



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

**George Mason University, Arlington, Va., campus
Friday and Saturday, Oct. 18- 19, 2013**

WHAT'S PLANNED

Rules Change-The DC Gathering, is a two-day summit -- presentations, circle-round discussions and workshops -- to learn about fundamental change in our economic system, how they affect corporations, people, markets and democracy, and what is being done about it. ***

- Join a public unveiling of the Rules Change Mapping Project.
- Hear and chat with noted authors and activists.
- Assess two decades of mainstream thought on corporate regulation, governance and global-resources impact.
- Understand what common ground exists on changes in public policies, marketplaces, communities – and how we trust each other – from Main Street to Wall Street.

Rules Change-The DC Gathering, is a learning initiative of the Rules Change Project, (<http://www.ruleschange.org>), an open coalition to spotlight and amplify existing efforts at economic "rules change." It is an informal, non-partisan collaboration of individuals and independent groups helping to launch a national conversation among media, politicians, scholars and engaged citizens.

WHY NOW

The rules of American capitalism have evolved from a shared circle of prosperity. Business and government leaders once saw four key *stakeholders* -- communities, employees, the environment and customers -- as team members along with *stockholders*. That's less and less true. America's economy cannot fairly go on the way it has. It's time to examine what rules change – policy, marketplace, social, ethical -- can restore balance among all five stakeholders.

*** -- *Rules Change-The DC Gathering* will follow a forum discussion at the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association in Arlington, VA on Thursday evening, October 17 addressing the policies that foster growing income inequality with Hedrick Smith; Dean Baker, Co-director, Center for Economic and Policy Research; Lori Wallach, Director, Global Trade Watch, Public Citizen; Lawrence Mishel, President, Economic Policy Institute; and moderated by Rich Rubenstein, GMU Professor of Conflict Resolution and Public Affairs

WHAT'S ON THE TABLE

- In his book, *Who Stole The American Dream?*, Pulitzer Prize-winning author and journalist Hedrick Smith reports how America's business elites systematically engineered over 40 years a massive wealth transfer from America's middle class to a new super-rich class. He outlines 10 steps concerned citizens can take to redress the influence of money on elections and politics.
- A recent study, *The Democratic Disconnect – Citizenship and Accountability in the Transatlantic Community*, describes the cumulative and accelerating impact of globalization, technology and markets on democratic accountability and concepts of citizenship, resulting in a loss of public trust in democratic institutions.

Average citizens need to better understand such developments that threaten the future of democratic governance and become more engaged in getting political leaders and the media do a better job of serving the public good. Critical topics on the table will include:

- Non-partisan election redistricting
- Changes in a "too-big-to-fail" banking system
- Corporate governance and sustainability
- Alternate success indicators besides GNP
- Reducing the influence of money on Washington
- Economic policies to rebuild a middle class

WHO'S SPONSORING

Rules Change-The DC Gathering is co-sponsored by the School of Public Policy at George Mason University. It is non-partisan and is not focused on any specific outcome other than public education and greater awareness of changes in our economic system. Other sponsors will have that purpose in mind.

WHO'S PARTICIPATING

Key experts who have expressed an interest in participating include (as of June 13):

- Hedrick Smith, author, "Who Stole the American Dream"
- Celinda Lake, Lake Research Partners
- David Cay Johnston, president, Investigative Reporters & Editors (IRE)
- Trevor Potter, President, Campaign Legal Center
- Robert Kaiser, author, "Act of Congress: How America's Essential Institution Works, and How It Doesn't"
- Norman Ornstein, author, "It's Even Worse Than It Looks"
- Michael Copps, Media and Democracy Reform Initiative, Common Cause

HOW TO PARTICIPATE:

Register your interest in co-convening, sponsoring or participating in Rules Change-DC by emailing or contact: Bill Densmore, Co-convener, Rules Change Summit (617-448-6600) / John Boyer, Co-Founder, Media Stewards Project (703-980-3337)