**MEMORANDUM**

**Updated 13 September 2015**

**1. Background.** When Tom Steyer acknowledged publicly in 2014 that his $74 million spent to advance Climate Change initiatives had not yielded the results he expected, it became clear to activists everywhere that no issue – however well-funded the activists might be – could be addressed within the current political environment characterized by a two-party duopoly and the merger of what Matt Taibbi has labeled [*Griftopia*](http://www.phibetaiota.net/2010/11/review-griftopia-bubble-machines-vampire-squids-and-the-long-con-that-is-breaking-america/) – the merger of political and financial crime such that the public interest is no longer remotely addressed by public policy processes.

**2. The Opportunity.** For the first time in modern history, real possibilities exist of electing a bi-partisan but independent ticket with a pre-announced coalition cabinet, and a public demand for electoral reform measures in 2015 such that we can, in 2016, also elect a sufficiency of new Members campaigning for 20-30 vacated seats in Congress who refuse affiliation with either side of the two-party duopoly, so as to restore Article 1 of the Constitution, enabling evidence-based governance in the public interest. *It is possible, with the initiatives presented below, to bring back to the electoral process the 100 million eligible voters who chose not to vote in 2012, and to fully engage – and register – the 60 million or more new voters, generally unmarried women, youth, and people of color.* Within the circus environment created by Donald Trump and the focus on issues from Bernie Sanders, *the way is open for a bi-partisan ticket and transpartisan team to energize a national conversation focused on the restoration of integrity to the US electoral process and our government.*

**3. What Is To Be Done?** There are seven specific initiatives that require a minimum of $1 million in seed money, but ideally $10 million, after which this initiative should be self-supporting via the [BigBatUSA.org website](http://bigbatusa.org/) (wiped clean of its present content) that seeks to raise $1 billion a year in a democracy fund, comprised of $10 or more from each of 100 million citizens. Even more important than money is the ability of a single sponsor or a small group of sponsors to offer such a compelling story to the corporate media that our initiative becomes the primary topic of conversation, displacing the current obsession with the bombastic offerings of Donald Trump and others on both sides of the aisle. *At this time both the mainstream and progressive press are ignoring electoral reform.*

a. Virtual Article V Constitutional Convention – Michael Levin as Moderator  
b. Living Room Conversation on Unemployment – and Why Government Lies a Lot …  
c. Electoral Reform Summit & Electoral Reform Act of 2015  
d. Fantasy Cabinet Build – Online Public Engagement in Picking a Best of the Best Cabinet  
e. Balanced Budget Build – Online Public Engagement in Building a Balanced Budget  
f. BigBatUSA.org – Democracy Fund Non-Partisan Fund-Raising  
g. Virtual People’s Assembly – Empower Youth, Elderly, Ethnic Group

**4. Who Is Doing What?** The bottom line is that no one is pursuing an integrated national electoral reform strategy. US Representative John Delaney (D-MD) with his [Open Our Democracy Act](http://ivn.us/2015/06/04/rep-john-delaney-wants-power-elections-heres/), Christina Tobin of [Free & Equal](https://www.freeandequal.org/), Lawrence Lessig and his [Citizen Equality Act](https://lessigforpresident.com/the-act/), and Peter Ackerman with his effort to expand the debates are all noteworthy, but not integrative. Everyone else is doing what they can on single issues from ballot access to gerrymandering to getting money out of politics to opposing electronic devices proven to be enablers of fraud, but their efforts do not add up to a systemic whole. The table below lists a tiny fraction of the organizations that could be brought together in a National Electoral Reform Coalition that in turn attracts economic and social justice groups and others to this common cause – *electoral reform is ROOT, without it, no issue will receive an honest complete hearing.*

21st Century Democrats

Advancement Project

American Association of People with Disabilities VOTE Project

American Civil Liberties Union Voting Rights

American Constitution Society for Law and Policy (ACS)

American for Campaign Reform

Americans for Democratic Action

Americans United for Change

Americans United to Rebuild Democracy

America Votes

Ballot Access News

Center for Democracy & Election Management (American University)

Center for Effective Government

Center for Election Science

Center for Progressive Reform (CPR)

Center for Responsive Politics (CRP) / OpenSecrets.org

Center for Voting and Democracy (also known as FairVote)

Century Foundation Electoral Reform Project

Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW)

Citizens in Charge

Coalition for Free and Open Elections

Commission on Federal Election Reform

Committee for a United Independent Party IndependentVoting.org)

Common Cause

Constitution Party

Democracy 21

Democracy for America (DFA)

Democracy Matters

Election Defense Alliance

Electology Electoral Knowledge Network

Fair Vote (also known as center for Voting and Democracy)

Fund for Constitutional Government

Free and Equal Elections Foundation

Free Speech for People (equivalent to Move to Amend)

Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL)

Government Accountability Project (GAP)

Green Party

Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under the Law (Gerrymandering)

Leadership Conference on Civil Rights

League of Women Voters

League of Young Voters

Libertarian Party

Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund

MoveOn (enabling education and voice for distracted public)

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Voter Fund

National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials

National Coalition on Black Civic Participation

National Committee for an Effective Congress (NCEC)

National Committee for Voting Integrity

National Council of La Raza

National Stonewall Democrats (LGBT)

National Voting Rights Institute (NVRI)

New Voters Project

Occupy NYC Politics & Electoral Reform Working Group

Progressive Change Campaign Committee (PCCC)

Progressive Democrats of America (PDA)

Project on Government Oversight (POGO)  
Project Vote

Public Campaign Of, By, and For the People

Public Citizen

Public Leadership Institute / Progressive Majority Action Fund

Reform Party

Rock the Vote

SaveOurVotes

Sunlight Foundation

US Public Interest Research Groups (PIRGs)

Verified Voting Foundation / VerifiedVoting.org

Voter Participation Center

VotersUnite

**5. Electoral Reform Act of 2015.** First, let us respect [Representative John Delaney (D-MD)](http://delaney.house.gov/) and his Open Our Democracy Act, which seeks to allow Independents to vote in primaries, begins redistricting reform as a national endeavor, and makes Election Day a holiday. He is joined in sponsorship of that Act by [Representative Jared Polis (D-CO)](http://polis.house.gov/) and [Representative Scott Peters (D-CA)](http://scottpeters.house.gov/). Let us also respect Lawrence Lessig and his proposed Citizen Equality Act of 2017 that calls for universal registration, tightly-drawn districts, and public funding of all qualified candidates. These two Acts, as worthy as they are, are *limited*. While some might say this vision is utopian and unrealistic, we beg to differ -- 2016 is ours to lose precisely because there is a convergence of public awakening and independent energy. Below are the elements of a proposed Electoral Reform Act that embraces all the good ideas from across the previously listed electoral reform advocacy groups; these are presented not as a final solution, but as a starting point for a national conversation leading to a demand for legislation in 2015.

**01 Universal Registration**  
• Opt-Out Option  
• Prisoners Remain Voters

**02 Free & Equal Ballot Access**

**03 Tightly-Drawn Districts**

**04 Free & Equal Public Funding**  
• Overturn CITIZENS UNITED

**05 Free & Equal Media Access**

**06 Inclusive Debates**  
• Restore League of Women Voters  
• Debates in Every State  
• Cabinet Announced in Advance  
• Cabinet-Level Debates

**07 Open Primaries**

Ranked choice voting -- see Fair Vote

**08 Election Day Holiday**  
Visitors to Disabled  
Free Public Transportation

**09 Paper Ballots**  
Counted Publicly On Site  
Military and Embassy Sites  
Exit Poll Validation at all Sites  
Mail/Internet Triple Validation

**10 End Winner-Take-All Voting**  
Instant Run-Off or  
Range, Concordent, Other

**11 Legislative Process Integrity**  
End Party-Line Voting  
All Legislation Published in Advance  
No Secret Provisions  
Process for Citizen Guidance to Representatives

**12 Article V Constitutional Convention**  
• 1st Religion & Freedom of Expression  
• 2nd Right to Bear Arms  
• 12th Electoral College  
• 14th Birthright  
• 17th State Appointment of Senators

We are at a tipping point in our democracy. The way is open for a public mobilization, demand for electoral reform, and the restoration of integrity to how we govern ourselves.

***A non-violent revolution can be achieved virtually overnight and at very low cost.***

NOTE: With leadership from the Progressive Democrats of America, three products are being prepared for public release: 1) a list of all proposed legislation bearing on any element of electoral reform; 2) a matrix of where leading presidential candidates stand in relation to each of the aspects of electoral reform; and 3) a summary of why people don’t register and don’t vote. These three new reports will be actionable complements to this memorandum.

**6. Timing.** September 2015 offers an opportunity to organize the first four “strikes” against the present duopoly.

**STRIKE ONE:** Challenge Donald Trump by sponsoring the Virtual Article V Constitutional Convention moderated and broadcast over radio by Michael Levin, thus assuring a serious national conversation about birth rights (14th Amendment), state rights (17th Amendment) and other aspects including the Electoral College and restoration of the vote to prisoners.

**STRIKE TWO:** Challenge the US Government / corporate media / academics and think tanks that “go along” with false reporting on unemployment, which is at [23%](http://www.shadowstats.com), not 5% (U1) or 10% (U6). Among youth (including those with new college degrees), older workers, unmarried women, and people of color the unemployment rate is closer to 40%.

**STRIKE THREE:** Money is needed to get Ron Paul, Dennis Kucinich, Ralph Nader, Jesse Ventura, Cynthia McKinney, Jesse Jackson Jr., Elizabeth Warren, Jill Stein, and others to come together for an Electoral Reform Summit, but this can be done. An opportunity exists to lionize Representative Delaney and convert his Open Our Democracy Act (HR 2655) into the Electoral Act of 2015, and then immediately challenge every Senator who is also a candidate now running for president to co-sponsor the Act in the Senate, or explain why not. In combination with the first two events, this is a transformative public consciousness intervention with unlimited potential. ***Tom Steyer, the Silicon Valley Black Sheep Billionaires, and the Colorado progressive democracy philanthropists have the power to make this revolution happen now.***

Below is a notional invitation list for the Summit, an event envisioned as costing $500,000 inclusive of travel expenses and honorariums for the personalities called to participate:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **A. Electoral Reform Wizards**  01 Winger, Richard (Ballot Access News)  **B. Past Presidential Candidates**  02 Anderson, Rocky (Justice)  03 Barnett, Andre (Reform)  04 Buchanan, Patrick (Republican)  05 Goode, Virgil (Constitution)  06 Hart, Gary (Democrat)  07 Huckabee, Mike (Republican)  08 Huntsman, Jon (Independent)  09 Johnson, Gary (Libertarian)  10 McKinney, Cynthia (Green)  11 Nader, Ralph (Independent)  12 Palin, Sarah (VP, Republican)  13 Paul, Ron (Republican)  14 Perot, Ross (Reform)  15 Stein, Jill (Green)  16 Web, James (Democrat) | **C Diversity Stars**  17 Coburn, Tom (Author, Politician)  18 Crane, Michael (Author)  19 DeBlasio, Bill (Working Families)  20 Hedges, Chris (Author)  21 Hubbard, Barbara Marx (Democrat)  22 Huckabee, Mike (Republican)  23 Korten, David (Author)  24 Kucinich, Dennis (Democratic)  25 Lappe, Francis Moore (Author)  26 Moseley Braun, Carol (Democratic)  27 Moyers, Bill (Broadcast TV)  28 Paul, Ray (Author)  29 Sanders, Bernie (Independent)  30 Sifry, Micah (Author)  31 Ventura, Jesse (Reform)  32 Walker, David (former Comptroller)  33 Warren, Elizabeth (Democrat) | 34 West, Cornell (Author, Professor)  **D. Early Adopter Donors**  35  36  37  38  39  40  **E. Mass Mobilization Leaders**  41  42  43  44  45  **F. Facilitators**  46  47  48 |

**STRIKE FOUR:** Once the Electoral Reform Act has been introduced into both chambers of Congress, the existing website BigBatUSA.org can be wiped clean and converted into a national fund-raising and direct democracy site with four features:

**a. Create Your Cabinet (“Fantasy Cabinet” or Best of the Best, multiple versions visible online)**

Below is a notional list compiled by Robert Steele when he was briefly a candidate for the Reform Party nomination for the presidency in 2012:

**Vice President for the Commonwealth:** [**Dennis Kucinich**](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Dennis+Kucinich+)   
Agriculture & Water: [Jim Hightower](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Jim+Hightower)  
• Water Conservation Authority: [William J. Cosgrove](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=William+J.+Cosgrove+water) (CA)  
Health: [Howard Dean](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Howard+Dean)  
• Surgeon General: [Steve McIntosh](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Steve+McIntosh)  
Interior: [Robert Costanza](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Robert+Costanza)  
• Energy: [Herman Daly](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Herman+Daly)  
• Environment: [Gordon Durnil](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Gordon+Durnil)  
Labor: [Jesse Ventura](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Jesse+Ventura)  
• Veteran’s Affairs: [Max Cleland](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Max+Cleland)  
• No Senior Left Behind: [Derek Bok](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Derek+Bok)  
Transportation & National Design: [Joan Claybook](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Joan+Claybook+transportation)  
Treasury, [Felix Rohatyn](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Felix%20Rohatyn)  
• Internal Revenue: [Grover Norquist](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Grover+Norquist)  
• Federal Reserve Termination Authority: [Ron Paul](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Ron+Paul)

**Vice President for Education, Intelligence, and Research:** [**Michael Bloomberg**](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Michael+Bloomberg)  
Chaplain: [Jim Wallis](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Jim+Wallis)  
Culture: [Jello Biafra](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Jello+Biafra)  
Education: [John Taylor Gatto](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=John+Taylor+Gatto)  
National Intelligence: [Brent Scowcroft](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Brent+Scowcroft)  
• Open Source Agency: [Carol Dumaine](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Carol+Dumaine)  
National Research: [Vint Cerf](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Vint+Cerf)  
Office of Management and Budget: [Joseph Eugene Stiglitz](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Joseph+Eugene+Stiglitz)  
Patent Office: [Lawrence Lessig](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Lawrence+Lessig)  
Strategy Center: [David Abshire](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=David+Abshire)  
Global Truth & Reconciliation Centre: [Lee Kuan Yew](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Lee+Kuan+Yew) (SG), [Nelson Mandela](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Nelson+Mandela) (ZA), & [Fidel Castro](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Fidel+Castro) (CU)

**Vice President for Global Engagement:** [**Newt Gingrich**](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Newt+Gingrich)  
Defense: [Tony Zinni](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Tony+Zinni)  
Justice: [Ralph Nader](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Ralph+Nader)  
• Homeland Security: [Rudi Guliani](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Rudi+Guliani+)   
• Computational Mathematics Authority: [Stephen Wolfram](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Stephen+Wolfram) (UK)  
State: [Gary Hart](http://duckduckgo.com/Gary_Hart)  
• Ambassador to Israel: [Henry Seigman](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Henry+Seigman)  
• Ambassador to the United Nations: [Carol Mosley Braun](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Carol+Mosley+Braun)  
Commerce: [Clyde Prestowitz](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Clyde+Prestowitz)  
• Trade Representative: [Alfred Eckes](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Alfred+Eckes)

Presidential Ambassadors & Assistants to the President (15): [Average American](http://www.phibetaiota.net/2010/09/2006/10/review-the-average-american-the-extraordinary-search-for-the-nations-most-ordinary-citizen/) (alter ego to the President), [Tom Atlee](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Tom+Atlee) (Collective Intelligence), [John Bogle](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=John+Bogle) (CEO for Whole Earth Capitalism), [Alex Cockburn](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Alex+Cockburn) (Inspector General of the Republic), [Barbara Marx Hubbard](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Barbara+Marx+Hubbard) (Collective Culture of Consciousness), [David Gergen](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=David+Gergen) (Media Outreach), [William Greider](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=William+Greider) (Public Outreach), [Peggy Holman](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Peggy+Holman) (Public Outreach), [Cynthia McKinney](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Cynthia+McKinney) (Public Outreach), [Francis Moore Lappe](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Francis+Moore+Lappe) (Collective Culture of Consciousness), [Gary Nolan](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Gary+Nolan) (Public Outreach), [Sarah Palin](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Sarah+Palin) (Public Outreach), [Jim Rough](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Jim+Rough) (Wisdom Councils Everywhere), [Pete Schoomaker](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=peter+schoomaker) (Put the Special back into Special Forces), [Al Sharpton](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Al+Sharpton) (alter ego to the President).

Supreme Court, 1st Available Position: [Ron Paul](http://duckduckgo.com/?q=Ron+Paul)

**b. Create Your Budget (Line Item Budget Online, open public Wikipedia-like discussion online)**

**c. Get a Grip on Reality (True Cost Economics data for every policy, product, service, behavior)**

**d. Buy Your Country Back ($10 at a time including the Donald Trump – Matt Taibbi drink game)**

Early discussion suggests that citizens are not ready to be engaged by a wonkish discussion of specific cabinet appointments or a line item budget but it could be possible to create a Serious Game for Extreme Democracy – with the right web design, the right messaging, and the ability to connect people by neighborhood and interest, we should be able to leverage the Internet to inspire a national conversation that brings those who have not voted and those who have not registered back into the process – that is the objective, along with raising money as we go so as to fund the more aggressive street actions needed to force the two-party duopoly to respect the public’s demand for electoral reform leading to honest governance.

If seed funding can be achieved and the personalities can be organized, this has the potential to raise $1 billion in fairly short order. That money would be used in part to revitalize Occupy and mobilize constituents to sit-in on the front lawns and home offices of every Senator and Representative until they all sign the Electoral Integrity Pledge and agree to schedule a vote on the Electoral Reform Act of 2015 for 4 November 2015.

The home run here is not just enabling a bi-partisan Independent ticket to win the executive, but to enable independent and small party members to capture the 20-30 seats being vacated in Congress for 2016. Providing they agree to not caucus with either of the two-party elements, this creates a substantial independent swing vote can could break the current practice of party line voting on bills written by lobbyists and never even read by Members.

**7. Obstacles.** The primary obstacle to our success is the unwillingness of the progressive press and the traditional left as well as the Reagan right now being able to see what is possible. Not only do many remain committed to the “lesser of two evils” whether the one party or the other, but in some cases – they are simply misinformed, disparaging the “unemployment truthers” who call into question the false statistics being proffered by the US Government.

Another obstacle is the comatose state of the progressive right. Right now Donald Trump is appealing to the white supremacists, using money and bluster that succeed only because there is a vacuum – the empty suits on one hand, and the silent thoughtful right on the other.

A third obstacle is the refusal of the Green and Libertarian and Reform Parties – despite their inconsequential numbers, never-the-less important voices to be respected – to work together toward a coalition government. They insist – as do the Democratic and Republican parties – on single party tickets, party platforms, and the honoring of promises to major donors who have sought to buy advantages against the public interest.

A fourth obstacle is the lack of a “home base” for all the Independents, non-voters, and those now classifying themselves as No Party Preference (NPP), a particularly relevant group in California and other Western states. BigBatUSA.org could meet this larger need for a neutral place where a Fantasy Cabinet, Balanced Budget, and a universal demand for an Electoral Reform Act of 2015 could be discussed.

**8. Potential Starting Points.** An immediate opportunity exists to bring together Dr. Cynthia McKinney (who could announce her candidacy), Ralph Nader, and Robert Steele – and perhaps Jesse Ventura – in a Washington DC event in mid-September.

The Democratic debate is on 16 September, the Free & Equal Festival on 19 September. Monday 21 September is proposed. Prior to that date a workshop could be convened (14 September?) of all interested electoral reform and social justice activists in the tri-state area, with satellite events organized in NYC and Portand and Seattle, in order to more deeply develop the concepts in this memorandum, and agree on a Statement of Demand and a public declaration intended to attract the attention of individual funders and individual progressive media personalities who might wish to reconsider their commitment to the Democratic Party or even the Republican Party, as the lesser of two evils, and contemplate instead the restoration of true deep democracy in the USA.

A minimum of $25,000 would appear to be needed to fund travel costs and honoraria for the speakers and selected progressive democratic influencers (Matt Taibbi, Chris Hedges, Thom Hartmann, Tom Englehart come to mind). Beyond that a plan should be developed, in partnership with Maryland, Colorado, and California philanthropists, for bridge funding that leads to the creation of BigBatUSA.org as a self-supporting nation-wide democracy movement.

[](http://www.phibetaiota.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Steele-Smiling-HIGH-RES-broad-crop.jpg)**ROBERT STEELE:** This is as close as we can get to a non-violent legal ethical restoration of integrity to our electoral process and how we govern ourselves.

I have done all one man can do to focus on this in an integrated manner.  I have been distressed by the lack of integrity among both the progressive press and the so-called democracy alliances that are committed to the Democratic Party rather than to democracy.

This is how I honor my lifetime Oath to defend and protect the US Constitution against all enemies domestic and foreign.

**See Especially:**

[Robert Steele: Death of a Nation — All Crazy, All Black, All Prisoners [Deal with It!]](http://www.phibetaiota.net/2015/08/robert-steele-death-of-a-nation-all-crazy-all-black-all-prisoners-deal-with-it/)

[Counter-Coup: How Trump Can Win](http://www.counterpunch.org/2015/08/14/counter-coup-how-trump-can-wi/)

[On the Seventh Day](http://www.counterpunch.org/2015/06/12/on-the-seventh-day/)

[Where is Jesse Ventura When You Need Him?](http://www.counterpunch.org/2014/11/20/where-is-jesse-ventura-when-you-need-him/)

**See Also:**

[BOOK: *Open Power - Electoral Reform Act of 2015 - Open Source Activist Tool-Kit*](http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/B00U0LS9HK/ossnet-20)

[ESSAY: Democracy Lost, with Amazon Book Reviews](http://tinyurl.com/Steele-Reform)

[ONLINE: Open Power Electoral Reform @ Phi Beta Iota](http://tinyurl.com/OpenPowerAll)