



**Rules Change:  
Resetting the Playing Field for  
Corporations, People and Democracy**

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## **RULES CHANGE WRAPUP**

This is a compilation of all the pages reached from this URL:  
<http://mediagiraffe.org/wiki/index.php/Ruleschange-planning>

### **Creating a plan -- Defining the problem**

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#### **"Make America Work for US"**

People don't see how mega-corporations are redefining our lives and disenfranchising us economically and politically:

- Destroying local accountability and community;
- Weakening us, silencing many voices;
- Giving a few way too much money and power.

Growth is treated as the primary measure of success but it is actually the cause of environmental and social problems. Financialization of the economy means Wall Street gambling has replaced the production of real goods and services and diminished available credit for most businesses. Meanwhile big corporations and banks are hoarding lots of cash. The result is foreclosures, unemployment and a credit crunch.

The Federal Reserve is a private cabal and there is no enforcement of protective legislation. Slick rules changes and bail outs abound. The press is losing its ability to do independent, in-depth reporting; there's no transparency regarding political spending. We are increasingly reliant on corporate-owned, costly technology for basic communications.

# Articulating a vision

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## **We seek:**

- Stakeholder capitalism vs. shareholder capitalism.
- Corporations accountable serving people and planet
- Restoration of civic virtue/civic, moral obligation
- Sustainable, local living economies- small business, banks, food, energy
- Shared prosperity instead of two Americas
- Multi-cultural not corporate culture. Society enriched by each member developing and sharing their gifts.
- Revaluing of human interests over capital interests through policy changes
- Money and technology serving a shared sense of common good.
- *A world without corporate ownership of the media*
- Diverse, independent, sustainable media focused on community needs and public accountability
- Basic human needs met globally. American consumers no longer dependent on slavery of others in the world.

## What we hope for

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We hope for:

- A small margin of pay gap between workers and owners
- True equal pay for equal work, and equal value assigned to all voices
- No longer having to say we're moving to Sweden or Canada -- and no one having the sense of entitlement to say such things
- Achieving a counter-narrative to corporate executive plea for deregulation and small government
- Better long-term use and protection of natural resources
- Replacing a debt-based financial system with one that allocates 40% debt-service on all goods and services to us
- Transparent and participatory governance, including participatory budgeting

## Dmensions of opportunity

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### **Public sentiment**

- democracy is broken
- corporate interest not the same as "my" interest
- polling results on positions -- background checks, Citizens United
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### [\[edit\]](#)**Demography**

- students
- white majority decreasing
- aging retirees -- leaving legacy, sense of fairness
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### [\[edit\]](#) **Issue campaigns**

- Climate change
- Student loans
- endowment investing
- food security
- recycling
- anti-toxics

### [\[edit\]](#) **Alternative institution building**

- public banks and financing
- Coops, CSAs
- spending on campaigns

### [\[edit\]](#) **Policy**

- overturning Citizens United and addressing corporate personhood through constitutional amendment
- accounting framework
- disclosure and transparency
- short-term vs. long-term investment framework
- evolving fiduciary responsibility
- sustainability standards

### [\[edit\]](#) **Resources/tools/efforts**

- ESG infrastructure
- Internet technology
- there's profit in solutions

## Envisioning **goals** and **solutions**

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### **GOALS**

1. Constitutional Amendment to affirm rights, rights are for natural persons—is a values infusion and structural change
2. Create community Action, providing Empowerment
3. Revive/expand union membership
4. Carbon tax
5. Include environmental costs in global accounting
6. Changing the narrative that policy must support corporate competitiveness
7. Achieve greater fairness, decrease wealth gap
8. Restrict and constrain corporate lobbying (not eliminate)
9. Shift control of resources from corporations to community
10. Redirect fear budgets (military and police) to “empowerment” services, community and social

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# SOLUTIONS

1. Ban derivatives
2. Local ownership of governance and economy
3. Develop civic fiduciary enabling structures (stewardship).
4. Raise awareness that we fund this economy through our spending
5. Involving people, the source of wealth, holding officials accountable
6. Public financing of elections
7. Election day registration, early voting, and election day holiday
8. Pass constitutional amendment, address corporate personhood as speech
9. Make credit a reliable public utility, re-localized and democratically governed (bank credit for local, small businesses), public banks
10. Rules/policy creation—especially dissemination of legal language into 5th grade working language
11. Provoke third parties and proportional representation
12. Corporate add campaigns should serve community needs not corporate profits (“fake needs) charter law
13. Quality of life as a measure of success vs. growth
14. Ban supra-legal market-creating international agreements, renationalize economy
15. Create positive barriers to protect and expand pension principal
16. Tax fairness to spread wealth/ reduce income gap
17. Provide education that is sustainable
18. See the people responsible for corporate actions, personify corporate actions
19. De-financialize the economy, tax speculation, tax breaks for counter-cyclical investments in local economy especially coops, use a public bank to channel credit for social needs not speculative investment
20. Public Finance system for political campaigns, restore integrity in electoral process
21. Connect Annie Leonard and Steve Snyder
22. Change the message/meme: people are the job creators as consumers not the wealthy or corporations
23. Broad campaign finance reform
24. Dissemination and translation of legal language into 5th grade working language
25. Tax breaks for counter-cyclical investment in local economy, especially coops
26. Unmasking corporate control by requiring more disclosure of 1. Political gifts, 2. Taxes, 3. Environmental cost cutting, and 4. Human rights abuses.
27. Personifying corporations, think of corporations and their boards as people not their brands

# Next-step actions required

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## PRIMARY

- **Explore meaning and impact of "Make America Work for US"**
- McGovern outreach followup working group virtual meeting(s)
- General project Advancement Group virtual meeting(s)
- List and map collaborative groups and bring them together
- Identify common goals
- Write our demands ("manifesto")
- Develop a strategy
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## SECONDARY

- Collaboration and commitment to unite
- Commitment to 2% of time to do public engagement; ask others to
- What are the "rules changes" we need in our interactions?
- Commitment to relationships holding, sharing our stories

## [\[edit\]](#) Participant specific commitments

- Joanne -- Evaluation of meeting toward developing replicable model
- Bill -- Capturing information, fleshing out wiki, evaluation
- Deb -- Agenda for movement, more gatherings, sound bites to engage others
- Stephen -- More non-verbal outreach
- Betsy -- Help transform into a platform and agenda / replicate in shorter form
- Shelley -- Limited networking resource to concerned investor community
- Marcy -- Help refining and designing, especially digital technology / funder & McGovern outreach help
- Scott -- Conversations with progressive funders/ explore resource field for replicating
- Becky -- League is developing discussion guide
- Tyler -- General commitment to help
- Chris -- Help running replication test in Southern California

## Talking points for Congressman McGovern followup

- Reinstate in IRS Form 990 itemization of portfolio endowment holdings
- Pressure FEC, SEC and IRS for timely disclosure regulations
- Six areas of transparency and disclosure for campaign contributions
- Change IRS rule to not grant 501(c)4 status until review completed
- Federal charter for especially large or multi-national corporations
- Support efforts to establish B-corp law in Massachusetts
- Sustainability standards and reporting for federal procurement vendors

# Strategy process and purpose proposals]

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## STRATEGIC PURPOSES

- Personify the policy "enemy" by showing corporations are made up of people actors
- Formulate and adopt a common democracy narrative throughout progressive community
- Identify the key changes in the last 20 years that illustrate so clearly how corporations now dominate and corrupt democracy
- Find and focus on the key messages that will resonate and inspire people to act
- Find and spotlight moral, inspiring, caring corporate leaders
- Engage retirees who still have pensions together with underemployed 20-somethings in a "Teach for America" environment
- Leverage economic and policy power of endowments and other invested assets
- Link transitional models for change with reform efforts such as "invest in Boston" (Arroyo)
- How do we create a consumer movement for fairness?
- Use consumer spending to drive change; 70% of GDP is consumer spending; organize just 10%
- Disable corporate power, by provoking/educating / /raise consciousness
- Revisit the Constitution (and other "rules we live by") at least once a year
- Leverage power by identifying key areas for collaboration
- Promote local ownership -- Economic and political

## [\[edit\]](#)STRATEGIC PROCESS OPPORTUNITIES

- Create financial incentives to act sustainably
- Provide examples of how we can feel good about small actions
- Appeal to people's sense of fairness – this can be very powerful
- Think longer term; think about sustainability
- Identify constituents, allies and forces build alliances, significant actions, relevant and responses
- How do we merge common interest with self interest
- Diversify our movement through outreach, listening, alliances
- Focus on things we can change immediately, not things
- Ongoing collaborative education and assessment of impact
- People empowerment and collective organizing; building a "grassroots" movement
- Celebrate solutions that show one person can make a difference
- Address personal, interpersonal, institutional, cultural levels of change
- Ongoing collaborative education and assessment of impact
- Education, literature, rhetoric that develops a sense of self I which self-interests and the good of the other are not mutually exclusive
- Celebrate our sameness instead of our differences
- People empowerment and collective organizing – build a "grassroots movement."
- Strategic mapping current aspects of problem and solutions, current allies, strategies in play
- Build coalition -- Establish specific goals, share goals across groups/political spectrum and build consensus; get buy in; share programming for educational action

# Understanding and overcoming **barriers**

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## **Understanding organizational barriers**

- Focus on engaging people with experience in collaboration
- Group competition/differentiation in funding, recognition and control
- Controlling behavior tends to inhibit diversity of ideas and experimentation
- Tension between maintaining access to political elite and arguing for radical change
- Imitation of corporate processes, right-wing strategies or messaging discipline
- Lack of clear strategy
- Silos -- we're not talking to each other
- Lack of analysis and commitment to structural change
- Narrow focus and insufficient rules-change effort
- Too many agendas; philanthropy structure causes funders to drive work
- Sexism, racism and lack of diversity
- Lack of solidarity among organizations
- Language -- Need agreement and clarity about campaign
- Need flexibility for speaking to different audiences

## [\[edit\]](#) **Understanding personal barriers**

- Lack of understanding of how issues affect lives
- Resentment of government and a belief that change won't happen
- Fear of conflict
- Emotions or pain around money and financial situation
- Feelings of powerlessness and despair -- dispirited
- Belief that materialism represents the American Dream and brings happiness
- Perception of self as a "consumer" more than citizen
- Identity / self esteem / self-knowledge
- Technologies cripple our capacity to reflect or find power

## [\[edit\]](#) **Strategies for overcoming barriers**

- Develop more resources
- Focus collaboration on enlarging the pie
- Fee-for-service mechanisms for social entrepreneurship
- Provide messaging to funders about what's needed to cause systemic change
- Ask funders to support changing in culture of interactions (training, role models, modules, conferences)
- Included collaborative behaviors in performance evaluations
- Better inclusion -- bring in diverse voices
- Talking directly about behaviors that exclude, or take power
- Unpack and examine world views
- Adopt tools and principles of "collective genius" group work and communication instead of top-down, corporate style
- Expand the pool of resources/tools that support collaboration

- Shifting our focus/solidarity to stand with the poor
- Talk about important of NOT seeking personal access
- Reward/commend/recognize *service* to the larger movement
- Reward/commend/recognize acts of solidarity with most marginalized

## [edit]Tactical actions

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- "Make America Work for US" march on Washington 50th anniversary of March on Washington
- Organize together to collectivize our buying power of multiple products
- Engage grad students to research; case studies on responsible corporation behavior
- House parties / town-city resolutions / state bills / federal amendment
- Lobby Congress/accounting and for triple bottom line reporting by organizations
- Contact Congress via phone calls, letters, personal visits once we have clear message
- Promote democracy curriculum at all levels of education
- Bring back Fair Election Money for political campaign money
- National Day of Boycott
- Use shareholder actions to pressure companies
- Expansion CEU credits for mindfulness training/practice incorporations (like A-Z for lawyers)
- Schedule a Rules Change quarterly Google+ Hangout
- Wikki for analyzing status of the struggle (from all sides) and progress/action
- Get new people to run for office
- Improve this convening model and try elsewhere with foundation funding
- Use social media for platform building; current institutions present
- Encyclopedia of Corporate vs. Peoples' Sovereignty
- Labor Day to support voting rights expansion bill
- Participatory budgeting in our cities as a way to push for direct democracy