



## Imagining a New Path Forward

### *Issue One's bold agenda to fix our broken political system*

Our democracy is in crisis. Decades of gridlock, disinformation, and a political system dominated by powerful monied interests have contributed to systemic failures and eroded public trust in our government.

**Issue One's 2021 issue agenda seeks to create a new covenant for how we as Americans govern ourselves:**

- ▶ Ensure safe and secure elections and create stronger election infrastructure.
- ▶ Address the weaknesses in ethics rules in Congress and the Executive Branch.
- ▶ Help create a 21st Century Congress that is more responsive to the needs of the American people.
- ▶ Strengthen enforcement of campaign finance laws and curb the growing influence of big money in our politics.

Not since Watergate has our nation had a more urgent and ripe opportunity to fix our broken political system. With a proven track record of bipartisan success, Issue One will build support for meaningful reforms.

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### **Election Integrity & Administration**

The 2020 election was the most secure in American history. But greater resources and better processes are needed to strengthen elections in the years ahead.

- ▶ Reform the Electoral Count Act to clarify Congress' role and dissuade members of Congress in both parties from attempting to consider rogue slates of electors.
- ▶ Establish regular funding to states and local election officials.
- ▶ Strengthen the Election Assistance Commission to improve election infrastructure and incentivize best practices, including for processing mail-in ballots earlier, automatic voter registration, and establishing new transparency measures.

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### **Executive Branch & Congressional Ethics**

We must bolster ethics laws and crack down on Washington's revolving door that gives the special interests too much power in policy-making.

- ▶ Strengthen the offices of Inspectors General as well as the Office of Government Ethics (OGE) to ensure the highest ethical standards.



- ▶ Close loopholes in the 1978 Ethics in Government Act (EIGA) to support efforts to prevent and address presidential conflicts of interest.
- ▶ Codify the Office of Congressional Ethics (OCE) to boost its enforcement power and hold members of Congress who violate ethics rules accountable.
- ▶ Extend the existing two-year revolving door limitations for members of Congress who often leave office to become registered lobbyists or “strategic advisors” for industries they frequently worked with or oversaw while in Congress.
- ▶ Amend Senate rules to prohibit members from engaging in stock trading.

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## 21st Century Congress

Increased polarization, a diminished ability to pay and retain staff, and outdated technology prevent Congress from effectively making laws and fulfilling its Article One responsibilities. Issue One is working to address these challenges and realize a more effective Congress through a number of initiatives:

- ▶ Advance and shape key recommendations made by the Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress (SCMC), which Issue One and a cohort of organizations helped to create.
- ▶ Ensure the SCMC is addressing issues of staff pay and retention, diversity and inclusion for Congressional staff, and more comprehensive and nonpartisan staff trainings.
- ▶ Engage with Braver Angels to bring Republican and Democratic members together in dialogue and collaboration.

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## The Power of Big Money in Politics

From shining the light on “dark money” to ending the use of leadership PACs as personal slush funds for members of Congress, building a democracy that works for everyone will require new laws to clean up our system of financing elections.

- ▶ Build more bipartisan support for reforms, especially curbing dark money, closing leadership PAC loopholes, and pushing the Federal Election Commission (FEC) to effectively enforce the law.
- ▶ Update the Lobbying Disclosure Act to increase transparency and accurately disclose what is actually happening in Washington’s influence industry.