- **Chronic Underfunding:** Public schools, especially in low-income communities, face staff shortages, crumbling infrastructure, and resource disparities due to funding tied to local property taxes.
- **Privatization and Charter Expansion:** Charter schools and voucher programs have diverted public funds and increased racial and economic segregation without consistent outcomes or accountability.
- **Standardized Testing Regimes:** High-stakes testing has narrowed curricula, punished teachers, and harmed students—particularly those with disabilities, trauma histories, or language needs.
- **Erasure of Civic and Cultural Education:** Political pressure has stripped curricula of inclusive history, media literacy, sex education, and critical thinking.
- **Student Debt and College Affordability:** Higher education remains inaccessible for many, with student debt surpassing \$1.7 trillion and predatory institutions targeting vulnerable populations.

What We Propose

Equity in Funding Act

Nationalize baseline public school funding to ensure every student has access to safe buildings, technology, arts, food, and mental health support—regardless of zip code.

Moratorium on New Charter/Voucher Programs

Halt expansion until public systems are repaired and full accountability measures are enforced.

Civic Literacy and Media Education Mandate

Make civic history, digital literacy, and democratic participation core K–12 requirements—alongside arts and ethics.

Tuition-Free Public College and Trade School

Phase in full federal coverage of tuition for all two- and four-year public institutions and accredited trade programs.

Student Debt Relief Plan

Offer structured debt relief that forgives burdensome student loans for borrowers in public service, caregiving, or lower income brackets, while also expanding low-interest refinancing options.

Civic Tools and Safeguards

- Public School Justice Index: A federal dashboard tracking per-student funding, graduation rates, disciplinary actions, and opportunity gaps by district.
- Community Education Councils: Fund locally elected councils to guide curricula, address school safety without policing, and foster restorative practices.
- Teacher Democracy Fellowship: A national program to elevate frontline educators as civic leaders, policy contributors, and curriculum co-creators.

Vision for the Future

Education is not test preparation. It is not workforce automation. It is not indoctrination. It is liberation.

We imagine a public education system that uplifts curiosity, honors culture, builds solidarity, and prepares every child—not just to get a job—but to shape a just society.

Chapter 9: Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

A Home Is Not a Privilege—It's a Human Right

Overview

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is charged with ensuring that all Americans have access to fair, affordable, and safe housing. Yet housing in the United States has become a vehicle for profit rather than a foundation for dignity. Speculation, redlining legacies, gentrification, and exclusionary zoning have created a crisis in which millions live unhoused or housing-insecure, while corporations buy up neighborhoods for profit.

A stable home is the foundation of education, health, safety, and economic participation. Until housing is treated as a human right—not a financial asset—we cannot claim to be a functioning democracy.

What's Broken

- **Affordable Housing Shortage:** There is a shortfall of more than 7 million affordable rental homes for low-income renters nationwide.
- **Gentrification and Displacement:** Historically marginalized communities are pushed out of their neighborhoods through unchecked development, rising rents, and lack of protections.
- **Racist Legacies of Redlining:** Decades of disinvestment continue to shape segregation, wealth inequality, and exposure to environmental harm.
- **Landlord and Corporate Abuse:** Wall Street-backed property owners exploit weak tenant protections, driving up evictions and making billions while housing decays.
- **Public Housing Neglect:** Thousands of public housing units are uninhabitable, with long waitlists, unsafe conditions, and chronic underfunding.

What We Propose



Universal Housing Guarantee

Establish housing as a legal right—backed by federal funding, tenant protections, and non-profit development models.



National Rent Control Framework

Set federal limits on annual rent increases in high-cost regions and provide emergency caps during crises.



Community Land Trust Expansion Act

Fund local land trusts to ensure permanent affordability and community governance of housing assets.



End Predatory Real Estate Ownership

Ban corporate ownership of single-family homes and tax speculative holding and flipping practices.



Public Housing Reparations Program

Invest in the restoration, greening, and expansion of public housing—prioritizing Black, Indigenous, and low-income communities long denied home equity.

Civic Tools and Safeguards

- Tenant Bill of Rights: A nationally enforced standard protecting against evictions without cause, discrimination, unsafe conditions, and price gouging.
- Housing Justice Index: A publicly accessible platform reporting housing conditions, ownership concentration, affordability gaps, and eviction trends.
- Local Housing Assemblies: Federally supported participatory budgeting councils to shape zoning, housing projects, and displacement mitigation in each municipality.

Vision for the Future

We envision a nation where every person has a place to rest, raise a family, and root their future—without fear of eviction, environmental hazard, or market-driven displacement.

Housing is not a luxury. It is a foundation. And the future of our democracy depends on our willingness to build that foundation for all.

Chapter 10: Labor and Worker Rights

Dignity in Every Job: Rebalancing Power Between Labor and Capital

Overview

The American economy was built by workers—but its rewards have increasingly been hoarded by employers, shareholders, and corporate executives. For decades, federal labor policy has weakened the power of unions, failed to protect gig and contract workers, and neglected enforcement of even the most basic workplace rights. The Department of Labor, once a champion of the working class, must be restructured to meet the demands of a 21st-century labor force.

From warehouses to classrooms, from farms to factories, from code to caregiving—every job deserves dignity, safety, and fair compensation.

What's Broken

- **Decline of Union Power:** Union membership has plummeted due to legal roadblocks, employer retaliation, and anti-labor legislation.
- **Gig Economy Exploitation:** Millions of workers are misclassified as independent contractors—stripped of benefits, protections, and recourse.
- **Wage Theft and Enforcement Failures:** Companies regularly violate wage laws with little consequence. Undocumented and low-wage workers are the most vulnerable.
- **Outdated Standards:** Federal minimum wage remains stagnant while cost of living soars. Workplace safety regulations haven't kept pace with modern risks—including algorithmic scheduling and climate exposure.
- **Retirement and Security Erosion:** Pensions have been decimated, and gig workers face old age without reliable social safety nets.

What We Propose

National Right to Organize Act

Enshrine collective bargaining and union formation as federally protected rights—with penalties for employer interference.

Universal Worker Classification Reform

Close the loopholes that allow companies to treat full-time workers as independent contractors.

Living Wage Mandate

Set a federal living wage indexed to local cost of living and enforce annual adjustments.

Portable Benefits Program

Establish federally backed benefits—including health, retirement, and paid leave—that follow workers across jobs and sectors.

Green Jobs and Care Work Expansion

Invest in publicly funded jobs tied to climate resilience, elder care, childcare, and community restoration.

Civic Tools and Safeguards

- Workplace Justice Portal: An online platform where workers can anonymously report violations, view employer histories, and connect with legal aid or union support.
- National Labor Accountability Index: Score companies on labor practices, gender and racial pay equity, safety records, and employee turnover.
- Community Labor Boards: Local citizen-employer councils that mediate disputes, vet employment practices, and support collective bargaining infrastructure.

Vision for the Future

We envision a country where the dignity of work is not up for debate. Where no one works full-time and lives in poverty. Where care workers, farm laborers, janitors, artists, and engineers are all treated as essential to the functioning of a healthy society.

Labor rights are human rights. And no democracy can survive if the people doing the work are denied a voice.

Chapter 11: Department of the Treasury

A Budget Is a Moral Document: Financing a Future That Works for All

Overview

The Department of the Treasury is responsible for managing the nation's finances—from federal revenue to public debt, from tax enforcement to economic policy. Yet in practice, Treasury policy has too often favored Wall Street over working families, tax shelters over transparency, and deficit panic over long-term investment. When the rules of the economy are written by and for the wealthy, inequality isn't accidental—it's policy.

The budget of a nation reveals its values. If we want a just society, we must realign our fiscal priorities with the people who keep it running.

What's Broken

- **Wealth Hoarding and Tax Avoidance:** The ultra-rich use loopholes, shell corporations, and offshoring to avoid paying their fair share.
- **Regressive Tax Code:** Workers pay a higher effective tax rate than billionaires; corporations use deductions and buybacks to hoard profit.
- **Deficit Scare Tactics:** Politicians invoke "fiscal responsibility" only when it comes to social spending—not military budgets or tax cuts for the rich.
- **Public Disinvestment:** Infrastructure, health care, education, and climate mitigation go underfunded while capital markets thrive.
- **Crisis Response Inequity:** Treasury-led bailouts often prioritize banks, industries, and shareholders over frontline workers and local economies.

What We Propose



People-Centered Revenue Act

Close loopholes, enforce progressive tax brackets, and ensure that high earners and corporations pay their fair share.



Wall Street Transaction Tax

Impose a small fee on trades of stocks, bonds, and derivatives to generate revenue and curb speculative risk.



Debt Equity Reform

End preferential treatment of investment income over wages; treat carried interest and capital gains as regular income.



Public Wealth Fund

Create a sovereign wealth fund funded by wealth taxes, climate transition surpluses, and excess corporate profits—to finance education, health, and public infrastructure.



Emergency Equity Protocols

Mandate that any future federal stimulus or economic rescue must prioritize vulnerable communities, workers, and small businesses.

Civic Tools and Safeguards

- Participatory Budgeting Initiative: Allocate a percentage of the federal budget to be directly voted on by citizens, with regional, demographic, and generational representation.
- Economic Justice Dashboard: Publicly track wealth inequality, tax compliance, and federal investment by geography, race, and income group.
- Community Treasury Councils: Local advisory bodies that provide feedback on federal spending impacts and shape regional investment strategy.

Vision for the Future

The Treasury should not be a fortress of financial elites. It should be a steward of national wellbeing.

We envision an economy where the richest contribute proportionally, where budgets reflect our collective humanity, and where economic power flows outward—not just upward.

The people make the economy. It's time our Treasury worked for them.

Chapter 12: Small Business Administration

Main Street Before Monopoly: Reclaiming Entrepreneurship for the People

Overview

The Small Business Administration was created to support local enterprise, reduce economic disparity, and ensure that small business owners—especially those from historically excluded communities—could access the capital and tools needed to thrive. But in recent years, SBA programs have become bureaucratic, inequitable, and inaccessible, often favoring well-connected firms or politically influential sectors.

While megacorporations dominate headlines, it's small businesses that form the heart of the American economy—and they deserve more than leftover policy.

What's Broken

- **Access Gaps:** Women-, Black-, Latino-, Indigenous-, and immigrant-owned businesses face systemic barriers in accessing SBA loans, grants, and procurement opportunities.
- **Red Tape and Risk Bias:** SBA loan programs are overly complex and skewed toward applicants with existing wealth, collateral, or credit—excluding precisely those they were created to uplift.
- **COVID-Era Disparities:** PPP and EIDL funding often bypassed the most vulnerable small businesses, leaving many permanently shuttered while large firms exploited loopholes.
- **Procurement Inequity:** Federal contracting opportunities are routinely awarded to repeat players with political ties or legal loopholes that favor "small" subsidiaries of larger firms.
- **Decline of Local Ownership:** Big box chains and delivery platforms continue to displace independent businesses—especially in rural and urban corridors of disinvestment.

What We Propose

Equity First Loan and Grant Programs

Require SBA to reserve a majority of funds for historically underserved communities, with simplified application pathways and technical assistance in multiple languages.

Universal Startup Fund

Provide forgivable microgrants to new entrepreneurs with community-based accountability measures—not traditional creditworthiness.

Local Cooperative Development Act

Support the formation of worker-owned and consumer co-ops through startup funds, education, and SBA-backed guarantees.

Federal Contracting Reform

Establish strict audits and caps to ensure genuine small and disadvantaged businesses receive priority—not corporate subsidiaries.

Public Banking Partnership Network

Build regional public financial institutions that work alongside SBA to provide low-interest loans to community-rooted businesses.

Civic Tools and Safeguards

- Entrepreneurship Equity Index: Publicly track who receives SBA funding by race, gender, geography, and income—with metrics on survival rates and job creation.
- People's Business Portal: Create a centralized, transparent resource hub for grants, mentorship, taxes, and procurement tailored to everyday entrepreneurs—not just consultants or accountants.
- Small Business People's Congress: A national network of elected small business delegates to advise the SBA and advocate for local ownership in federal policy.

Vision for the Future

We envision an economy where owning a business isn't reserved for the wealthy or well-connected, but is accessible to barbers, bakers, mechanics, caregivers, farmers, designers, and dreamers in every zip code.

Reviving democracy means revitalizing local economies. And that means putting the "small" back in business.

Chapter 13: Department of Commerce

Commerce with Conscience: Rebalancing Innovation, Equity, and the Common Good

Overview

The Department of Commerce is responsible for promoting economic growth, technological innovation, trade, and data infrastructure. But in practice, it has often served as a gatekeeper for corporate interests—prioritizing GDP over equity, industry influence over public input, and deregulation over sustainability. At a time when climate crises, digital monopolies, and global economic instability demand new thinking, the agency must evolve beyond outdated measures of "progress."

We must reclaim commerce not just as a measure of wealth, but as a mechanism for shared wellbeing.

What's Broken

- **GDP as a Sole Metric:** Economic success is measured in aggregate growth, masking inequality, environmental degradation, and regional disinvestment.
- **Tech Monopoly Enablement:** The Department has facilitated the rise of monopolistic tech platforms that suppress innovation, exploit user data, and erode labor rights.
- **Export Prioritization Over Community Resilience:** Trade policy favors global competitiveness over domestic resilience, hollowing out supply chains and harming workers.
- **Climate Apathy:** Commerce continues to support extractive industries and infrastructure projects that threaten long-term sustainability.
- **Exclusion in Innovation:** Federal research and development funding disproportionately supports elite institutions and industries, bypassing underserved communities and small businesses.

What We Propose

Beyond GDP Act

Redefine national economic success to include equity, sustainability, public health, and regional well-being—alongside traditional growth metrics.

Antitrust Revival Task Force

Collaborate with DOJ and FTC to strengthen antitrust enforcement, prioritize platform accountability, and democratize tech infrastructure.

Community Resilience Investment Zones

Reinvest in economically marginalized regions with targeted grants, green industry subsidies, and digital access infrastructure.

Climate Commerce Compact

Shift subsidies from extractive industries to renewable energy, regenerative agriculture, and circular economy initiatives.

Equity in Innovation Fund

Direct R&D and patent support to historically excluded communities, HBCUs, Tribal colleges, and public cooperatives.

Civic Tools and Safeguards

- Commerce Equity Map: Public dashboard tracking business growth, trade deals, federal funding, and access to innovation by region and demographic.
- People's Innovation Exchange: A participatory platform for citizen inventors, entrepreneurs, and cooperatives to access funding, collaborate, and scale.
- Local Economic Democracy Councils: Civic advisory boards guiding regional economic policy and resilience planning with public feedback mechanisms.

Vision for the Future

We envision a commerce system not measured only by stock indices or exports, but by whether it lifts the floor for all people. A system that values creativity, regeneration, and cooperation over exploitation and accumulation.

Commerce should serve the people—not the other way around.

Chapter 14: The Federal Reserve

Stability for Whom? Reclaiming Monetary Policy for the Public Good

Overview

The Federal Reserve System—America's central bank—sets the tone for the nation's entire financial system. From interest rates to inflation control, banking regulation to employment goals, the Fed wields immense power with limited public oversight. Its decisions shape the cost of credit, the value of money, and the fate of economies across the globe. Yet its priorities often reflect the interests of investors and institutions over workers and everyday citizens.

Monetary policy is not neutral—it is political. And it must be restructured to serve people, not just markets.

What's Broken

- **Wall Street Alignment:** The Fed has prioritized inflation control over full employment, often raising interest rates at the expense of wages and job growth.
- **Opaque Governance:** Key policy decisions are made behind closed doors, with limited democratic input or explanation.
- **Bank Deregulation Legacy:** Lax oversight contributed to crises like the 2008 collapse and ongoing financial instability from shadow banking and crypto speculation.
- **Structural Racism in Credit Access:** Lending data shows systemic racial bias persists in credit scoring, home loans, and small business access.
- **Underutilization of Power:** The Fed has the capacity to promote equitable investment and climate resilience but remains tethered to outdated priorities.

What We Propose



Dual Mandate Expansion Act

Update the Fed's statutory mandate to prioritize racial and economic equity, climate resilience, and public employment—alongside price stability and maximum employment.



Democratize the Fed

Require regional board appointments to include labor leaders, community organizers, and public interest economists—not just bankers.



Credit Access Equity Office

Establish a permanent division to investigate, expose, and eliminate racial disparities in lending, scoring, and banking access.



People's Recovery Lending Facility

Create a Fed-backed mechanism to issue low-interest credit for housing, student loan relief, small business, and climate transition—not just big bank bailouts.



Climate Risk Integration Mandate

Require all Fed stress tests and reserve strategies to account for climate vulnerability and transition scenarios.

Civic Tools and Safeguards

- Monetary Policy Public Forum Series: Biannual public town halls with regional and national Fed officials, live streamed and archived for transparency.
- Community Credit Tracker: Open data platform showing access to credit, interest rates, and lending outcomes by zip code and demographic.
- Citizen Inflation Review Council: A rotating, diverse panel of citizens that provides public testimony on the real-life effects of monetary policy—wages, housing, food prices, and savings.

Vision for the Future

The central bank of a democratic nation must be guided by democratic values. We imagine a Federal Reserve where stability means safety for families, not just portfolios. Where public investment, racial equity, and climate survival are cornerstones—not afterthoughts.

Because managing the economy should be about more than managing the stock market. It should be about managing for us.

Chapter 15: Consumer Financial Protection Bureau

Protect the People, Not the Profits

Overview

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) was established in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis to be a watchdog for everyday Americans—to regulate predatory lenders, hold financial institutions accountable, and ensure fairness and transparency across the consumer economy. Despite its critical mission, the CFPB has faced relentless political attacks and funding threats, stalling its potential to serve as the people's financial firewall.

Consumer protection isn't a side issue—it's the front line of economic justice.

What's Broken

- **Predatory Financial Products:** Payday lenders, subprime credit cards, and exploitative student loan servicers continue to trap low-income Americans in cycles of debt.
- **Data Misuse and Digital Surveillance:** Consumer financial data is bought, sold, and weaponized—with little oversight or meaningful consent.
- **Weak Enforcement and Budget Constraints:** Political interference has reduced the CFPB's reach and resources, leaving violations unpunished or delayed.
- **Financial Literacy Gaps:** Millions of Americans lack basic tools and information to navigate increasingly complex financial systems.
- **Exclusion from Access:** Underserved communities, especially BIPOC and immigrant populations, are disproportionately unbanked or subjected to high-fee services.

What We Propose

Consumer Data Dignity Act

Give individuals control over their financial data, ban algorithmic redlining, and require opt-in consent for data sharing.

Whistleblower and Victim Protection Fund

Create a public restitution pool for victims of financial abuse, funded by penalties from violations.



Universal Fair Lending Enforcement

Restore and expand CFPB power to investigate discriminatory practices in mortgages, auto loans, and credit access.

National Financial Literacy Guarantee

Embed civic financial education into K–12 and adult education programs, in partnership with community organizations.

Expand Public Banking Options

Partner with USPS and community banks to offer low-fee, no-exploitation financial services in banking deserts.

Civic Tools and Safeguards

- Consumer Justice Index: A live dashboard of complaints, fines, enforcement outcomes, and trends across lending, credit, and insurance sectors.
- Neighborhood Financial Health Score: Community-level metrics on debt load, banking access, payday loan saturation, and savings rates—used to target CFPB interventions.
- Citizen Complaint Corps: Fund and train local advocates to help people file CFPB complaints, navigate recoveries, and support collective action.

Vision for the Future

We envision a financial system where the people are not prey. Where access, fairness, and safety are non-negotiable. Where financial protection isn't an afterthought, but a national priority.

Because dignity in the economy starts at the checkout counter, the loan office, the credit score—and every place working people are told to "read the fine print."

Chapter 16: Department of Defense

Security Redefined: From Endless War to Enduring Peace

Overview

The Department of Defense oversees the most powerful military in the world, with a budget that surpasses the next ten countries combined. Yet national security is increasingly defined not by tanks and missiles, but by public health, climate stability, and the strength of our democratic institutions. For too long, the Pentagon has operated with near-blank checks and limited accountability—perpetuating forever wars, fueling global instability, and neglecting the domestic well-being of its own personnel.

A nation's defense should not be measured by its weapons stockpile, but by its ability to preserve peace, uphold rights, and protect the future.

What's Broken

- **Endless War Doctrine:** Decades of unauthorized military interventions have eroded international trust and burdened multiple generations of service members.
- **Budget Bloat and Waste:** The Pentagon routinely fails audits, with billions unaccounted for and defense contractors enriching themselves with minimal oversight.
- **Civilian Harm and Secrecy:** U.S. drone strikes, special operations, and foreign training programs have resulted in thousands of civilian casualties with little transparency or redress.
- **Military Industrial Complex:** Lobbyists and weapons manufacturers wield enormous influence, shaping defense policy more than elected officials or public will.
- **Neglect of Service Members:** Active duty personnel and their families often live in substandard housing, face food insecurity, and struggle with reintegration and mental health.

What We Propose



War Powers Restoration Act

Require explicit congressional authorization for any military action beyond 30 days; repeal outdated AUMFs.



Pentagon Audit and Realignment Commission

Conduct a full public audit of DoD spending; cut waste and redirect funds to veteran care, housing, and climate resilience.



Global Civilians First Protocol

Establish public metrics, investigation mechanisms, and reparations for civilian casualties caused by U.S. operations.



Defense Contractor Reform Act

Ban political donations from defense contractors and limit no-bid contracts; cap executive compensation for government-funded contracts.



Open and Equitable Procurement Standards

Require the Department of Defense to open bidding processes to independent product suppliers—not just traditional contractors—who can provide goods and services efficiently without inflating costs.



Service Member Dignity Guarantee

Ensure quality housing, food security, and free mental health services for all enlisted personnel and their families.

Civic Tools and Safeguards

- Public Defense Budget Explorer: A transparent, accessible tool showing where every defense dollar goes—by category, contractor, and outcome.
- Democracy Security Index: A new measure of national security based on public trust, civil liberties, press freedom, and democratic resilience.
- Civilian Defense Assemblies: Regional forums where citizens, veterans, and military families provide feedback and shape defense priorities.

Vision for the Future

We envision a defense strategy grounded not in domination, but in dignity. One that prioritizes diplomacy over destruction, people over profit, and resilience over reaction.

A strong nation does not fear its citizens or the world—it protects both. True security means safety for all, not supremacy for a few.

Chapter 17: State Department

Diplomacy Is Strength: Rebuilding Global Trust Through Partnership, Not Power

Overview

The State Department is the face of America abroad. Through diplomacy, foreign aid, cultural exchange, and global coordination, it shapes how the U.S. is perceived and how it engages with the world. But over time, diplomatic functions have been hollowed out by militarization, political interference, underfunding, and transactional foreign policy. What was once a beacon of soft power is now a shadow of its potential.

To meet the challenges of the 21st century—climate migration, global pandemics, authoritarianism, and economic displacement—we must restore diplomacy to its rightful place: at the center of global strategy.

What's Broken

- **Militarized Foreign Policy:** The Pentagon increasingly leads U.S. global engagement, sidelining civilian diplomacy and escalating conflict over collaboration.
- **Political Patronage in Ambassadorships:** High-dollar campaign donors often receive ambassadorships, weakening professionalism and eroding international credibility.
- **Underinvestment in Development and Aid:** Essential programs in global health, education, and peacebuilding receive pennies on the dollar compared to defense budgets.
- **Neglect of Human Rights and Democracy:** Strategic alliances have often trumped values, with the U.S. supporting authoritarian regimes or remaining silent on human rights abuses.
- **Institutional Lack of Diversity:** The foreign service remains disproportionately white and elite, lacking perspectives from the communities most impacted by U.S. global policy.

What We Propose

Diplomacy First Act

Elevate the State Department's role in all national security decisions and require diplomatic strategies before military escalation.

Merit-Based Ambassador Reform

Require that 90% of ambassadorial appointments be filled by career foreign service officers or proven international experts—not political donors.

Restoration of Global Aid and Climate Leadership

Triple funding for development, health, refugee support, and climate resilience in frontline nations.

Human Rights Conditions in All Bilateral Agreements

Mandate annual public reviews of partner countries' human rights records with enforcement tools for violations.

Foreign Service Diversity Pipeline

Launch a fully funded recruitment and advancement program for underrepresented communities, HBCUs, and tribal colleges.

Civic Tools and Safeguards

- Global Diplomacy Dashboard: Track U.S. foreign aid, trade agreements, diplomatic posts, and human rights conditions by country in an open data platform.
- People's Global Advisory Council: Include civic leaders, immigrants, diaspora communities, and peacebuilders in shaping foreign policy priorities.
- Truth and Transparency Forums: Host annual public hearings on U.S. diplomatic engagement, including declassified briefings on sanctions, alliances, and foreign military aid.

Vision for the Future

We imagine a world where America leads not through coercion, but through cooperation. Where diplomacy is not an afterthought to war, but the default posture of a mature, ethical superpower.

Diplomacy isn't weakness—it's wisdom. And if we are to restore global trust, we must practice the democracy we preach.

Chapter 18: Department of Homeland Security

Safety Without Surveillance: Reimagining Homeland Security for a Free Society

Overview

Created in the aftermath of 9/11, the Department of Homeland Security was designed to coordinate federal efforts around national safety, emergency response, border integrity, and counterterrorism. But over time, DHS has become a sprawling, opaque, and overreaching agency—more known for surveillance, militarized policing, and civil rights violations than for public protection.

True homeland security cannot be achieved through fear, suspicion, and suppression. It must be built through trust, equity, and preparedness.

What's Broken

- **Militarization of Civil Society:** Local police departments acquire DHS grants for tactical gear, surveillance tech, and crowd control weapons used against civilians, particularly in communities of color.
- **Mass Surveillance and Data Harvesting:** Programs like Fusion Centers, social media tracking, and biometric databases operate with little transparency or oversight, often violating privacy rights.
- **Border and Immigration Abuses:** DHS agencies, particularly ICE and CBP, have been implicated in family separations, detention abuse, and extrajudicial practices at the border.
- **Politicized Threat Framing:** DHS resources have often been deployed against protest movements while underplaying the threat of white nationalist violence.
- **Climate and Crisis Underpreparedness:** Disaster readiness and climate adaptation—arguably the most pressing homeland security threats—remain underfunded and de-prioritized.

What We Propose

Civil Rights First Security Act

Prohibit federal funding for any DHS program that violates First or Fourth Amendment protections; mandate civil liberties reviews for all surveillance technologies.

Demilitarize Domestic Policing

End the 1033 program and all DHS equipment transfers to local law enforcement for non-emergency, non-border purposes.

Border and Asylum Accountability

Restructure CBP and ICE oversight, ban child detention, and codify humane asylum processing standards rooted in international law.

Climate Security Corps

Transform FEMA and related agencies under DHS to lead national efforts on wildfire response, extreme weather, heat mitigation, and climate displacement.

Data Protection and Sovereignty Mandate

Enforce strict limitations on data retention, third-party sharing, and AI profiling. Prohibit DHS data from being sold, leaked, or accessed by big data brokers or unauthorized foreign actors.

Civic Tools and Safeguards

- Civil Liberties Oversight Board: Independent civilian body with subpoena power to review and publicly report on all surveillance, detention, and enforcement activities.
- Know Your Rights National Curriculum: Federally supported, locally delivered civic education campaign on rights during encounters with DHS-affiliated agencies.
- Security Equity and Breach Transparency Tracker: An interactive tool showing who is surveilled, what systems are most vulnerable, and where breaches or abuse have occurred—updated in real-time and integrated with an opt-out data protection mechanism for citizens.

Vision for the Future

We envision a country where "homeland security" doesn't mean drones, detention, or profiling—but preparation, compassion, and human dignity. A homeland is not a fortress. It's a shared space we must protect without sacrificing the freedoms that define us.

The goal isn't fear—it's freedom. And freedom demands restraint, accountability, and courage.

Chapter 19: Immigration and Customs

From Enforcement to Welcome: Building a Humane and Just Immigration System

Overview

Immigration policy in the United States has long been a site of contradiction—celebrating the promise of inclusion while operating a system built on exclusion, detention, and deterrence. Under the umbrella of DHS, agencies like U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) have become synonymous with family separation, raids, overcrowded detention centers, and unchecked abuse.

But a democratic nation cannot treat people fleeing danger, seeking hope, or reuniting with family as criminals. Our immigration system must be transformed into one that reflects dignity, legality, and humanity.

What's Broken

- **Inhumane Detention Practices:** Immigrants—including children—are routinely held in substandard, unsanitary, or for-profit detention facilities.
- **Backlogs and Bureaucratic Gridlock:** Millions wait years for legal pathways to citizenship, green cards, or asylum due to under-resourcing and politicized policy shifts.
- **Racial Profiling and Community Raids:** Immigrant communities are subjected to surveillance, workplace raids, and deportation without due process or oversight.
- **Data Exploitation and Hacking Risks:** Sensitive biometric and personal data collected during border crossings and visa processing is stored in insecure government systems, vulnerable to hacks, foreign espionage, and abuse by private contractors.
- **Fear-Based Governance:** Political leaders have weaponized immigration to sow division, using dehumanizing language and misinformation to justify cruelty.

What We Propose



Abolish For-Profit Immigration Detention

Phase out all private immigration prisons and create a community-based, non-carceral model for housing vulnerable populations.



Due Process and Oversight Expansion Act

Guarantee legal counsel for all immigrants in proceedings and establish a public-facing review board to monitor CBP and ICE actions.



Fair Pathways to Legal Status

Restore DACA and TPS, expand humanitarian visas, and create new, equitable legal pathways for refugees, workers, and mixed-status families.



Digital Dignity for Migrants

Prohibit the sale, export, or third-party use of immigrant biometric and personal data. Require data purges after status resolution and public audits of all digital systems.



End Workplace Raids and Family Separations

Make these tactics unlawful under federal civil rights statutes; codify family unity and child welfare as top immigration priorities.

Civic Tools and Safeguards

- National Immigrant Rights Database: Public tool for families and advocates to track cases, report abuse, and connect with legal and language access resources.
- Immigration Justice Dashboard: Federal transparency platform with real-time updates on detention numbers, asylum processing times, and visa backlogs—by region and demographic.
- People's Immigration Council: A civilian-staffed advisory body composed of immigrant leaders, policy experts, and human rights defenders with power to advise, review, and recommend enforcement changes.

Vision for the Future

We envision an America where borders are managed with compassion, where citizenship is not defined by fear or wealth, and where immigrants are welcomed not as threats, but as part of the democratic fabric.

To be a nation of laws and of immigrants, we must also be a nation of justice.

Chapter 20: Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

Preparedness Is Justice: Responding to Crisis with Equity and Care

Overview

FEMA exists to respond to disasters—natural and human-made—by coordinating aid, recovery, and resilience. But as climate change accelerates and crises multiply, FEMA's limitations have become painfully clear. Its responses often arrive too late, prioritize wealthier areas, and rely on bureaucratic red tape that leaves the most vulnerable stranded. Black, Indigenous, rural, disabled, and low-income communities disproportionately suffer—and rarely recover.

A just emergency response system must prepare before the storm, respond during it, and protect long after it passes. Anything less is abandonment.

What's Broken

- Inequitable Disaster Response: FEMA has a well-documented history of faster, more complete responses to affluent and majority-white communities.
- Red Tape and Delays: Aid applications are overly complex, paper-heavy, and slow—delaying funds and leaving families without shelter or support.
- Climate Underpreparedness: FEMA remains reactive, not proactive. It is structurally underfunded for climate adaptation, resilience planning, or pre-disaster mitigation.
- Housing and Insurance Failures: FEMA fails to address mass displacement, temporary housing shortages, or fraudulent insurance practices that devastate already vulnerable families.
- Lack of Data Transparency: Disaggregated data on race, income, and geography is not consistently available, making equitable planning and accountability impossible.

What We Propose

Equity First Disaster Framework

Require all FEMA programs to prioritize aid based on community vulnerability indices, not just property loss value.

Pre-Disaster Investment Mandate

Allocate at least 30% of FEMA's annual budget to climate mitigation, infrastructure upgrades, and wildfire/floodproofing in high-risk zones.

Universal Disaster Relief Access

Create a simplified, multilingual, mobile-first aid application platform with automatic eligibility matching and pre-enrollment for at-risk residents.

Housing Justice in Disaster Recovery

Federalize disaster housing programs to ensure all displaced individuals have guaranteed shelter within 48 hours, with rental support until long-term solutions are secured.

Climate Insurance Accountability Act

Regulate insurers operating in high-risk zones to prevent discriminatory pricing, fraud, or abandonment after disaster events.

Disaster Neutrality Law

Make it illegal to withhold or delay FEMA funding based on political affiliation, voting records, or ideological speech of state and local leaders.

Civic Tools and Safeguards

- Disaster Equity Index: Public tracker of disaster impact, aid delivery, and recovery outcomes across race, income, ability, and region.
- Citizen Response Corps: National service initiative training young people, retirees, and local leaders to respond to disasters with trauma-informed, culturally competent support.
- FEMA Watch Network: Local watchdog councils with real-time auditing powers over contracts, distribution practices, and aid quality—especially in historically neglected regions.
- Critical Infrastructure Defense Clause: Enshrine mandatory, sustained funding for NOAA, the National Weather Service, and other frontline forecasting and emergency signal agencies.

Vision for the Future

We envision a FEMA that works not just as a first responder—but as a first defender of dignity. A FEMA that sees marginalized communities not as afterthoughts, but as the front line of protection.

Because in a climate-changed future, the most just emergency system won't only respond to disaster. It will help prevent it.

Chapter 21: Department of Energy (DOE)

Power for the People: Leading an Equitable Energy Transition

Overview

The Department of Energy oversees the nation's power infrastructure, scientific research labs, nuclear safety, and energy policy. As the country faces aging grids, rising utility costs, and climate-related disruptions, DOE stands at a critical crossroads. The path forward must balance economic reality, regional differences, and long-term sustainability—while restoring public trust in science and infrastructure.

Energy shouldn't be politicized. It should be reliable, affordable, and responsibly stewarded—for all of us.

What's Broken

- **Legacy System Strain:** Many regions still rely on outdated, centralized grids vulnerable to extreme weather and cyber threats.
- **Overconcentration of Market Power:** Large utilities and private interests often dominate energy decision-making, limiting competition and local innovation.
- **Underfunded Public Science:** Agencies like NOAA and the National Weather Service provide life-saving data yet remain politically vulnerable and under-resourced.
- **Disparities in Energy Access:** Rural, tribal, and low-income communities face persistent energy insecurity and limited access to clean energy options.
- **Polarized Climate Conversations:** Productive dialogue has been derailed by political extremes, making compromise difficult and leaving many Americans feeling unheard or villainized.

What We Propose



Resilient Grid and Community Energy Plan

Support regional infrastructure upgrades that reduce blackouts, decentralize risk, and empower local decision-making—including fossil-to-clean transitions where viable.



Energy Security and Affordability Act

Protect households from utility shutoffs during climate emergencies and expand weatherization programs in partnership with states.



Scientific Integrity and Public Data Guarantee

Safeguard funding for NOAA, the National Weather Service, and climate science labs from political interference. These are not bureaucracies—they are lifelines.



Flexible Clean Energy Targets

Work with states to create regionally tailored timelines for reducing emissions and modernizing systems—without a one-size-fits-all mandate.



Fair Energy Transition Fund

Help coal, oil, and gas-dependent communities diversify local economies and retrain workers—without leaving anyone behind.

Civic Tools and Safeguards

- Energy Equity Atlas: Track where investments flow and who benefits from solar, wind, and grid upgrades—by zip code, income, and race.
- Local Energy Partnership Grants: Fund cooperatives, tribal nations, and rural municipalities to build community-owned energy solutions at their own pace.
- National Energy Dialogue Network: Facilitate cross-partisan town halls to shape regional energy policies rooted in transparency, shared interest, and respect for local priorities.

Vision for the Future

We envision an energy future built not on shame or slogans, but on shared responsibility, innovation, and dignity. Where a rancher in Wyoming, a family in Detroit, and a solar installer in Nevada can all see themselves in the solution.

Energy is life. And every American deserves to help shape how it's produced, delivered, and protected.

Chapter 22: Department of the Interior

Stewardship, Sovereignty, and Shared Belonging

Overview

The Department of the Interior manages one-fifth of the U.S. landmass and is charged with protecting natural resources, honoring tribal sovereignty, and preserving public lands for current and future generations. Yet for too long, land management decisions have been shaped by short-term profits, federal overreach, and a lack of meaningful public inclusion—especially among Indigenous peoples, rural communities, and working-class Americans.

The land does not belong to the left or the right. It belongs to all of us. And our stewardship must reflect that shared belonging.

What's Broken

- **Resource Extraction Imbalance:** Public lands are often leased for mining, drilling, or logging with minimal return to taxpayers and major environmental cost.
- **Erosion of Tribal Sovereignty:** Federal processes frequently override Indigenous treaty rights, sacred land protections, and tribal-led conservation.
- **Access Inequities:** Many communities—urban and rural alike—have limited access to safe, public natural spaces and healthy ecosystems.
- **Climate Vulnerability:** Wildfires, droughts, floods, and species loss are accelerating while the department's resilience strategies remain underfunded or outdated.
- **Over politicization of Land Use:** Land protection has become a political flashpoint rather than a unifying opportunity for environmental, economic, and cultural strength.

What We Propose

Community Stewardship Act

Create regional public land councils with Indigenous, rural, conservation, and recreational stakeholders guiding land-use policy.

Respect and Repair for Tribal Nations

Return stewardship of sacred and ancestral lands to tribal governments, and fully fund tribal conservation and infrastructure projects.

Public Access Guarantee

Ensure that every American lives within reach of a clean, safe, publicly maintained natural space—whether a city park, forest trail, or waterway.

Balanced Resource Use Policy

Where extractive activity continues, require environmental safeguards, local benefit-sharing, and transparent public oversight of revenues.

Climate and Fire Resilience Plan

Modernize firefighting infrastructure, drought mitigation, and conservation efforts—while creating jobs in ecological restoration and disaster preparation.

Civic Tools and Safeguards

- Public Land Access Map: A dynamic, public tool showing real-time data on land use, ownership, access points, trails, and environmental conditions.
- Land Justice Fellows Program: Recruit local residents—especially from frontline communities—to serve as liaisons, historians, and climate ambassadors within the Department.
- Cross-Party Conservation Corps: Support service teams composed of veterans, students, elders, and faith leaders working together on public land restoration across political and geographic lines.

Vision for the Future

We envision a country where everyone feels connected to the land—not as a commodity, but as a common good. Where stewardship is an act of unity, not division. And where the Interior is guided not by ideology, but by care, culture, and continuity.

Because this is our land—across red states and blue, across generations and traditions—and it deserves a future shaped by all of us, together.

Chapter 23: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Clean Air, Clean Water, Common Ground

Overview

The Environmental Protection Agency exists to safeguard the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the land we depend on. While its mission is universal, its protections have too often been uneven—delayed by politics, weakened by industry pressure, or withheld from communities without power or wealth. The EPA must be restored as a science-grounded, people-first agency accountable not just to law, but to life.

Clean air and water are not partisan issues. They are rights, and they are responsibilities we share across every line that tries to divide us.

What's Broken

- **Environmental Injustice:** Low-income and marginalized communities suffer the worst pollution, highest asthma rates, and slowest cleanup timelines—often for generations.
- **Corporate Influence and Regulatory Rollbacks:** Industries frequently write the rules that govern them. Lobbying and lawsuits weaken enforcement and delay progress.
- **Underfunded Local Enforcement:** Many state and regional EPA offices lack resources to monitor violations or respond quickly to spills, fires, and chemical hazards.
- **Data Inaccessibility:** Many residents lack access to real-time environmental data for their communities—especially in rural or underserved areas.
- **Climate Urgency Delays:** While the science is clear, meaningful federal enforcement on emissions, toxins, and climate mitigation remains sluggish and reactive.

What We Propose

Environmental Equity Act

Codify the right to clean air, water, and land as a protected civil liberty, and mandate environmental equity reviews for all major EPA decisions.

Local Enforcement Fund

Increase staffing and funding for state and tribal environmental agencies with real-time coordination with EPA headquarters.

Community-Led Remediation Grants

Empower neighborhoods impacted by landfills, industrial zones, or toxic sites to lead cleanup design and job creation initiatives.

Public Science and Data Infrastructure

Ensure real-time air and water quality monitors in every community, with results available online and via mobile in multiple languages.

Industry Accountability Reform

Close the revolving door between regulatory agencies and corporate lobbyists. Require public disclosure of regulatory input and correspondence.

Civic Tools and Safeguards

- Environmental Risk Map: A national tool showing contamination risks, active cleanup zones, and pollutant levels—searchable by zip code, school district, and watershed.
- EPA Citizens' Advisory Council: A permanent body of scientists, frontline leaders, and everyday residents who co-review policy rollouts and cleanup priorities.
- Justice for All Hotline: A multilingual EPA reporting system for anonymous whistleblower tips, citizen alerts, or underreported violations—monitored by an independent office.

Vision for the Future

We envision an EPA that isn't feared, defunded, or ignored—but trusted and relied upon. One that defends farms, factories, suburbs, and cities equally. One that sees environmental protection not as an agenda, but as a guarantee.

Because protecting the environment doesn't mean choosing between jobs or justice. It means making sure every American has what we all need to live: air, water, land—and one another.

Chapter 24: Federal Communications Commission (FCC)

Access, Accuracy, and Accountability: Reclaiming the Public's Airwaves

Overview

The Federal Communications Commission is responsible for regulating television, radio, broadband, and digital communication across the country. In an age where information moves faster than ever—and disinformation spreads even faster—the FCC's role is more vital than it's ever been. Yet decades of deregulation, consolidation, and political inaction have left millions without affordable internet, unchecked media monopolies, and communities—especially rural and low-income—cut off from access to truth and opportunity.

Communication is not a luxury. It's a lifeline. And the future of democracy depends on every American having access to reliable, affordable, and trusted information.

What's Broken

- **Digital Disconnection:** Tens of millions—especially in rural communities, tribal nations, and low-income neighborhoods—still lack reliable, high-speed internet.
- **Media Monopolies:** A handful of corporations control the majority of what Americans see and hear, limiting local news, suppressing diverse voices, and shaping public opinion without accountability.
- **Unchecked Disinformation:** False narratives and extremist propaganda flood public platforms, fueled by algorithms with little oversight.
- **Political Paralysis:** The FCC has been gridlocked for years—unable to enforce net neutrality, regulate big tech influence, or hold media outlets accountable for repeated public harm.
- **Underserved Small Towns and Seniors:** Many older Americans and rural communities rely on traditional broadcast and radio—but those systems are aging, underfunded, and often written off in digital-first policy.

What We Propose



Universal Internet Access Guarantee

Ensure every home in America—rural, urban, remote—has affordable, high-speed internet as a baseline utility, not a market commodity.



Net Neutrality Restoration Act

Codify equal access to all internet content, prohibiting throttling, paid prioritization, or censorship by internet providers.



Local News and Public Media Fund

Provide grants to revive community journalism, independent stations, and local storytelling in areas where it's been lost.



Public Interest Standards for Platforms Act

Regulate major tech platforms under a framework similar to broadcast media, requiring transparency in content algorithms, public interest obligations during elections and emergencies, and verified labeling for political content.



Open Spectrum Access Policy

Expand public use of the broadcast spectrum for community radio, emergency alert systems, and non-commercial education.

Civic Tools and Safeguards

- Communications Equity Dashboard: Publicly track broadband speed, cost, outages, and access by zip code—and hold providers accountable.
- Community Media Cooperatives: Support neighborhood-owned media, student-run radio, and multilingual newsrooms with federal seed funding.
- FCC Citizen Accountability Panel: Create a rotating board of veterans, educators, elders, and small-town leaders to evaluate FCC policy impacts and prevent elite media capture.

Vision for the Future

We envision a country where no one is silenced because of their income, their geography, or their age. Where public airwaves and internet lines serve people—not profit. Where truth can still be found, shared, and trusted.

Because in a functioning democracy, communication isn't just a right—it's how we find one another. And without that, nothing else works.

Chapter 25: Federal Trade Commission (FTC)

Fairness in the Marketplace: Defending Citizens from Corporate Abuse

Overview

The Federal Trade Commission exists to protect consumers from fraud, deception, monopolies, and anti-competitive practices. Yet in today's economy, too many people—especially seniors, small business owners, and working families—are left vulnerable to scams, data harvesting, false advertising, and market rigging. Big Tech, Wall Street, and mega-retailers operate in ways that make the average citizen feel powerless and unprotected.

It shouldn't take a law degree or endless paperwork to stop fraud. The FTC must work not just for markets—but for people.

What's Broken

- **Predatory Business Models:** From fake medical billing to endless subscription traps, many businesses profit through confusion, not value.
- **Corporate Consolidation:** When just a few companies dominate entire sectors—like food, healthcare, or tech—prices go up, choices go down, and local businesses can't compete.
- **Digital Exploitation:** People's personal data is bought and sold without consent, used to target them with scams or manipulate their behavior—often with devastating financial consequences.
- **Limited Enforcement and Delays:** The FTC is too often reactive. By the time a bad actor is fined, the damage is done and the victims are on their own.
- **Small Business Disadvantage:** Independent and family-run businesses struggle to compete with online giants who exploit loopholes and undercut fair competition.

What We Propose

Consumer First Fair Practices Act

Ban dark patterns (confusing interfaces, forced subscriptions), require clear opt-outs, and mandate simple, plain-language contracts.

Small Business Fairness Standard

Investigate and penalize platforms or wholesalers that engage in predatory pricing or exploit market dominance to crush competitors.

Digital Data Defense Rule

Prohibit companies from collecting or selling consumer data without explicit permission. Ban resale to data brokers entirely.

Scam Prevention and Recovery Fund

Create a victim restitution fund—federally backed and paid for by fines from deceptive or abusive companies.

Proactive Monitoring Division

Launch a new FTC unit to actively scan the marketplace for scam trends, phishing networks, and algorithmic exploitation.

Civic Tools and Safeguards

- Fraud Watch Dashboard: A public alert system that shows trending scams by region and demographic—updated in partnership with banks, utilities, and consumer advocates.
- Small Business Protection Network: Connect local entrepreneurs with FTC liaisons to report unfair practices, request investigations, and access legal support.
- Consumer Protection Corps: A civilian service initiative where trained volunteers help vulnerable populations—especially seniors and low-income residents—navigate consumer protections, dispute unfair charges, and file FTC claims.

Vision for the Future

We envision a country where people are not preyed upon just because they clicked the wrong link, didn't read the fine print, or trusted a brand that turned out to be a lie. Where small businesses are protected, not squeezed out. Where the economy rewards service, not trickery.

Because a free market should never mean a free-for-all. And protection isn't just a policy—it's a promise.

Chapter 26: Trade Policy and Economic Sovereignty

Trade That Works for Workers, Not Just Markets

Overview

Trade agreements shape everything from the price of groceries to the availability of medicine and the future of American manufacturing. Yet for too long, U.S. trade policy has been dominated by multinational interests, designed behind closed doors and justified by trickle-down theories that never reached most workers. The result? Job loss, wage suppression, rural hollowing, and a dangerous dependency on fragile global supply chains.

Trade should serve people—not just profits. And no working American should be expected to sacrifice their livelihood in the name of "global competitiveness."

What's Broken

- Offshoring and Industrial Decline: Free trade deals with minimal labor or environmental standards gutted American manufacturing and contributed to regional economic collapse.
- Corporate Capture of Trade Negotiations: Big business interests write the rules—while workers, farmers, small manufacturers, and consumers are excluded.
- Weak Enforcement of Agreements: Even when trade rules exist, violations go unpunished or are settled in secret by investor tribunals, not sovereign courts.
- Food and Medicine Insecurity: Over reliance on foreign production for essentials like antibiotics, fertilizers, or semiconductors leaves the country exposed in times of crisis.
- Environmental Loopholes: Trade rules often override climate protections or allow polluting industries to relocate to countries with fewer regulations.

What We Propose

Worker-First Trade Reform Act

Require that all future trade agreements include enforceable labor, environmental, and wage standards—negotiated with public input and subject to congressional oversight.

Essential Industry Reshoring Fund

Provide federal incentives for returning domestic production of key goods like medical supplies, food processing, clean energy tech, and rare earths.

Rural and Regional Export Hubs

Invest in logistics, infrastructure, and local co-ops to help small farmers and manufacturers access export markets—without middlemen or monopolies.

Transparent Trade Tracker

Publish all trade negotiations in accessible formats, with summaries reviewed by citizen panels, unions, and small business representatives.

Fair Retaliation Protections

Equip trade enforcement agencies with the tools and political backing to respond to foreign dumping, currency manipulation, or unfair subsidies—without delay.

Civic Tools and Safeguards

- Economic Impact Dashboard: Show how each trade agreement affects jobs, wages, and local economies in real time—by county, sector, and income level.
- Trade Justice Roundtables: Host quarterly forums in industrial towns, rural counties, and coastal ports to gather input on trade impacts and future priorities.
- Supply Chain Resilience Review Board: A bipartisan, independent council to monitor and assess the national security and economic risks of foreign sourcing for critical goods.

Vision for the Future

We envision a trade policy that defends sovereignty without isolationism. That upholds fair competition without sacrificing communities. That ensures the price we pay for low-cost imports is not the permanent loss of dignity, work, and national resilience.

Because real prosperity can't be outsourced—and neither can democracy.

Chapter 27: Privacy and Surveillance

The Right to Be Left Alone: Reclaiming Privacy in a Watched World

Overview

In a society saturated with smart devices, surveillance tools, and digital profiling, privacy is no longer a given—it's something we must fight to preserve. From government agencies to corporate platforms to third-party data brokers, everyday Americans are tracked, targeted, and commodified without clear consent or meaningful protection. And when surveillance is used disproportionately against certain communities—low-income, rural, immigrant, or politically active—it becomes a threat not just to privacy, but to democracy itself.

Freedom begins with privacy. Without it, choice, thought, and speech lose their meaning.

What's Broken

- **No Federal Privacy Standard:** Americans have no basic legal right to control how their data is collected, shared, or sold—online or offline.
- **Data Brokers and Algorithmic Exploitation:** Private companies harvest and sell behavioral, location, financial, and biometric data with little oversight.
- **Surveillance Creep in Government:** Law enforcement and federal agencies use facial recognition, predictive policing, and mass data collection with minimal transparency or accountability.
- **Lack of Consent and Opt-Out:** Most digital platforms bury privacy terms in legalese and make opting out nearly impossible.
- **Disproportionate Monitoring of Marginalized Groups:** Surveillance tools are often deployed most aggressively against immigrants, poor communities, protestors, and students—worsening inequality and mistrust.

What We Propose

1

American Privacy Bill of Rights

Establish baseline national protections for all citizens, including the right to know what data is collected, the right to delete it, and the right to refuse its sale or transfer.

2

Ban Sale of Personal Data Without Consent

Prohibit corporations, schools, political entities, and government contractors from profiting off sensitive data—especially financial, health, or location information—without explicit, revocable permission.



Prohibit Political Data Exploitation

Ban all political campaigns, PACs, and advocacy groups from using voter registration or purchased consumer data for unsolicited fundraising, robocalls, or email campaigns without clear, permanent, opt-out consent.



Sunset Government Surveillance Tools

Require public review, reauthorization, and strict use limits on technologies like facial recognition, license plate readers, and predictive software.

5

Digital Consent and Plain Language Law

Mandate that all data collection policies be written at an 8th-grade reading level, with visible opt-outs and no penalty for refusing consent.

Civic Tools and Safeguards

- My Data, My Rights Portal: A centralized online dashboard where citizens can view and control what personal data is held by government agencies, major tech platforms, and political campaign entities.
- Voter Privacy Shield: Require all political campaigns to honor opt-out preferences permanently and publicly list the sources of their voter contact data. Enforce violations with escalating fines and temporary fundraising bans.
- Whistleblower and Citizen Alert Hotline: Secure platform for reporting unauthorized surveillance, improper data sharing, or campaign-related privacy violations—backed by enforceable consequences.

Vision for the Future

We envision a future where technology serves people, not the other way around. Where safety doesn't come at the cost of dignity. And where every citizen—no matter their income, politics, or ZIP code—has the right to move, think, speak, and live without being watched, scored, or sold.

Because privacy is not just about secrecy. It's about sovereignty. Political speech is free, but citizen privacy is not for sale.

Chapter 28: Public Broadcasting and Media Integrity

Truth Is Infrastructure: Rebuilding a Civic Media for a Free Society

Overview

For generations, public broadcasting played a stabilizing role in American life—offering trusted news, emergency alerts, educational programming, and shared cultural reference points. But today, that civic foundation has fractured. Local journalism is collapsing. Disinformation floods social media. Tech platforms reach further than any broadcaster ever did—but without the public interest standards broadcasters were once required to meet.

In an age where trust is eroding and facts feel negotiable, we must treat truth like infrastructure—because without it, nothing else we build will stand.

What's Broken

- **Collapse of Local and Independent Journalism:** Thousands of small-town newspapers and radio stations have disappeared, leaving information voids exploited by misinformation networks.
- **Unregulated Tech Media:** Companies like Meta, Google, and X (formerly Twitter) serve as the new broadcasters—yet face no requirement to verify content, uphold truth, or serve the public.
- **Algorithmic Disinformation:** False stories spread faster than fact, amplified by engagement-based ranking systems that reward outrage over accuracy.
- **Erosion of Public Broadcasting Support:** Funding for PBS, NPR, and educational programming remains vulnerable to political whims and budget cuts.
- **Ad-Saturated News Ecosystem:** Clickbait, branded content, and undisclosed sponsorships blur the line between journalism and marketing.

What We Propose

Public Interest Standards for Platforms Act

Regulate major tech platforms (based on reach and influence) under a framework similar to broadcast media. Require transparency in content algorithms, public interest obligations during elections and emergencies, verified labeling for paid political content, and clear appeals and moderation guidelines for user content.

Civic Media Reinvestment Fund

Dramatically increase funding for local public radio, rural newsrooms, Indigenous and Black media, educational TV, and student journalism.

Digital Fairness and Labeling Law

Require watermarking and disclosure of AI-generated content, sponsored news, and third-party influencer partnerships across all platforms.

Nonprofit Journalism Tax Credit

Offer payroll and production credits to independent, nonprofit news outlets that meet civic service criteria—particularly in underserved areas.

Democracy Media Corps

Establish a national fellowship program for young journalists, veterans, and career switchers to serve in local newsrooms and civic storytelling roles across the country.

Civic Tools and Safeguards

- **Public Media Access Map:** A national tool showing news deserts, public station reach, and the availability of educational content by region.
- **Media Integrity Accountability Board:** A nonpartisan oversight body of journalists, technologists, educators, and community members tasked with reviewing the civic performance of major platforms and media conglomerates.
- **Civic Literacy in Schools and Public Libraries:** Restore news literacy, source verification, and media ethics education as core curriculum in middle schools, high schools, and adult learning programs.

Vision for the Future

We envision a nation where people can still agree on facts—even when they disagree on solutions. Where information is accessible, not manipulated. Where truth has a public address—and it's loud enough to be heard through the noise.

Because democracy cannot survive without trusted information. And trust is not built by corporations. It's built by people.

Chapter 29: Federal Election Commission (FEC)

Guardians of the Vote: Rebuilding Trust in Free and Fair Elections

Overview

The Federal Election Commission was created to enforce transparency, integrity, and fairness in U.S. elections. But today, it stands as one of the weakest agencies in government—hobbled by partisan gridlock, outdated rules, and a campaign finance system flooded by dark money. Voters increasingly feel that elections are bought, not won. That rules apply to the people—but not to the powerful.

If democracy is to mean anything, elections must be protected—not just from fraud, but from manipulation, suppression, and the slow erosion of trust.

What's Broken

- **Partisan Deadlock:** With an even number of Democratic and Republican commissioners, the FEC often fails to act—allowing violations to go unpunished.
- **Dark Money Loopholes:** Political nonprofits and Super PACs routinely bypass disclosure laws, laundering millions in anonymous donations.
- **Weak Enforcement:** Fines for violations are rare, delayed, and often lower than the cost of compliance. This rewards rule-breaking.
- **Digital Election Manipulation:** Online ads and influencer campaigns remain largely unregulated, making it easy to mislead voters or hide funding sources.
- **Foreign Influence Risks:** Despite laws, foreign money and influence campaigns continue to reach American voters through shell donations and unmonitored digital channels.

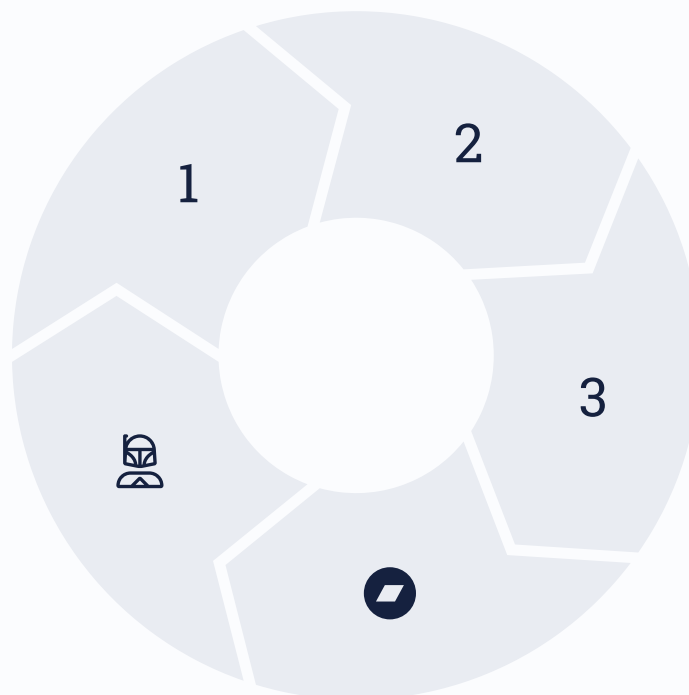
What We Propose

FEC Modernization Act

Restructure the commission to break gridlock by adding a nonpartisan tie-breaking member, term limits, and a transparent appointment process.

Equal Access Enforcement

Ensure that all candidates—regardless of party or funding—receive equal access to ballots, debates, and public forums, particularly at the local and state level.



Full Transparency in Campaign Finance

Require real-time disclosure of all donations over \$200, including to Super PACs, nonprofits, and digital platforms.

Digital Election Integrity Rule

Mandate clear labels on all political ads—including influencer content—disclose sponsors, and ban foreign-funded messaging on social platforms.

Ban on Deep Fake Campaign Content

Prohibit the use of manipulated media or AI-generated impersonations in any election-related communication.

Civic Tools and Safeguards

- Follow the Money Portal: A user-friendly public dashboard tracking donations, PACs, and digital ad spending by candidate, donor, and zip code.
- Voter Data Protection Act: Prohibit the sale or unauthorized use of voter registration data for political fundraising or targeting without opt-in consent.
- Citizens' Election Oversight Boards: Establish local election accountability teams composed of veterans, educators, young voters, and civic leaders to monitor fairness and transparency during elections.

Vision for the Future

We envision an America where elections are not war games for the wealthy, but sacred expressions of the people's will. Where every vote counts—and every voter matters. Where we do not have to wonder if democracy has been bought, because we've rebuilt a system where it can't be sold.

Because free and fair elections are not just a goal. They're the minimum requirement of a functioning republic.

Chapter 30: A New Civic Contract

From Transaction to Transformation: Reclaiming the Promise of Citizenship

Overview

We stand at a crossroads. Not just politically, but morally. Not just institutionally, but existentially. The social contract in America—the unspoken agreement that government serves the people and the people uphold democracy—has been shattered by decades of corruption, neglect, exclusion, and abuse of power. Too many citizens feel abandoned. Too many elected officials feel entitled. And too many systems remain untouched by the very people they claim to represent.

It is time to build a new civic contract. One rooted not in ideology, but in accountability. Not in partisanship, but in principle. Not in punishment, but in purpose.

What's Broken

- **Government as Performance:** Elected offices have become stages for ego, brand-building, and culture wars—while real problems go unaddressed.
- **Citizenship as Spectatorship:** Most Americans feel disconnected from the levers of power, reduced to voting every few years while elites decide everything else.
- **Power Without Consequence:** Lifetime politicians, unchecked executives, and corporate lobbyists shape policy with little transparency or fear of losing power.
- **Fragmented Movements:** Civic efforts—though passionate—often remain siloed by ideology, race, region, or party, failing to build broad coalitions for structural change.
- **Loss of Shared Purpose:** The very idea of a national "we" has eroded, leaving citizens alienated from one another—and from any common sense of mission.

What We Propose

The Citizens' Compact: A living, crowd-sourced document committing individuals, institutions, and leaders to shared values: transparency, humility in service, truth in speech, and equity in action.

We are done watching. We are done waiting. We are the Citizens. And this is our Project.