



*Rethinking the
playing field for
corporations,
people and
democracy*
ruleschange.org

August, 2013

Can you help begin a national dialog?

Dear Friend:

America's economy can't go on as it has. It needs to work better for communities, employees, customers, citizens and the environment -- as well as for shareholders. Should we take a "time out" to consider changing or emphasizing the rules?

- Does the "voice" of money speak too loudly in Washington?
- Can democracy survive growing income and wealth gaps in the United States?
- Do we need to acknowledge that the ways we measure growth and success are out of step with sustaining a healthy planet and just communities?
- How might we "map" and follow the projects and people concerned about making shareholder capitalism work better for all stakeholders?

The School of Public Policy at George Mason University invites you to join Oct. 18-19 in co-convening a two-day dialog "Rules Change, The DC Gathering: Time Out for Corporations, People and Democracy," at GMU's Arlington campus.

RC-DC is an intimate, two-day education effort with circle-round discussions, facilitated breakouts and a few keynote talks and panels. You can join in supporting a working summit considering two decades of mainstream thought on corporate regulation, governance and global-resources impact. We'll discuss changes in public policies and behavior that could revitalize participatory democracy on Main Street -- and Wall Street.

The issues are broad and numerous: campaign finance and election changes, taxes, wages, corporate governance, measurement and "personhood", ethics, environmental costs, healthy living, vibrant communities, quality education. Hundreds of groups working in these "silos" have nevertheless come to a common conclusion: The rules of the game aren't always rigged for the common good.

SEEKING COMMON GROUND

If there is one abiding principle of our participatory democracy, it is this: The common good is best served when people of good will convene and collaborate, despite differences, to discover common ground for action. In the last decades we have struggled as a nation to observe that principle. "Rules Change: The DC Gathering," is your chance to support it.

Learn more on the next two pages about how you can help.

The change we all feel is a new commitment for shared understanding, deliberation and action. At RC-DC we'll act together as convenors, collaborators, silo-breakers, pollinators and amplifiers of ideas for changing how we govern, and access, corporations, communities and markets. Think of it as a non-partisan "tent" open to fresh dialog and unexpected alliances. We'll share ideas for capitalism and the common good.

BIG GOVERNMENT – OR BIG CORPORATIONS

Whether your concern is “big government” or “big corporations” -- or both -- this is what's changed -- a majority of Americans now feel the system needs to work better. It's time for Americans to take a time out for a period of sober reflection about the economic game, and maybe change some of the rules we all agree to observe.

Our approach is not to end or replace the game, but to generate sensible rules that honor the dignity of human life and reward real value creation. All stakeholders -- employees, customers, citizens, communities, the Earth, and stockholders – share in the consequences of the actions of any one group. Our future is a common one.

WHO IS ORGANIZING RC-DC?

The idea of a cross-silo convening to find common ground on economic rules changes took shape at a preliminary gathering at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, May 3-5. Convening groups included the New Economy Coalition, United Republic.org, Responsible Wealth/UFE, Institute for Policy Studies, the Donohue Institute at the University of Massachusetts, and U.S. Rep. James P. McGovern, D-Mass. His district includes UMass.

The three-day summit was designed as a test flight for the idea that the term “rules changes” could become a simple way to wrap together dozens of independent initiatives for getting America's economy and society back on track.

READ a story about the Amherst meeting:

<http://mediagiraffe.org/wiki/index.php/Ruleschange-story>

<http://ruleschangeblog.wordpress.com/who-are-we/>

Believing this to be a critical issue for our time, GMU's School of Public Policy encouraged “Rules Change Project” principals to convene a similar gathering near Washington in order to observe the possibility for greater collaboration among seemingly independent policy groups. The Rules Change Project, is an unincorporated effort of individuals. It has no advocacy agenda other than to spotlight, amplify and bring together silos of thought, and learn where there may be common ground for change . . . in Washington, in states, communities, boardrooms and within our own families.

READ the Rules Change Vision:

<http://ruleschangeblog.wordpress.com/vision/>

FINISHING WORK OF THE FOUNDING FATHERS?

For hundreds of years, Americans have worked and died to build a country in which people of all walks of life can realize their full potential and live happily. We now enjoy unprecedented technological advances and the accompanying lightning-speed communication; access to natural resources; and efficient systems for mobilization and distribution that support unparalleled participation in democratic governance and the establishment of a basic quality of life for all.

But for some, the financial crises that began several years ago have given way to tremendous suffering. These crises may also be a catalyst for profound and lasting change. We have an opportunity to update and put fresh touches on the work of the pioneers of democracy – and to go beyond it.

WHY YOUR HELP IS NECESSARY

In order to ensure diverse participation in RC-DC, we are inviting co-convenors at three levels of support to underwrite registration, lodging and some limited travel stipends for those whose voices might not otherwise be heard.

RC-DC is an experiment in collaborative democracy. If it works -- if new ideas and unexpected alliances emerge, it could make sense to convene similar gatherings around the United States. Your support could help make that possible.

In addition, your participation as a co-convenor will entitle you to be listed on our web and on on-location program materials. Levels include:

1. PROJECT CONVENOR -- \$10,000 or more donation, underwrites at least 20 participants designated by the co-convenor or selected by event organizers; principal convenor status for any future Rules Change gatherings.
2. PRINCIPAL CO-CONVENOR -- \$5,000 or more donation, underwrites at least 10 participants.
3. SUPPORTING CO-CONVENOR -- \$2,000-\$4,999 donation, underwrites at least four participants.
4. INDIVIDUAL CO-CONVENOR -- \$500-\$1,999 donation, underwrites 1-3 participants.

Please give us a call or send email for details about how to make your donation. And thank-you for helping support this timely and unique educational effort.

With thanks,



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Make America Work *all of* **for**  **US**