

Will you help us with . . .

Rules Change: Resetting the Playing Field for Corporations, People and Democracy *Action ideas for capitalism and the common good*

To: **Potential co-convenors of “Rules Change” summit**
From: Bill Densmore, Chuck Collins, Bill Densmore Jr.
Date: October 2, 2012

Subject: **Convening statement, invitation to join steering committee**

SUMMARY: Please consider joining us in co-promoting, co-convening and attending an invitation-only summit, “Rules Change: Resetting the Playing Field for Corporations, People and Democracy” – a May 3-5, 2013 convening for leaders across up to 15 change categories.

“Rules Change” is for people concerned about inadequate oversight of large public corporations and financial institutions, and big-money domination of Washington politics. This gathering will provide a forum for seeking consensus on (a) rules change citizens can inspire in policies and governance and (b) behavior changes they can make in their communities and marketplaces. We’ll provide a forum for the latest thought and action plans, including the potential to permit limiting, via constitutional amendment, some corporate political campaign spending.

We hope to produce an unemotional, rational consideration of benefits and losses of each proposed rule change. The suggested process will permit appropriate elimination or modification of suggestions that would significantly hurt United States’ world competitiveness.

WHO: U.S. Rep. James P. McGovern, D-Mass., the Donahue Institute at the University of Massachusetts, the Institute for Policy Studies and others TBD. Between 40 and 150 participants, including politicians, constitutional, legal and corporate governance scholars, policy strategists and advocates, media and engaged citizens.

WHERE: University of Massachusetts, Amherst

WHEN: Fri.-Sun., May 3-5, 2013.

FORMAT: Friday evening plenary situation analysis by key operatives; Saturday work on pre-convening task-force proposals in multiple categories, open-space dialog; facilitated effort to achieve specific policy recommendations and action; Sunday wrap-up/next steps.

Ideas for pre-convening task force topics: <http://newshare.com/rules-change-categories.pdf>

HOW YOU CAN HELP: Please help us by reading the narrative summary below and answering:

- Is this gathering well-framed?
- Does it overlap any concurrent initiatives?
- Would it well serve existing policy initiatives and actors?
- Will you and/or your organization join our public steering committee of co-convenors?
- Who do you recommend to lead task forces?

FRAMING THE SUMMIT

When the Founding Fathers met in Philadelphia to craft the U.S. Constitution, American communities were relatively small. You could walk the town common, attend a meeting house or a town meeting, know and converse with your fellow citizens face to face. Government was a tiny influence on your daily life and what corporations existed were generally small and local.

Today, the two greatest forces in the American public square are government, and corporations. While each provides important services and benefits to people, the American public¹ -- and President Obama² -- are each worried about the potential for unchecked influence.

Changes in the way we govern corporations are required to revitalize participatory democracy in the United States. One barrier may be a perception that proposed changes are new or radical.

In fact, dozens of books have been written over 20 years that address key principles of policy rules changes. These changes will lead to a more just and sustainable free-market, capitalist democracy. See the essay, "Restoring Democracy and Changing Corporate Rules." (<http://www.newshare.com/rules-change.pdf>)

For people concerned about inadequate oversight of large public corporations and financial institutions and big-money domination of Washington politics, this gathering will provide a forum for consider rules changes, and assessing possibilities for consensus.

In this gathering, we'll take a look at how this is changing participatory democracy, and how the rules of participatory democracy and corporate governance may need to change as a result.

Format ideas for the gathering:

- For each category of rules change, identify a task group to develop recommendations and an action plan for implementation. Each group would meet either face to face or in teleconference periodically before the summit. These recommendations would be presented for discussion and action at the larger conference.
- The full summit will start on a Friday afternoon, then run all day Saturday, carrying over to a Sunday morning wrap-up seeking action consensus.
- Format would include a "conversation catalyst" dinner and plenary Friday evening; Saturday morning plenary; then a day of facilitated round-table breakouts lead by members of the pre-convened task groups, with a what-we-learned and next-steps plenary end of day Saturday or Sunday morning.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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¹ -- <http://ap-gfcpoll.com/uncategorized/our-latest-poll-findings-10>

<http://www.latimes.com/news/politics/la-pn-poll-citizens-united-20120916,0,7468934.story>

² -- http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/08/29/barack-obama-citizens-united-reddit_n_1841258.html