

## **PRINCIPLES & PURPOSE WORKING GROUP OF THE COFFEE PARTY**

# Complete Revised Draft Guiding Statements + Strategy Options

CORE VALUES • PURPOSE STATEMENT • GOALS

February 18, 2011

## Core Values

### **E PLURIBUS UNUM**

We act as a "grassroots of the whole" to develop Coffee Party values, goals and priorities that provide for flexibility in how members in specific grassroots communities support these ideals.

### **TRANSPARTISANSHIP**

We recognize the validity of truths from across a range of perspectives; and seek to synthesize these truths through a process of facilitated dialogue and deliberation aimed at arriving at creative, integrated breakthrough solutions that are win-win for all citizens.

### **INDEPENDENCE**

We remain independent of political parties and strive to keep ourselves free of ideologically based assumptions and influence.

### **TRUST**

We strive to be open with one another in a way that promotes understanding and cooperation.

### **INCLUSIVENESS**

We reach out to and welcome those with diverse backgrounds and political perspectives.

### **CIVILITY**

We engage with one another based on humility, listening, honesty and respect.

### **CONTINUOUS LEARNING**

We believe that educating ourselves and our fellow citizens is crucial to making informed decisions and to participating in government.

### **DEMOCRACY**

We subject all major decisions to a democratic vote, while respecting minority viewpoints.

### **ADVOCACY**

We advocate for initiatives that strengthen democracy.

## Purpose Statement

The Coffee Party exists to convene, equip and empower a movement of citizens who work together to strengthen American democracy.

## Goals

In the course of developing the draft Goals statements, the Working Group also has been “incubating” lists of member-suggested shorter-term Strategy options for achieving some of these Goals. Although these detailed lists of Strategy options are not included in the current Survey, they have been an important resource in shaping the draft Goals themselves. And, in two cases, thematic summaries of these Strategy options are included in the Survey as Sub-Goals of the Main Goals. These Strategy options appear here in [smaller blue text](#).

### **PUBLIC GOAL I**

Identify and promote those specific opportunities to make concrete governmental, Constitutional, technological and other improvements to American democracy that will increase the pro-democracy behavior of all American individuals and institutions.

#### **Sub-Goal**

Build productive alliances and create effective campaigns on issues in areas that bear most directly on the functioning of a healthy and vigorous democracy — such as

- campaign finance reform
- governmental reform;
- electoral reform;
- efforts to preserve and increase access to highest-quality, unbiased news and information; and
- voter engagement and online voting technology.

#### **Strategy Options**

- [Reduce the undue influence of corporations over electoral campaigns, elections, and policy making.](#)
- [Reduce the undue influence of political parties, media corporations, unions and industry associations over electoral campaigns, elections, and policy making.](#)
- [Lobby for passage of the Fair Elections Now Act \(FENA\) to provide for publicly financed Congressional election campaigns.](#)
- [Propose and lobby for changes to the Democracy is Strengthened by Casting Light on Spending in Elections Act \(DISCLOSE\).](#)
- [Create open primaries in all 50 states.](#)
- [Highlight the merits of Independent candidacy, and remove legal barriers for Independent candidacy in all 50 states.](#)
- [Place state-level redistricting powers in the hands of independent commissions; require geographic compactness, respect for communities of interest, and transparency at all levels.](#)
- [Modify Congressional processes that impede democracy \(i.e., secret member holds, committee holds, cloture\).](#)
- [Secure an independent news media.](#)
- [Preserve free and equal access to the Internet.](#)
- [Pursue use of new pro-democracy technologies like the Interactive Voter Choice System \(IVCS\) and Vote Smart, to identify citizen-created solution initiatives.](#)
- [Sponsor or co-sponsor forums to identify and pursue potential Constitutional amendments.](#)

## **PUBLIC GOAL 2**

Model a standard of political discourse and action that enables citizens respectfully to learn from one another and work together to examine the issues and events of the day from the broadest perspective — so that informed, reasoned and wise decisions can be made regarding our future and our general welfare.

### **Sub-Goal**

Explore and promote transpartisan approaches to problem solving and decision making, by bringing together groups of citizens from across the political spectrum to address issues of common concern.

### **Strategy Options**

- Convene and educate local and national networks of citizens to participate in open civil “dialogue and deliberation” forums that result in civic actions that strengthen democracy.
- Establish local and national media presence on radio, television, and the Internet, to model and promote civil discourse and provide best-quality information.
- Collaborate with experts on techniques for “dialogue and deliberation” and outreach to diverse audiences.
- Create action teams to analyze pressing issues and develop Coffee Party positions.
- Train chapter members to become “dialogue and deliberation” facilitators..
- Provide forums where legislators want to go to listen and respond to Coffee Party values and priorities.
- Expand Coffee Party University, to build youth movement.
- Develop a “hot button” methodology for dealing with pop-up issues that demand a Coffee Party position.
- Work with credible fact-checking organizations to expose blatant lies and gross distortions in political discourse.

## **PUBLIC GOAL 3**

Identify, evaluate and inform voters about candidates who, regardless of party affiliation, have demonstrated records of high integrity and support for Coffee Party core values and goals.

### **Strategy Options**

- Establish integrity and electability criteria to evaluate candidates in both qualitative and quantitative ways.
- Engage with candidates who meet these criteria, to solicit their concurrence with the evaluations.
- Forge alliances with other organizations to raise awareness of these candidates.
- Develop and implement “get out the vote” techniques for local, state, and Congressional elections.
- Monitor the actions of local, state, and national officials, and create report cards on their integrity, their focus on citizens’ needs, and their support for Coffee Party Core Values and Goals.
- Seek to register voters as “Independent” or “Decline to state,” to lessen the influence of the two major parties.
- Seek to change local and state laws to remove onerous barriers to ballot access and unfair overall treatment of both minority and unaffiliated candidates for state and federal office expand Coffee Party University, to build youth movement.

**ORGANIZATIONAL GOAL 1**

Create and nurture a powerful and lasting identity for the Coffee Party as the convener of a “democracy movement,” and use this to grow an engaged membership, form alliances and build broad public support for Coffee Party goals.

**ORGANIZATIONAL GOAL 2**

Facilitate the growth and development of networked grassroots Coffee Party communities where citizens can join together to create and implement solutions and responses to local, state and national challenges.

**ORGANIZATIONAL GOAL 3**

Develop an online mechanism for local / state / national Coffee Party deliberation and decision making (including polling and secure voting); petitioning; and collaborating / communicating with leaders and organizations inside and outside the Coffee Party.