

# 2020 STRATEGIC PLAN

represent **Us**





# A NATION IN CRISIS

America's political system is in freefall. Polarization is fraying the fabric of society and government. Faith in our institutions is unraveling. Extremism, corruption, and gridlock define Washington. Disaffection with the status quo is at historic highs.

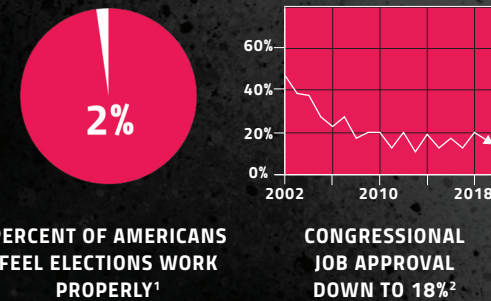
The root of the problem is a broken political system that incentivizes politicians to serve special interests and party elites at the expense of everyday Americans. There is nearly zero correlation between elected officials serving their constituents and winning reelection. On issues like climate change, federal spending, mass incarceration, and countless others, our corrupted system impedes solutions rather than advancing them.

We cannot depend on any one politician to fix it. Nor can we wait for a natural course correction. **We must address the root of the crisis: American ethics, election, and campaign finance laws are woefully antiquated and broken.**

But after decades of decline, we have arrived at a moment of extraordinary opportunity. In 2018 and 2019, 37 anti-corruption reforms passed at the state and local levels. People are making the connection between system failure, our growing political crisis, and the impact on our shared future. It is time to seize this moment **to restore the promise of America: a government of, by, and for the American people.**

## "FLAWED DEMOCRACY"

THE ECONOMIST MAGAZINE DOWNGRADES AMERICA IN 2016 DEMOCRACY INDEX



## BIG PROBLEMS

POLITICAL EXTREMISM

UNCOMPETITIVE ELECTIONS

LESSER OF TWO EVILS

TWO-PARTY DUOPOLY

UNSECURE ELECTIONS

LOW VOTER TURNOUT

BIG-MONEY INFLUENCE

UNDUE LOBBYIST INFLUENCE

# A NATION FOR ALL

We envision a nation where the government works for everyday Americans and their families, not just a handful of party bosses and special interests; where our elected leaders put country over party to create a future of sustainability and shared prosperity.

To realize this vision, we have to change how politics works. We need to build a political system that encourages our leaders to represent voters and work together to advance the public good. We'll accomplish that by adopting policies that transform incentives for voters and candidates.

## REQUIRE BOLD SOLUTIONS

### ANTI-GERRYMANDERING

- Create nonpartisan independent citizen commissions to draw voting district lines
- Make districts competitive and compact, so politicians can't choose their voters

### RANKED CHOICE VOTING

- Eliminate the spoiler effect so better independent and third-party candidates can run and win
- Incentivize election civility, moderation, and compromise, and let voters voice their conscience

### ELECTION SECURITY & VOTER OPTIONS

- Make elections modern and secure, and increase turnout with automatic voter registration
- Empower voters with vote-at-home ballots

### CAMPAIGN FINANCE & ETHICS

- Empower every voter with a small tax credit to contribute to candidates
- Make it illegal for lobbyists to give gifts, jobs, and donations to politicians

These policies are the foundation of **THE AMERICAN ANTI-CORRUPTION ACT.**



THE AMERICAN ANTI-CORRUPTION ACT

<sup>1</sup> Election Confidence source: Change Research and Avalanche Strategy, The Hill, 2019

<sup>2</sup> Congressional approval source: Gallup, 2019, "Congress and the Public"



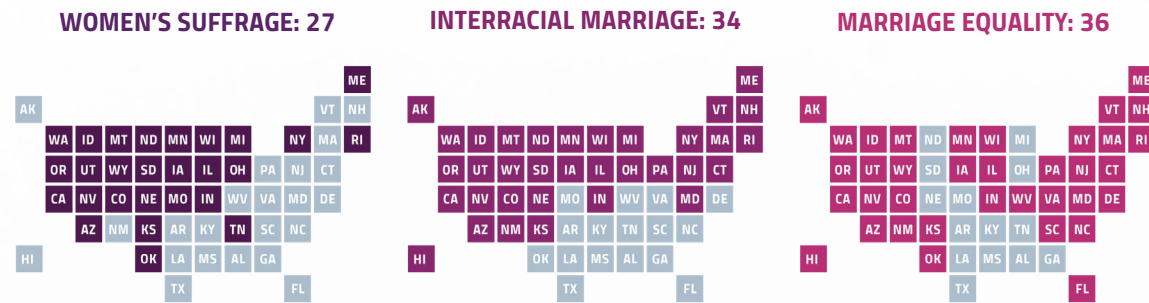
# A PROVEN STRATEGY

The American Anti-Corruption Act enjoys support from 9 out of 10 Americans — across the political spectrum. But congressional leaders from both parties fail to pass meaningful reform when they're in power. So we need to go around Congress, following in the footsteps of movements that came before us.

## STATE-BY-STATE

Major political movements, when facing insurmountable odds in Washington, focused on amassing state-level victories that paved the way for a change in federal law. In the wake of 2018's historic wave of victories, we're seeding and supporting the next round of anti-corruption ballot initiatives and legislative reform campaigns in the states, working with local leaders to push this issue closer to a tipping point.

Here's how many states won prior to federal passage of:



## BUILDING A MOVEMENT

At the same time, we're mobilizing a grassroots movement at historic scale and leveraging its power to pass impactful reforms. But we must build more than a political movement. It must be a cultural movement that shows Americans how fixing the corrupt political system improves their lives. We're creating on-ramps for millions, engaging them in campaigns, and restoring the belief that America's government can be a force for good.

# HOW WE FIX THE SYSTEM

We run three major programs to implement our strategy:

## CAMPAIGN ACCELERATOR

The **Campaign Accelerator** identifies and seeds emerging campaigns. If the policy is impactful and the politics are viable, we work with local and national partners to provide the assets and expertise required to win. The Accelerator plays a pivotal role in the passage, implementation, and protection of game-changing reforms.

## CAMPAIGN CONNECTOR

The **Campaign Connector** is our movement-building program. It educates and mobilizes Americans, and connects them to active campaigns across the nation. The Connector produces creative and innovative public-education content to complement Accelerator campaigns.

## UNRIG SUMMIT

**Unrig Summit** is a fast-paced, solutions-oriented, annual gathering that brings together the brightest minds from the left and right to build the anti-corruption movement. At Unrig Summit, reformers celebrate the movement's victories and plan for the road ahead. The Summit has quickly become the movement's premier gathering.

**"A key event — often a court decision or a grassroots campaign reaching maturity — triggers a rush of state activity that ultimately leads to a change in federal law."**

*-Alex Tribou, Keith Collins, "This Is How Fast America Changes Its Mind," Bloomberg, 2015*



# WE'RE ALREADY WINNING

Our strategy isn't just theoretical — it's already working. In 2018 and 2019, we helped 37 campaigns pass anti-corruption policies, building the national momentum of this movement.

## THE BADASS GRANDMAS FIGHT CORRUPTION

After watching their neighbors in South Dakota pass a RepresentUs-led anti-corruption amendment, Republican Dina Butcher and Democrat Ellen Chaffee joined forces to fix politics in their state. They formed a cross-partisan coalition, and reached out to RepresentUs for guidance.

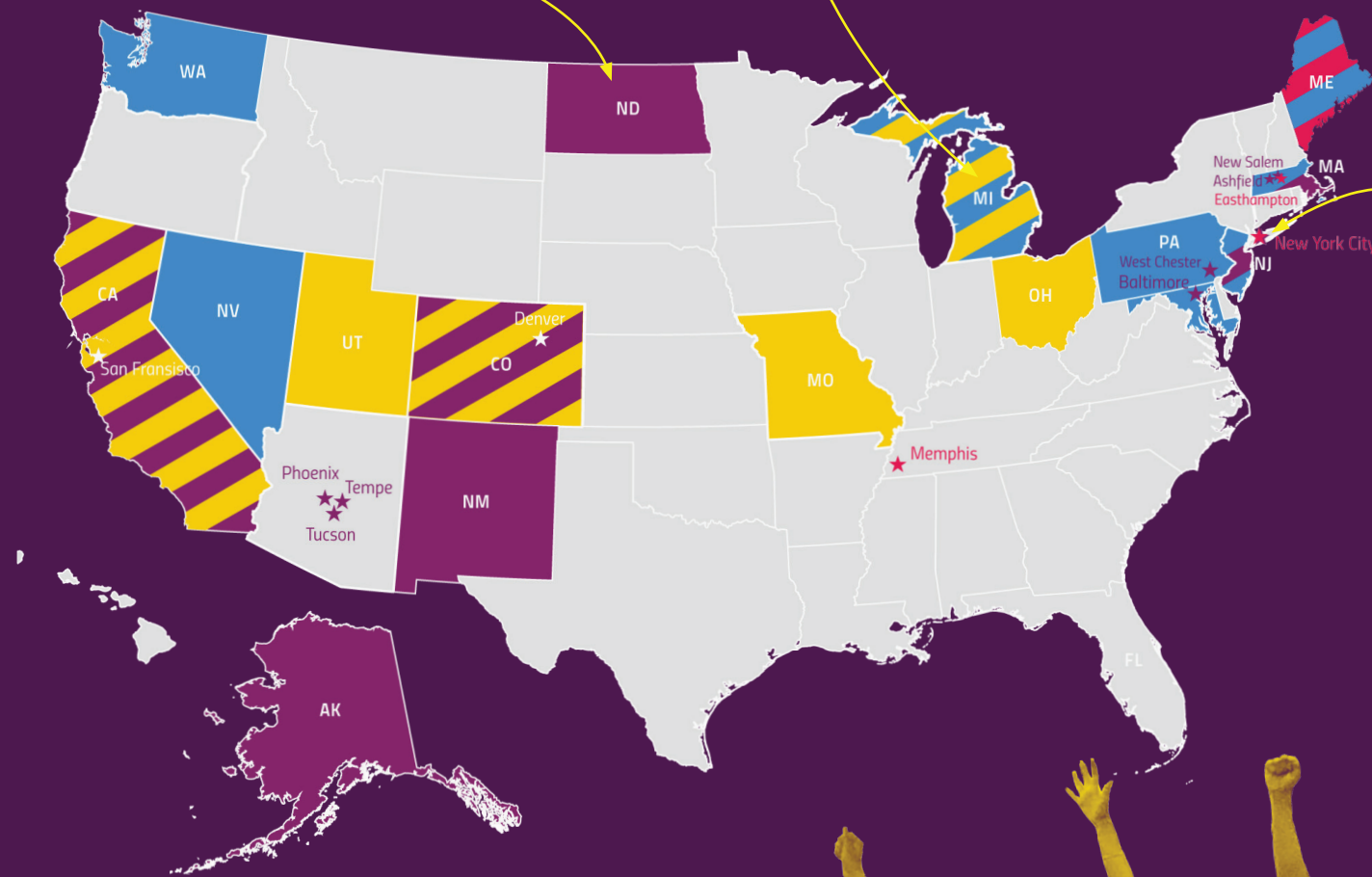
On Election Day, the self-styled "Badass Grandmas" won the nation's strongest transparency law, which banned gifts from lobbyists to politicians, created an independent ethics commission, and closed the revolving door between government and the lobbying industry.



## ENDING GERRYMANDERING IN MICHIGAN

In 2016, political rookie Katie Fahey took to social media to call for an end to gerrymandering in her home state of Michigan. The response was off the charts. Thousands volunteered, and together they gathered 425,000 signatures to put a constitutional amendment on the ballot.

In July 2018, an opposition lawsuit funded by powerful special interests sought to knock them off the ballot. RepresentUs members in Michigan — with support from across the nation — led a name-and-shame campaign to beat back the lawsuit. On election day, Michiganders voted to eliminate gerrymandering.



## BRINGING RCV TO NEW YORK CITY

In 2019, we joined a coalition of reformers to pass Ranked Choice Voting in New York and triple the number of Americans using RCV. Our members sent 600,000 texts to voters. We ran the digital campaign and provided celebrity spokespeople and policy support.

On November 5, New Yorkers overwhelmingly chose to adopt RCV. Starting in 2021, they will benefit from a new voting system that promotes voter choice, increases candidate diversity, and discourages negative campaigning.



### KEY: 2018-19 WIN MAP

- RANKED CHOICE VOTING
- CAMPAIGN FINANCE & ETHICS
- ANTI-GERRYMANDERING
- AVR & VOTE-AT-HOME



# THE CAMPAIGN ACCELERATOR

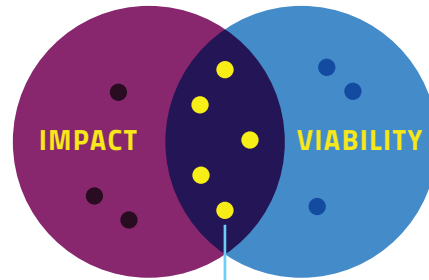


In recent years, voters and legislators in cities and states have passed dozens of anti-corruption reforms. But for every success story, there have been far more potential campaigns that never launched or lacked the expertise or resources to win.

The Campaign Accelerator addresses this problem by tracking and evaluating reform efforts in cities and states nationwide. We provide reform campaigns the top-caliber, national-scale resources they need to win.

## WORKING AT THE INTERSECTION OF IMPACT AND VIABILITY

Historically, reformers have often pursued policies that are transformative but politically unrealistic, or that are easily winnable but have minimal impact. Our strategy innovates by focusing on campaigns with both policy impact and political viability.



WE FOCUS ON POLICIES THAT SIT AT THE INTERSECTION OF POLICY IMPACT AND POLITICAL VIABILITY

## THE ACCELERATOR'S SIX CORE SERVICES ARE TAILORED TO EACH CAMPAIGN'S NEEDS:

- 1 Policy design, legal support, & political strategy
- 2 Branding, communications, & messaging
- 3 Digital media & amplification
- 4 Moderate & conservative voter engagement
- 5 Hard-hitting accountability campaigns
- 6 Grassroots mobilization



# THE CAMPAIGN CONNECTOR



A Harvard study of 112 years of political movements around the globe shows movements that mobilize at least 3.5% of the population win every time. In America, that's 11 million people. Building such a movement is a huge undertaking, one that RepresentUs is uniquely fit to lead.

The Campaign Connector leverages our signature creative, digital, and organizing assets to build the movement and connect our members around the country with the most promising campaigns.

**There are three stages of the program:**

## INSPIRATION & RECRUITMENT

The Connector is fed by breakthrough digital assets that inspire people to take action.



## EDUCATION & TRAINING

RepresentUs is the largest online community in our field, where volunteers educate each other in a decentralized model and connect with in-house experts to learn innovative organizing skills.

## MOBILIZATION & CONNECTION

We track the most impactful and viable campaigns across the country, and we connect newly trained activists with local campaigns, where they become the lifeblood of the movement.





# JOIN US AT UNRIG SUMMIT

Unrig Summit brings leaders, philanthropists, journalists, academics, and activists together to build the networks that make the anti-corruption movement greater than the sum of its parts. The next generation of reformers are molded into leaders. Activists learn best practices and hone their skills before the next campaign. Campaigners break bread and plan for the road ahead.

More information at [unrigsummit.com](http://unrigsummit.com).



## FEATURED PANEL: HOW THEY WON

At Unrig Summit 2019, we brought winning reformers on stage to share their experiences. In a plenary moderated by RepresentUs Board Member Jennifer Lawrence, six campaign leaders discussed the obstacles they faced and how they overcame them on their path to victory.

This panel showcased the power that everyday Americans can wield through advocacy and civic engagement. As one audience member put it:

**"This session provided hope that, regardless of obstacles, change is possible."**



# ABOUT REPRESENTUS

**We believe in an America where the government works for you and your family, not just a handful of billionaires and special interests.**

RepresentUs was co-founded in 2012 by seasoned media and democracy advocate Josh Silver and marketing and communications expert Joshua Graham Lynn. From the outset, we've distinguished ourselves by uniting progressives, moderates, and conservatives in support of winnable, impactful reforms.

Today, RepresentUs is America's leading right-left anti-corruption organization. Our board boasts tech entrepreneurs, marketing experts, celebrities, and renowned business leaders. We're supported by more than 55,000 grassroots donors, philanthropists, and charitable foundations from across the political spectrum.



## REPRESENTUS AT A GLANCE

40+ staff

800,000+ members

55,000+ Grassroots donors

37 anti-corruption movement victories in 2018 and 2019

100+ anti-corruption movement wins since 2012

1.6 billion social media reach in 2019

750,000 social media followers



# MOVING FORWARD, TOGETHER

Imagine a nation where politicians put country over party; where decisions are made for the greater good, not the benefit of political donors; where talent and passion for public service count for more than the size of a candidate's war chest. This is the future we believe in, and we have a smart, viable plan to realize it.

This is the most urgent challenge of our time, and we must rise to the occasion. We have an extraordinary opportunity to seize the grassroots momentum of the last election cycle, to rally Americans around common-sense solutions and restore a government of, by, and for the people.

Our goal for the next two years is to ensure at least 30 more high-impact reform campaigns succeed, while engaging millions more Americans in the fight for the soul of our democracy. But this task is too big for any organization to do alone. We must come together as a movement to achieve the critical mass necessary to win. We must work across ideologies, parties, and issue areas.

**We must move forward, together.**

To get involved in the movement, visit [represent.us/actions](https://represent.us/actions).

# SUPPORT THIS VISION

This vision will not become a reality without your support. Join one of our giving societies today.

**Every dollar you give brings us closer to a government of, by, and for the people.**



Members of the Common Wealth make monthly donations of any amount. They fuel the front lines of the anti-corruption movement. 100% of their donations directly support anti-corruption campaigns. To join, visit [represent.us/commonwealth](https://represent.us/commonwealth).



Change Makers give \$1,000 or more per year to fuel our major programs and vibrant content. To join the Change Makers or learn more, visit [represent.us/changemakers](https://represent.us/changemakers).



Founding Family members make an annual commitment of at least \$50,000 for three years. The Family covers our vital operating costs, allowing us to direct 100% of small-dollar donations to the field. To join or learn more about the Founding Family, contact Josh Silver at [josh@represent.us](mailto:josh@represent.us).

Visit [represent.us/ways-to-give](https://represent.us/ways-to-give) for more information

## THE COMMON WEALTH

The Common Wealth has more than 2,500 members. Victoria from California found us online, and was inspired to join the movement.

*"I want to be a part of the changes that our political system requires, not only for my life but for the lives of my children and future grandchildren."*





# represent Us

END CORRUPTION. DEFEND THE REPUBLIC.

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