



# Rules Change: <http://ruleschange.org> Resetting the Playing Field for Corporations, People and Democracy

*Creating action ideas for capitalism and the common good*

**May 3-5, 2013 / Univ. of Massachusetts-Amherst Donahue Institute**

- **NEW: 60-second audio backgrounder on summit**  
<http://tinyurl.com/rc-audio-file>

"Rules Change: Resetting the Playing Field for Corporations, People and Democracy," is a three day gathering May 3-5 organized by the UMass Donahue Institute at the request of U.S. Rep. James P. McGovern, D-Mass., and four other non-profit policy groups. McGovern will be a special guest at the event. "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 common ground on:

- Rules change citizens can inspire in policies and governance and
- 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.

"Rules Change" is planned as a deliberative process to find common ground on action steps that will adjust the rules of the game, not completely change the game. We hope to produce an unemotional, rational consideration of benefits and losses of each proposed rule change, including a rethinking of what we mean by [global "competition."](#)

**FIND OUT**

## Who Stole the American Dream?

Join a talk and discussion with Pulitzer Prize-winning author Hedrick Smith



**Fri., May 3,  
Bowker  
Auditorium  
UMass  
7:30 p.m.  
FREE**



**INFO: <http://www.ruleschange.org>**

Cosponsors: The Donahue Institute, New Economics Coalition, Responsible Wealth, Institute for Policy Studies, UnitedRepublic.org. Co-sponsored by Common Cause. Special guest: U.S. Rep. James P. McGovern.

## BACKGROUND

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WHO: [UMass Donahue Institute](#), the [New Economy Coalition](#), [UnitedRepublic.org](#), [Free Speech for People](#), the [Institute for Policy Studies](#), [Responsible Wealth / UFE](#), [Gross National Happiness USA](#), the [Marlboro MBA in Managing for Sustainability](#), and individuals. Between 30 and 70 participants, including politicians, constitutional, legal and corporate governance scholars, policy strategists and advocates, media and engaged citizens. Co-sponsor: [Common Cause](#). Keynote speaker: Hedrick Smith, author/journalist: “Who Stole The American Dream?” / Special guest: [U.S. Rep. Jim McGovern](#), D-Mass.

- 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.
- CONTACT: Bill Densmore, principal convenor for the Donahue Institute: [wpdensmore@gmail.com](mailto:wpdensmore@gmail.com) / m: 617-448-6600

## FIVE CATEGORIES OF CHANGE

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- **CATEGORY ONE: Influence:** -- Personhood, corporate money and politics -- Reconsidering the role of corporations in public policy, including charter reform.
- **CATEGORY TWO: Measurement:** -- Alternate success measurements, including internalizing externalities, genuine progress and gross domestic happiness indicators, corporate performance.
- **CATEGORY THREE: Ownership:** -- New models for business ownership, including co-ops, B-corps, L3C, including community role, limits to growth and size.
- **CATEGORY FOUR: Accountability:** -- Considering the market and community impacts on broad stakeholder groups such as employees, communities, customers, shareholders including wages, profits and taxes (loopholes, offshoring, capital gains, estate/inheritance).
- **CATEGORY FIVE: Governance:** -- Public and shareholder influence over executive pay by disclosure or regulation: regulated adherence to world sustainability measurements (see category 2, Measurement), improved transparency.

## WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

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"Rules Change" is for public officials, authors, policy analysts, researchers, scholars and concerned citizens who are 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.

## FRAMING THE SUMMIT

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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 public -- and President Obama -- are each worried about the potential for unchecked influence.

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.

One barrier may be a perception that proposed changes are new or radical. <p> 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.

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**For more, see the essay, "Restoring Democracy and Changing Corporate Rules."**  
(<http://www.newshare.com/rules-change.pdf>)

## YOU'RE INVITED . . . TO A CIVIL ACT

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You -- corporate leader, public official, author, policy analyst, researcher, scholar, student or concerned citizen -- are invited to join a bold and urgent effort to rethink our politics, economy and communities. For the first time ever, civic and business leaders are convening to **open the silos** that threaten to strangle our great, 250-year American Dream. For three days, May 3-5, at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst we intend to test the proposition that **acollaborative congress** can invent new rules, new measurements and new inspiration for economic justice.

We're calling this timely gathering: "Rules Change: Resetting the Playing Field for Corporations, People and Democracy." We'll get started Friday with a critical address by Pulitzer Prize-winning author/journalist [Hedrick Smith](#) answer the question: "Who Stole The American Dream?" and suggest [what to do about it](#). Then well spend Saturday formulating ideas around [five key change categories](#), and find common ground and possible action steps in a Sunday morning wrapup.

The Rules Change Project is **not a new group**, but a collaboration among many. Our goal: Mainstream rule changes that redefine the relationship between corporations and society. We will focus on three approaches: (1) Top-down policy solutions, (2) bottom-up new models for business development and governance, and (3) internal changes coming from within corporations themselves. We're committed to **cross silos and politics** -- to bring policy wonks, engaged citizen-activists and corporate change-agents into dialogue with each other. Collaborations formed at Rules Change will help launch on-going work that moves beyond rhetorical boundaries.

President Obama [declared](#) in his State of the Union address: "The patriots of 1776 did not fight to replace the tyranny of a king with the privileges of a few or the rule of a mob. They gave to us a Republic, a government of, and by, and for the people, entrusting each generation to keep safe our founding creed." At Rules Change, we intend to ensure that all people -- *real people* -- are treated justly, and can pursue lives marked by **freedom, health and happiness**.

If you believe, as we do, that the American republic is not fully meeting this responsibility, what might be done? There is no single path so we are asking each delegate to help us with one of at least five approaches. We've identified [five key categories of "rules change"](#) -- and an equal number of supporting categories -- to start. [Dozens of authors, scholars and policy experts](#) have written for years about these categories, and their prescriptions are remarkably similar. And yet little changes? Why?

We think the first step is the hardest -- recognition that there are many ideas for politic, policy, marketplace and community change which are not at all radical and simply **require attention and action** from thought leaders.

It's just mentioned as part of the Friday evening, May 3 proceedings:  
<http://newshare.com/ruleschange/news.pdf>

The **video** also is listed in the program detail for the conference:  
<http://newshare.com/ruleschange/program.pdf>

The basic release is now up on the Five College Calendar:  
[http://calendar.fivecolleges.edu/FiveCol/calendrome.cgi?span=event&ID=316073&day=3&month=May&year=2013&state\\_values=](http://calendar.fivecolleges.edu/FiveCol/calendrome.cgi?span=event&ID=316073&day=3&month=May&year=2013&state_values=)

As well as on the UMass News Office website:  
<http://www.umass.edu/newsoffice/activists-gather-umass-chart-newly-balanced-vision-us-economy>

Here's a link to a downloadable PDF poster/flyer for Hedrick Smith's talk:  
<http://newshare.com/ruleschange/poster.pdf>

## TALKING POINTS

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They key overall point: System insiders, **some** wise elders of corporate America, in unflinching terms and dire warnings, are among people standing up and saying: "The rules must change." It's time the rest of us listen -- and act.

For **talking points**, you might want to read the 10 recommendations that Hedrick Smith makes at the end of his book to pick up **some** of the themes the senator might want to emphasize:

<http://newshare.com/ruleschange/ten-steps.pdf>

Also, the famous corporate-proxy activist Bob Monks has a new book just out. We're going to feature him in a live Skype session from his Cape Elizabeth, Maine. Here are his key **points**:

<http://www.ragm.com/> / <http://www.ragm.com/citizens-disunited/>  
<http://tinyurl.com/rc-invite>

## FAQ

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### **Q: What you hope will be accomplished at the conference**

The UMass event won't be large -- 40 or 50 people. It's intended to be an experiment, a test of whether there are people who want to come together and talk about changing the way we govern corporations and influence markets -- and about how corporations influence us. There are more and more people asking the question: What might the corporation owe to society in exchange for its charter to do business? As we closer to the event, **some** of the organizers are becoming optimistic that the idea of "rules change" -- not ending the game called capitalism, but sort of calling a time out and examing -- as Elizabeth **Warren** would say -- how we can make the game fairer for everyone -- not just for shareholders, for for employees, customers and the communities where corporations are based -- and fairer for the planet.

### **Q: Why Cong. McGovern requested the conference**

This is a grassroots effort. An elderly constituent, a person with a deep background as a businessman and civic leader, came to me because he was concerned about the way our democracy is working. He had started writing a white paper called, "Restoring Democracy and Changing Corporate Rules." His idea was that for decades very mainstream people have written books with sensible ideas for reform, but nothing's really happened. McGovern suggested he put a conference together, but he said; "Don't do it in Washington, nobody will pay attention, there are conferences there everyday." Since McGovern's district was then expanding to include UMass Amherst, it made sense to do it there. .

WHITE PAPER: <http://newshare.com/ruleschange.pdf>

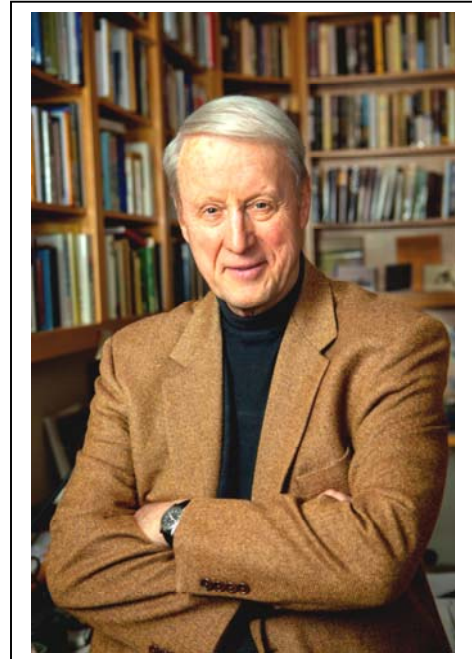
### **Q: What the key takeaway message of the conference is**

The way the Rules Change Summit is organized, the ideas and outcomes will be the result of the thinking and meeting which goes on next weekend. So if there is a takeaway message, we'll all going to have to wait and see what it is.

### **Q: Why did you invite Hedrick Smith and Bob Monks to open the conference?**

In his bestselling *The Russians*, PULITZER PRIZE WINNER Hedrick Smith took millions of readers inside the Soviet Union. In *The Power Game*, he took us inside Washington's corridors of power. Now, in *Who Stole The American Dream?*, Smith takes us across America to show how seismic changes, sparked by a sequence of landmark political and economic decisions, have transformed America.

Smith is a distinguished, mainstream journalist and PBS documentarian. To have him conclude, after years of careful research, that the growing influence of business and corporations is closing off the American Dream and squeezing the middle class -- and to take the time to write and use the word "stole" in the book title, suggests a change in the political dynamics of America.



[WHO STOLE THE AMERICAN DREAM?](#) Is not only an eye-opening account of how we became Two Americas, or how the nation became mired in lop-sided economic inequalities and starkly unequal and gridlocked democracy over the past 30 years. It's also a penetrating analysis of why the U.S. economy and the middle class are stuck in a rut today and why Congress is blocking moves to create jobs or make America more globally competitive.

Harvard Business school professor Jay Lorsch calls the "essential reading." Huffington Post called it "a sweeping, authoritative examination" of the last four decades and "one heck of a story by one of the great journalists of our time."

Today, Smith is right on top of the latest developments and has ideas on how to break out of our economic rut and restore middle-class prosperity.

<http://www.hedricksmith.com>

## BOB MONKS

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Smith, Bob Monks, age 78, is a scion of a Yankee family -- ministers and doctors -- who has had every type of role in law, corporate leadership, banking and investment. He is mainstream, Harvard educated. And like Smith, he has concluded, in stark language, that American democracy cannot last much longer unless the rules change. Here is the first paragraph of his new book, just being published this month:

<http://www.governmentcapture.com/>



EXCERPT BELOW FROM:

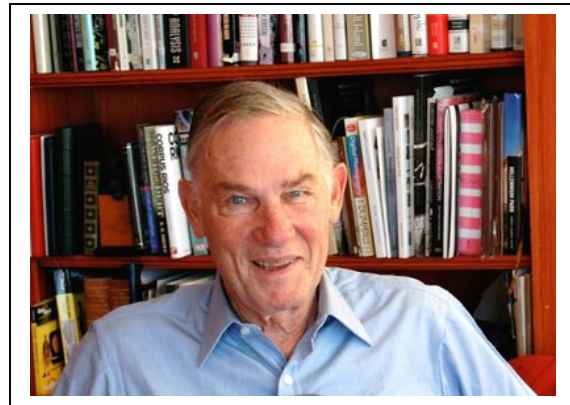
[http://www.governmentcapture.com/main\\_text\\_home.html](http://www.governmentcapture.com/main_text_home.html)

"American corporations today are like the great European monarchies of yore: They have the power to control the rules under which they function and to direct the allocation of public resources. This is not a prediction of what's to come; this is a simple statement of the present state of affairs.

"Corporations have effectively captured the United States: its judiciary, its political system, and its national wealth, without assuming any of the responsibilities of dominion. Evidence of government capture is everywhere."

### **Monk's Six Symptoms of Government Capture:**

1. The "smoking gun" is CEO pay.
2. Retirement risk has been transferred to employees.
3. Corporate money now controls every stage of politics -- legislative, executive, and ultimately judicial.
4. Government Capture has been further implemented through the extensive lobbying power of corporations.
5. The most powerful CEOs are above the reach of the law and beyond its effective enforcement.
6. Government capture has been perpetuated through the removal of property off shore, where it is neither regulated nor taxed.



Monks continues:

"Government cannot and will not hold corporations to account. That much is now obvious. Indeed, the dawning realization of this truth is what has informed the Occupy movement, but only the owners of corporations can create the accountability that will ultimately unwind the knot of government capture.

"The essence of the problem is quite straightforward: a failed system of corporate governance. So is the cause: the unwillingness of trustee owners of America's corporations to assert their responsibility, legal duty, and civic obligation to monitor and oversee the corporations they invest in. Fiduciary institutions own 80 percent of the outstanding shares of corporate America and thus bear at least 80 percent of the responsibility for present circumstances as well as 80 percent of the onus for saving the system itself. And the largest institutional investors . the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Harvard University, and others . must take the lead because (a) they should and (b) all other courses have failed."



UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS

Donahue Institute

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

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**A SUMMIT CONFERENCE, May 3-5, 2013**  
University of Massachusetts-Amherst

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## FIVE CATEGORIES FOR RULES CHANGE

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Organizers of the Rules Change Summit May 3-5 at UMass Amherst have chose five “categories” of rule changes to help prompt discussion.

- **CATEGORY ONE: Influence:** -- Personhood, corporate money and politics --  
Reconsidering the role of corporations in public policy, including charter reform.
- **CATEGORY TWO: Measurement:** -- Alternate success measurements, including  
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co-ops, B-corps, L3C, including community role, limits to growth and size.
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impacts on broad stakeholder groups such as employees, communities, customers,  
shareholders including wages, profits and taxes (loopholes, offshoring, capital gains,  
estate/inheritance).
- **CATEGORY FIVE: Governance:** -- Public and shareholder influence over executive  
pay by disclosure or regulation: regulated adherence to world sustainability  
measurements (see category 2, Measurement), improved transparency.





UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS

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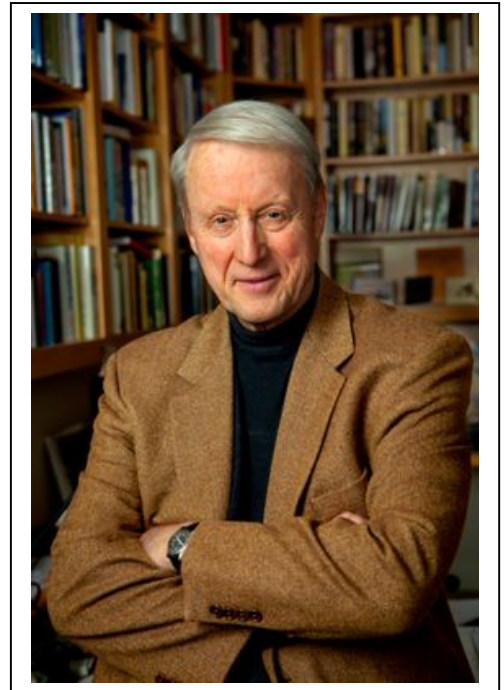
University of Massachusetts-Amherst

## Hedrick Smith's Ten steps for reviving the American Dream

AMHERST, Mass. — When [Hedrick Smith](#) finished his draft of his best-selling book "[Who Stole the American Dream](#)," he realized his reporter's fact-based answer to the question his title posed left him with a deeper personal question: How could he end there, without suggesting solutions? For the twice-winner of the Pulitzer Prize for reporting, it was a sober moment. Could he as the journalist, step into the role of policy advocate? His wife, and his editor at Random House gave him the answer: "You must."

Here, [summarized by Rules Change co-convenor Bill Densmore](#), are the suggestions Smith makes at the end of his book:

1. Create five million jobs through a public-private partnership to modernize America's outdated transportation networks, just as Abraham Lincoln, Teddy Roosevelt and Dwight Eisenhower did.
2. Start a major new national commitment to rebuild America's capacity to out-invent and "out innovate" the world. Government funding for basic research has dropped to \$1.4 billion 2006 from \$9 billion in 1979 -- figures adjusted for inflation.
3. Regenerate America's industrial manufacturing base through federal loan guarantees to help finance new energy infrastructure projects, tax credits for clean-energy manufacturing, tax changes for up-front expensing on capital investment, plant and equipment. Also institute "Buy American" policies. In the decade from 2001 to 2011 U.S. manufacturing employment fell to 11.7 million people from 17.2 million people.
4. Make the U.S. tax code simpler and easier to enforce, increasing the capital-gains tax, and closing loopholes that favor the wealthy. The top 0.1 percent of all U.S. income earners receive almost half of all the capital gains in America so having a low capital gains tax disproportionately advantages them.



5. Fix the corporate tax code to promote job creation at home. At 35 percent, the rate is one of the highest in the world, but various exemptions allow most corporations to pay a fraction of that, especially on foreign profits kept overseas. General Electric, for example, made nearly \$10.5 billion in profits from 2008 through 2010, and instead of paying taxes, got a federal tax rebate of \$4.7 billion. Apple paid \$3.3 billion in taxes in 2011 on \$34.2 billion in profits.
6. Push China to float its currency live up to World Trade Organization rules on dumping, subsidies and land grants to generate four million jobs in the United States. The United States would gain 2.25 million jobs -- lowering the unemployment rate by 1 percent -- if China's currency were floated and rose 25 percent against other currencies.

**FIND OUT**

## **Who Stole the American Dream?**

*Join a talk and discussion with Pulitzer Prize-winning author Hedrick Smith*



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7. Cut spending on overseas conflicts and reduce the Pentagon budget by \$1 trillion over the next decade to fund the domestic "Marshall Plan." The Iraq and Afghanistan wars will ultimately cost \$3.5 trillion. After the Korean War, Eisenhower reduced defense spending 27 percent. After the Vietnam War, Nixon reduced it by 29 percent.
8. Fix housing and protect the safety net. Refinance some of 22 million "under water" homes. Remove the \$106,800 annual income cap on the payroll tax to better financial Social Security and Medicare.
9. Rebuild the political center by helping ordinary Americans to re-engage with the political system -- possibly with third-party, independent movements. Two-thirds of Americans (including 55% of Republicans) now say there are "strong" conflicts between rich and poor -- up roughly 20 percent from just two years ago. Key requirements: Online registration, non-partisan redistricting, and open or nonpartisan primaries.
10. Foster a rebirth of citizen involvement, activism and American idealism, by holding government accountable, and by sending a larger share of America's national income to average Americans. Restore credibility by fairly handling housing, closing corporate tax loopholes, raising taxes on the rich, and imposing new fees on Wall Street's stock transactions and executive stock options.

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<http://www.unitedrepublic.org>

**United Republic is a bold, new challenge to the undue influence of well-financed special interests over American politics and government.**

## Get Money out of Politics: Stop lobbyist bribery, End secret money & Empower voters.

• 1

### **STOP POLITICIANS FROM TAKING BRIBES**

**Prohibit members of congress from soliciting contributions from the interests they regulate, and prevent them from benefiting interests that directly or indirectly spend heavily to influence their elections.**

Politicians routinely host fundraisers, and invite lobbyists to contribute to their campaigns. Members of congress who sit on powerful committees get extraordinary amounts of money from interests regulated by those committees. The result is a congress made up of politicians dependent on those special interests in order to raise the money necessary to win reelection. Politicians are forced to create laws that are favorable to those interests, often at the expense of the public interest.

• 2

### **LIMIT SUPER PAC CONTRIBUTIONS AND "COORDINATION"**

**Require Super PACs to abide by the same contribution limits as other political committees. Toughen rules regarding Super PACs and other groups' coordination with political campaigns and political parties.**

The Supreme Court's Citizens United and subsequent court cases ruled that SuperPACs have the right to raise and spend unlimited money influencing elections, so long as the SuperPACs do not coordinate with the candidate campaigns. Since Citizens United, we've seen tremendous coordination between campaigns and their Super-PACS, making a mockery of the "independence" that the courts thought would exist. SuperPACs have become extensions of the campaigns, and allow mega-donors to exert undue influence on election outcomes.

• 3

### **PREVENT JOB OFFERS AS BRIBES**

**Close the "revolving door" so that elected representatives and their senior staff can no longer sell off their legislative power in exchange for high-paying jobs when they leave office. 7 years for all members and 5 senior congressional staff. (currently 2 years for Senate; 1 year for House; 1 year for senior staff)**

Today, politicians routinely move straight from Congress to lucrative lobbying jobs on K Street, in order to influence their former colleagues and friends. Senior staffers who work for congressmen do the same thing. This corrupts policymaking in two ways: members and their staff anticipate high-paying jobs on K Street, and routinely do favors to their future employers while still in Congress; and once out of congress they enjoy undue access and influence to members of Congress. The biggest spenders hire these influencers, and win policy as a result.

• 4

### **CALL LOBBYISTS LOBBYISTS**

**Significantly expand the definition of, and register all lobbyists to prevent influencers from skirting the rules.**

Today, the definition of who is a lobbyist - and who is not - is weak. The result: members of congress and their staff, even when they are in the cool down phase when they may not lobby (1 year for US House members, 2 years for Senators, and 1 year for senior staff) work as "historical advisors" to skirt the law while receiving big money to influence policy.

### **LIMIT LOBBYIST DONATIONS**

**Limit the amount that lobbyists and their clients can contribute to federal candidates, political parties, and political committees to \$500 per year and limit lobbyist fundraising. Federal contractors already are banned from contributing to campaigns: extend that ban to the lobbyists, high-level executives and government relations employees and PACs of federal government contractors.**

Lobbyists currently must abide by the same contribution limits (to candidate campaigns) as everyone else: \$2500 per election. Lobbyists "bundle" these \$2500 contributions with other lobbyists, and individuals working for special interests that seek to influence politicians. This adds up to serious money, and serious undue influence.

### **END SECRET MONEY**

**Mandate full transparency of all political money. Require any organization that spends \$10,000 or more on advertisements to elect or defeat federal candidates to file a disclosure report online with the Federal Election Commission within 24 hours. List each of the organization's donors who donated \$10,000 or more to the organization to run such ads. This includes all PACs, 501c nonprofits, or other groups that engage in electioneering.**

Elections are being flooded with secret money funneled through "501c" organizations that are not required to disclose the names of donors. 501c's either spend money directly to influence elections, or make unlimited contributions to SuperPAC's. This allows secret political donors to flood elections with money, and influence outcomes.

### **LEVEL THE PLAYING FIELD WITH A SMALL DONOR TAX REBATE**

**Empower voters by creating an annual \$100 Tax Rebate that voters can use for qualified contributions to one or more federal candidates, political parties, and political committees. In order to be eligible to receive Tax Rebate contributions, candidates, political parties, and political committees must limit the contributions they receive to no more than \$500 per contributor per calendar year or contributions from entities that are funded exclusively by Tax Rebates and small-dollar contributions.**

Nearly \$6 billion was spent on the 2012 elections, and the vast majority came from big special interest donors. In 2008, less than 0.5 percent of Americans contributed \$200 or more, and less than 0.1 percent of Americans contributed \$2,300 or more. Politicians become dependent on this tiny percentage of the population. To change this, we need to dramatically increase the number of small donors to politics, so that politicians become dependent on everyday Americans and not moneyed interests. That's how we get politicians who actually fight for the general public.

### **DISCLOSE "BUNDLING"**

**Require federal candidates to disclose the names of individuals who "bundle" contributions for the Member or candidate, regardless of whether such individuals are registered lobbyists.**

### **ENFORCE THE RULES**

**Strengthen the Federal Election Commission's independence and strengthen the House and Senate ethics enforcement processes. Provide federal prosecutors additional tools necessary to combat corruption, and prohibit lobbyists who fail to properly register and disclose their activities from engaging in federal lobbying activities for a period of two years.**

Federal agencies routinely fail to enforce the anti-corruption rules that already exist because their leadership are appointed by those they are supposed to regulate. The result is a wild-west elections system, where even lax rules can be skirted or broken with impunity.

**Sounds tough? It is. But this is why it will work**

- Reform will only occur at a moment of crisis. We will harness public anger and demand for change.
- We must start with the people, not Congress, and gather an unprecedented coalition.
- We must engage liberals, conservatives and independents. Highly visible spokespeople from all quarters will aid us.
- Politicians will only act if forced to by electoral pressure. We will unseat politicians who don't cooperate.
- The solution must be comprehensive. Incremental reform won't work: it has to come as a package.

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