



RULES CHANGE:
Resetting the Playing Field for Corporations,
People and Democracy
(May 3-5, 2013 convening / UMass Amherst)

CONGRESSIONAL ACTION PROPOSAL

For our system to keep working for all, we need to use the tools of democracy at our disposal to change the rules. Our overall recommendation is a call for a bipartisan, public-private task force with a decent budget to bring forth well-considered, feasible changes such as the four listed below.

Steps proposed:

1. Form a coalition of supporters and legislators develop consensus on changes to consider.
2. Prepare a cogent statement of need and benefits for each such change.
3. Review the losses and difficulties that each change would create.
4. Drop changes where benefits don't outweigh the losses.
5. Consider how to counter the objections that will be raised for each change included.
6. Prepare a bill or bills for filing, utilizing staff of members of Congress and the Congressional Research Service.
7. File bill, refer to committee, hold hearings, develop support, move through the process for enactment

Rule Change Categories (#1, 2, 3, 4 are top priority)

1. Make clear that corporations do not have the constitutional right of people and that money is not speech
2. Require federal charters for large corporations; include public good and environmental protection
3. Lobbying reform and election reform; curtail the influence of big money
4. Act for world sustainability; accept limits to growth

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5. Encourage media diversity (to prevent corporate dominance and provide for investigative reporting)
 6. Create disincentives for short term trading profits
 7. Make unique rule changes for Wall Street corporations (and other large financial institutions)
 8. Internalize costs created by corporations (charge for pollution)
 9. Supplement GNP as the measure of economic progress)see Genuine Progress Indicator, etc.
 10. Review progressive taxation of income and consumption
 11. World trade reforms; consider global charters
 12. Encourage alternative ownership structures - coops, employee ownership, nfp public benefit, etc.
 13. Antitrust enforcement to create and preserve competition.
 14. Consider additional constitutional issues and federal vs. state (such as limited liability, commerce clause reinterpretation, guidelines for state corporate charters
 15. Additional rules change needed but not in any of the above categories