

Initiatives v Oligarchy

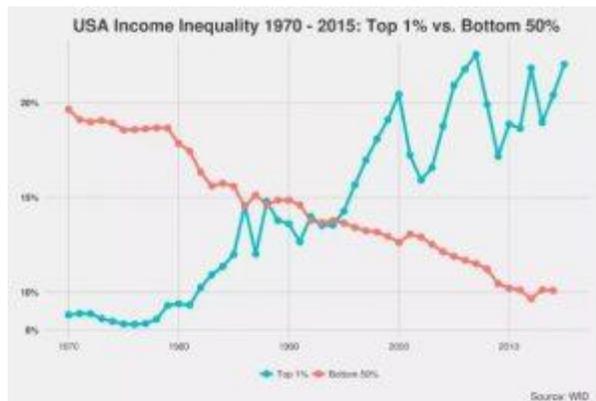
Our Founders' Warning: "Every government degenerates when trusted to the rulers of the people alone. The people themselves are its only safe depositories." (Thomas Jefferson)

Summary

"Unless the mass retains sufficient control over those entrusted with the powers of their government, these will be perverted to their own oppression, and to the perpetuation of wealth and power in the individuals and their families selected for the trust." (Thomas Jefferson). Clearly, the Founders did not trust elected representatives not to abuse their office to pursue their personal wealth and repeated reelection; but the People have so far ignored our Founders' wisdom. **This website is about a feasible constitutional solution based on a citizens' assembly and ballot initiatives, which are the People's only peaceful power to enforce reduction in corruption.**



OLIGARCHY
IT'S A VERY EXCLUSIVE CLUB
AND YOU ARE NOT A MEMBER



Over at least the last 40 years, our Democratic Republic has increasingly become a Oligarchy of vastly wealthy individuals (mostly male) and their huge corporations, aided by hordes of lobbyists, non-profit fronts, foreign and dark money, and Oligarchs' media. They use their wealth and resources to select and buy candidates' loyalty, fund their campaigns, dictate their votes; creating intolerable systemic corruption, spreading big lie propaganda, causing lock-step dysfunction, wasting the Nation's physical and human resources, and ensuring that their sitting members of congress are al-

most always reelected.

Most **Members of Congress** now represent the **Oligarchs** not the People: they have created their **Oligarchs' Gilded Age**, exploiting the **flaws in our Constitution that permit permanent Oligarchy**. Our founders knew there were constitutional flaws and pitfalls; they warned us repeatedly and clearly.

Consequently, over the last 40 years, the U.S has fallen from the world's Democracy leader to **25th amongst nations and classified as a flawed democracy**, and to 31st in **life expectancy!** Among many analyses, a 10-min. video and a Senator's eBook "Captured" explain much of what has gone wrong. Neither the Peoples' Congressional choice from mostly preselected and bought candidates, nor choice of Party, nor choice of President, can reverse **Oligarchs'** relentless capture of **Congress**, and with consent of the Senate, the Supreme Court. **"[You have] A Republic ... if you can keep it." (Benjamin Franklin).** But the People have allowed all three branches of our government to become permanent instruments of and for sale to political pressure and cash. **The only effective remedy now is for the People to take some superior federal power unto themselves. This website describes how it can be done. It is easier than most Citizens realize, since 70% of us can already vote on state and local initiatives at federal elections!** Even the **Oligarchs** cannot afford to bribe **all** the people—well, not yet we hope.

A possible solution is for the People to demand that **Congress** convene a United States **Citizens Assembly** to recreate trust in the political process by allowing citizens' decision-making input on issues of

great national importance. For example, [Citizens' Assemblies](#) have been used in [Canada](#) and the Netherlands to recommend revision of the election systems, in [Ireland](#) to resolve issues of abortion (intractable to government) and population ageing, in [Belgium](#) to permit a German-speaking section to have a voice, [New Unity](#) proposed in the U.S., etc. These are worthy efforts, but need statistics companies to select Assembly members, are under Government's control, and therefore **attractive only as a first step towards an effective solution to [Oligarchy](#)**.

A better solution is based on [Switzerland](#), ancient [Athens](#), and **24 U.S. States** that faced [similar problems](#). They grant the People's the right to propose legislation by ballot [Initiatives](#) (a.k.a., [proposition](#), [ballot measure](#)), comment in public and [Internet](#), debate and [winnow](#) by an [Initiatives Qualifying Assembly](#) (in [Switzerland](#), Ancient Greece, and [Oregon State](#) to a degree), and then to vote on them directly at [Federal elections](#). Both [Switzerland](#) and [Athens](#) thrived; [Initiative States](#) have done well too. **None have ever revoked their ballot [Initiative rights](#)**. The scope and size of U.S. Federal legislation requires a professional government despite all its defects, but Swiss, Athenian, and State [initiative](#) experiences indicate that the accumulation of a few [Initiatives](#) a year can limit the worst defects, particularly [corruption](#) and [Oligarchy](#). “[A legislature] ... should be an [exact portrait, in miniature, of the people at large, as it should feel, reason and act like them](#)” (John Adams).

BUT THE BEST SOLUTION relies on our Founders' wise anticipation of today's problem via their inclusion of a [Constitutional Amendment approach](#) using the [Second Method](#) that [Congress](#) cannot stop. **“We may safely rely on the disposition of the State legislatures to erect barriers against the encroachments of the national authority.”** (Alexander Hamilton), (though [Congress](#) so far has always inserted itself and proposed the States' Amendments using its [First Method](#)). The People have the power and the constitutional obligation to [compel](#) each State to take the necessary action; and in **16 States the People can do it without the consent of any elected state or federal representatives!** Most State capitals are within easy driving distance of their voters, so large pressure demonstrations, voting campaigns, etc. are far easier to implement than in Washington D.C. [“Of the people, by the people, for the people”](#) are not just pretty words, they are very real duties of every American citizen to defend their freedom, most critically against **[Oligarchic Government](#)**.

This best solution can constrain [Oligarchy](#) now and for the future. The People through their States must permit U.S. [Initiatives](#) on Federal election ballots under the U.S. Constitution, while retaining a [republican form](#) of Government. **The solution can be implemented constitutionally without support or approval from [Congress](#), and the People today are up to the task.**

34 States pass and then **38 States** ratify the [Initiatives Amendment](#) by the [2nd Method](#).

It authorizes groups of 25 or more U.S. Citizens to propose [Direct Initiatives](#).

A very [large Grand Jury](#) selects just the very best [initiatives](#) so as not to overload the voters.

These [Initiatives](#) go on the next Federal Election ballot for vote **of, by, and for the People**.

“The basis of our political systems is the right of the people to make and to alter their constitutions of government.” (George Washington, 1796). **“All power is originally in the People and should be exercised by them in person, if that could be done with convenience, or even with [little difficulty](#).”** (James Wilson).

Moreover, the availability of ballot [initiatives](#) in [24 States](#) out of the [34 States](#) needed to apply, and [38 States](#) needed to ratify, a U.S. [Constitutional Amendment](#), provides crucial power to bypass [Congress](#). It permits concentration of the People's resources to focus on convincing and/or [forcing](#) at least 14 of the 28 non-[initiative States](#) to submit their amendment applications. After the Amendment is ratified by

a [Limited Convention of the States](#) (i.e. the [Second Method](#) of Amendment) followed by a [one-year implementation](#) period, the People will have the direct power to limit [Oligarchy](#).

Initiatives Qualifying Assembly is a Large Grand Jury **Practical details to achieve this are presented in this [website](#)**. Central to its incorruptibility is a [large Grand Jury](#) assembly meeting one week each month, with 12-month [staggered membership](#), fairly paid to oversee the [Initiatives](#) system. It deliberates, seeks information and advice, reaches [consensus](#), and decides which few (e.g., under 10) of the People's Proposed [Initiatives](#) qualify to go on the Federal Election Ballot. A randomly-selected U.S. Assembly is [surprisingly well qualified](#) for the job. It also has the ability to improve itself via [Initiatives](#) approved by the People to ensure that it can [evolve improvements](#) that time will make apparent..

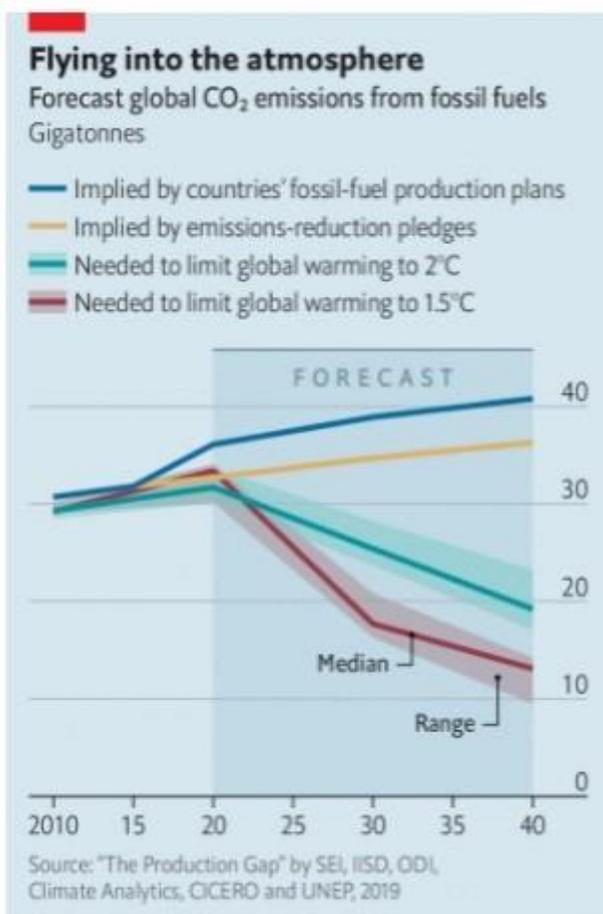


Citizens Assembly
Photo by Stuart Davis #715955 by kind permission of The Vancouver Sun.

Today, [Oligarchs](#) damage our Democracy far faster than the People can repair it. For example, [Oligarchs](#) and friends implemented [Citizens United](#) in 2010; but over 9 years later, even the most aggressive responses from the People are still in the early stages. Peoples' advocacy organizations such as [Fix Democracy First – WAmend](#), [Move to Amend](#), [Wolf-PAC](#), et al, try to solve each problem with a separate [Constitutional Amendment](#) with repeated huge efforts and rare success. **By comparison**, once implemented, the single United States [Initiatives Amendment](#) enables concurrent consideration and prompt remedy, with advice but without consent of [Congress](#), the President, and the Supreme Court, for many [important and urgent issues](#) within a few years after they arise, greatly reducing effort, cost, time, and dissention.

Our Founders in their wisdom gave us this path to a Constitutional solution. But to date, we as a nation have not shown the courage and patriotism to follow our Founders' wisdom and the leadership of our 24 [initiative States](#). **“As the people are the only legitimate fountain of power, and it is from them that the constitutional charter, under which the several branches of government hold their power, is derived, it seems strictly consonant to the republican theory to recur to the same original authority [the People]... whenever it may be necessary to enlarge, diminish, or new-model the powers of government.”** (James Madison). CO2 Forecast, Economist Nov. 23, 2019

Without U.S. Initiative power, the People procrastinate and gamble that the [Oligarchs](#) and [Congress](#) will benignly reform themselves; but history shows that this is a futile hope – entrenched international [Oligarchy](#) and [dictatorships](#) are likely, even inevitable. For example, cigarette [Oligarchs'](#) cancer deaths, drug [Oligarchs'](#) opioid deaths, and oil, gas, and coal [Oligarchs'](#) [irreversible global warming](#) that affects the



The Economist

health and very existence for much of the world's population. Government responses have been [totally inadequate](#).

By trying the [Initiatives solution for a few years](#), with the built-in ability of the People to adjust, improve, or [abort the solution](#), at a total cost less than building [one big warship](#), the U.S. could regain its [democratic republic](#) and world leadership in democracy. By ignoring it, the People will have only themselves to blame as they and their children lose their rights, freedoms, and security. There are thousands of U.S. non-profit organizations seeking to resolve a wide range of valid political and national problems with little hope of success; if enough were to adopt Citizens [Initiatives](#) in a unified front they would all vastly increase their chances of individual and collective success.

Greek democracy was founded by aristocrats ([Solon](#) and [Cleisthenes](#)) not the People; 2,500 years later, founding this new U.S. experiment in democracy today is within the power of even a small altruistic group of wealthy Americans.

Quick Answers to Some Obvious Questions:

- [How Will the People Propose, Select, and Approve Initiatives?](#)
- [How Does the Amendment Become Part of the Constitution?](#)
- [What Is the First Draft Wording of the Initiatives Amendment?](#)
- [How Will States Demand the Initiatives Amendment?](#)
- [How Will the Initiatives Amendment System be Physically Implemented?](#)
- [What Type of Issues Might Initiatives be Able to Solve that Congress Cannot?](#)

[Download this Summary as PDF](#)