



## Vastly Positive Common Sense 2025 Proposals vs. Authoritarian Project 2025 Plans

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Here are highly positive *Common Sense 2025 Proposals* that offer a brighter, fairer, more inclusive and more hopeful future than the darkly dystopian, apocalyptic and absolutist Republican *Project 2025* plans.

These *Common Sense 2025 Proposals* contain plans that prioritize fairness, individual freedoms, public health and safety, environmental stewardship, and the integrity of our democratic institutions. They offer to create a much better future than the regressive and repressive *Christian Nationalist Project 2025* blueprint for totalitarian "conservative" rule. These *Common Sense 2025* proposals envision reforms that will serve the public good rather than narrow interests. See my essay *The Common Good, Properly Understood* for a clearer idea of what really constitutes the public good. Here are key areas where *Common Sense 2025 Proposals* offer a better path forward:

### **1. Tax Fairness and Fiscal Responsibility**

Instead of shifting the tax burden onto ordinary citizens, the *Common Sense 2025* plan proposes modest tax cuts for the bottom 90%, and ensures that the wealthiest Americans pay their fair share. This policy would reduce income inequality while trying to more responsibly bring the national budget into balance, and would sensibly address the unsustainable generosity of policies that give debt financed tax cuts to disproportionately benefit the ultra-wealthy. Review the scandalous details of this in "The Titanic Tax Cut Swindle" in the Appendix below.

### **2. Restoration of Reproductive Rights and Healthcare Privacy**

The *Common Sense 2025* plan guarantees reproductive freedom, ensuring that women have the right to make decisions about their own bodies and futures without government interference. It would also protect access to contraception, support fertility treatments like IVF, and safeguard healthcare privacy from invasive tracking.

### **3. Compassionate Immigration Reform**

In contrast to deportation-heavy immigration policies, *Common Sense 2025 Proposals* advocate for good ways to properly secure our borders while treating immigrants and refugees humanely. They would provide protections for young Dreamers and enact comprehensive immigration reforms that would take into account both economic needs and humanitarian concerns.

### **4. Support for Public Service and Good Governance**

The *Common Sense 2025* plan defends the integrity of civil service by protecting federal employees from being fired for politically motivated reasons, and promotes nonpartisan governance to ensure that public institutions remain dedicated to serving the people rather than special interest groups and politically partisan agendas.

### **5. Justice and Accountability for All**

A key pillar of these *Common Sense 2025 Proposals* is to prevent the politicization of the Department of Justice. It ensures the DOJ serves as a fair and impartial body that will promote the rule of law and safeguard individual rights while holding everyone accountable, regardless of political affiliation, and would protect the right to dissent and criticize inequities and safely protest against political corruption, graft and abuses of power.

### **6. Strengthening Democratic Institutions**

Unlike Project 2025 plans to centralize executive power, the Common Sense 2025 Proposals would reinforce congressional oversight and transparency. They champion accountability across all branches of government, and ensure that no one is above the law.

### **7. Free and Fair Elections for All**

The Common Sense 2025 plan promotes voting rights, fights voter suppression, and ensures that elections reflect the will of the people. It supports legislation like the Freedom to Vote Act and works to eliminate extreme gerrymandering to guarantee fairer representation.

### **8. Environmental Responsibility and Climate Justice**

To combat climate change, the Common Sense 2025 plan would invest in clean energy and strengthen the Inflation Reduction Act to mitigate the worst impacts of climate change while creating millions of green jobs. It would also use smart regulations to reduce pollution and emissions of greenhouse gases that are harmfully destabilizing global weather patterns and causing temperatures to spike, and exacerbating the intensity of storms, and causing extreme floods and droughts around the planet.

### **9. Commitment to Public Education and Student Debt Relief**

Rather than eliminating the Department of Education and further dismantling public education, the Common Sense 2025 agenda supports well-funded public schools and prioritizes educational opportunity for all, ensuring a stronger future for the next generation. It also would offer relief to those burdened by big amounts of student debt.

### **10. Strengthening the Social Safety Net**

The Common Sense 2025 plan would protect healthcare access by expanding Medicaid and improving Medicare. It would ensure that the social safety net remains intact for those who need it most, while responsibly controlling military spending to focus on domestic priorities.

### **11. Civil Rights and Protections for All People**

The plan emphasizes equality by safeguarding LGBTQ rights and countering hate crimes. It ensures that everyone, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, can live free from discrimination and violence.

### **12. Sensible Gun Safety Measures**

The Common Sense 2025 agenda would promote public safety by banning assault weapons, especially for persons under 21 years of age, and limiting devices that enable rapid-fire shooting, and it would implement other sensible plans designed to reduce gun violence while respecting responsible gun ownership.

### **13. Honest Education and a Fair Society**

To foster a more just society, the plan rejects divisive narratives about "anti-white racism" and supports teaching history accurately. It promotes policies that expand economic opportunity and diversity, helping to ensure fairness for all Americans, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation or socioeconomic status.

### Summary

The Common Sense 2025 Proposals offer a hopeful vision for the future -- one that prioritizes equity, freedom, environmental sustainability, and democracy. They seek to unite Americans around shared values, in stark contrast to the Project 2025 agenda, which would erode our institutions and liberties. The 13 planks of these Common Sense 2025 Proposals are elaborated upon below.

Note: This essay was initially titled *Project 2025 and the Most Egregious Wrongs that Right-Wing Extremists Are Planning, Together with Contrasting More Propitious Common Sense 2025 Proposals*. And then it was subsequently appropriately titled *A Damning Denunciation of Project 2025's MAGA "Mandate" for Dictatorial Rule*.

The Republican Project 2025 agenda is an alarmingly anti-democratic hard-right plan for the takeover and rigid control of the U.S. government by partisan conservatives and Christian religious extremists. The blueprint would heavily favor rich people and corporate entities over everyone else, and it is particularly offensive for the following

plans that are set forth in the 920-page *Mandate*:

1) Project 2025 would impose a regressive tax plan that would onerously shift the burden of taxation from the top 1% to all other tax payers, wrongly making income and wealth inequalities even more extreme than they already are. Worse, it would finance this tax scam by perpetuating the long-running public-debt-financed tax cut swindle, borrowing trillions of dollars more, and irresponsibly adding to the already very costly and dangerously large \$35 trillion national debt. See the Appendix for extraordinary details about this highly inequitable tax cut swindle.

A much fairer and more socially responsible Common Sense 2025 Plan would enact legislation that shifts more of the burden of paying taxes to the top 1%, and give all taxpayers in the bottom 90% a modest tax cut. This would rightly reduce the extreme inequalities of income and wealth that prevail under the current system. Deficit spending should simultaneously be reduced every year by more responsibly balancing tax revenues and government spending, in effect reducing the amount of the Santa Claus Tax Cut Swindle that allows the top dogs in our society to pay low tax rates every year through the ruse of further mortgaging the future.

2) Project 2025 would subjugate women to the heinous hegemony of anti-abortion reactionaries, contemptuous control freaks and misogynistic Christian nationalists by forcing women who do not want a child, or another child, to remain pregnant and deliver an unwanted baby. The medical fallout from abortion restrictions in red states is becoming dire. And access to contraceptives would be restricted. In vitro fertilization would be outlawed or restricted, preventing many women who want to have a child using fertility treatments from being able to do so. A regime of invasive abortion data tracking would also be implemented, invading women's healthcare privacy, and the 1873 Comstock Act would be misused as a means of banning abortions in every state in the country by criminally prosecuting anyone who sends medication abortion drugs through the mail. "It's a detailed roadmap to rip away a woman's right to choose in every single state in America -- and they don't even need Congress to try to do it! All Americans need to understand that abortion rights are on the ballot this November, in every single state."

A much fairer Common Sense 2025 Plan would enact national legislation that restores reproductive rights along the lines of the Supreme Court's sensibly fair 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision, giving all pregnant women federal protections for the freedom to get a safe and legal abortion before fetal viability. It would also provide stronger protections for women's healthcare privacy, and for all women (and men) to be able to freely obtain and use contraceptives. And it would prevent extremist politicians from outlawing or restricting in vitro fertilization that helps women become pregnant when they face fertility difficulties, and it would prevent the government from invasive abortion data tracking, or misusing the 1873 Comstock Act for anti-choice purposes. In doing these things, the American people would reject authority-abusing, freedom of choice-opposing extremists who are striving to force women to have unwanted children, and it would help women who want to become pregnant to do so using IVF.

3) Project 2025 pushes decidedly immigrant-harming plans like deporting millions of immigrants, circumventing Congress and the courts. It would also terminate the legal status of hundreds of thousands of young Dreamers, and separate families, and end birthright citizenship, and inhumanely dismantle our nation's asylum system. Cruel!

The economic repercussions of deporting millions of hard-working immigrants would be cataclysmic. And most of the jobs these hard-working immigrants do are ones few people want to do because of the low pay, hardness of the work, lack of benefits, degradation, and considerable workplace dangers.

A fairer Common Sense 2025 Plan would strengthen border security, deal more sensibly with problems there, and take steps to protect young Dreamers and treat legal immigrants and refugees more fairly and decently. The new session of Congress beginning in January 2025 should make it a top priority to formulate and pass a new border bill, a better plan that will replace the hard-nosed one primarily authored by Georgia Republican Sen. James Langford. That plan was torpedoed by Donald Trump, who demanded that all House Republicans vote against the solution because he diabolically wanted to divisively work his demagogic magic by shrewdly and manipulatively keeping the anti-immigrant scapegoating ruse fired up and insidiously motivating. Note that chaos is draconianly unwise!

4) Project 2025 would undermine good governance by firing tens of thousands of public servants and replacing them with loyalists to *MAGA* Trumpism. This would be contrary to more responsible patriotic propriety. It would dangerously further concentrate power in the presidency, with a planned goal of giving Trump (if he wins) and his

appointees more power over the executive branch relative to nonpartisan civil service professionals (who are disparaged as the so-called "deep state"). This would obviously lead to abuses of power and more opportunities for political malfeasance. Such policies would impose repressive rule on *We the People* that would be "of corporate entities and the rich, by corporations and the rich, and for the rich and rightwing extremists."

A more politicized federal bureaucracy -- under a more politicizing dictator wannabe and the current reactionary Republican Supreme Court -- would be grotesquely irresponsible, especially as regards the economy, fairness, true justice, public safety, unity, people's freedoms, the police state, and our democratic (and autocratic) allies.

The more decent Common Sense 2025 Proposals would protect civil servants from political termination, and maintain a strong separation between the executive, legislative and judicial branches of the federal government.

5) Project 2025 plans would allow the president to weaponize the Department of Justice against critics and political opponents, including those who honorably protest against abuses of authority.

A Common Sense 2025 Plan would prevent the politicizing of the Department of Justice and its use in partisan prosecutions and attacks against honest, courageous and patriotic Americans.

6) Project 2025 would not only expand executive power but also defang congressional oversight, dangerously allowing a President to exert unfettered power. This is on top of the greater power that the Supreme Court has given the President in its absurd ruling on absolute immunity for "official acts" wrongdoing. The plan would wage an offensive against responsibility, transparency and accountability of elected officials in favor of political corruption, graft and malfeasance. It would carry out these nefarious plans through personnel in key White House staff and Cabinet positions, judges, federal agencies, and Congress members, in addition to Trump loyalist civil servants.

A Common Sense 2025 Plan agenda would support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic, and choose fair-minded persons and people who put Country over Party for White House staff, cabinet positions, federal agencies, Congress, and the Supreme Court and other federal courts.

7) Project 2025 would push anti-democratic plans against having free and fair elections and fair representation, by making efforts to restrict voting and suppress voter turnout by people most likely to be opposed to their authoritarian plans. Republicans in red states are already using devious misinformation to justify outrageous voter suppression laws that make it harder for millions of Americans to vote. Also, they plan to prevent the proper certification of votes that express the popular will, using the cunningly deceitful tactic of falsely claiming that there is widespread voting fraud in our elections, thereby perpetrating massive fraud against the majority of the people. And Project 2025 calls for green-lighting Trump's racist citizenship question on the next U.S. census, and turn management of the census over to the same types of right-wing political operatives that wrote Project 2025.

A Common Sense 2025 Plan would strengthen our democracy and its guardrails by taking steps to help guarantee voting rights, free and fair elections and fair representation, and prevent extreme gerrymanders of congressional districts, and it would make sure that all votes are properly certified and accurately express the popular will.

Congress must pass legislation to strengthen our democracy by making elections more democratically fair, such as the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act and its companion bill, the Freedom to Vote Act.

8) Project 2025 promotes irresponsible stances on fossil fuel use and refuses to deal with the horrible legacy such policies will have on all people in the future by making "climate hell" worse than it would alternately be with fairer, more reasonable and more farsighted policies. The agenda pushes for slashing regulations, exacerbating pollution, stoking climate injustices and gutting the Inflation Reduction Act, which is "the Biden administration's wide-ranging law that would generate some 10 million climate-friendly jobs over the next 10 years. The policy agenda also advises eviscerating greenhouse gas regulations and clean energy programs."

A more sensible Common Sense 2025 Plan would move boldly toward a fossil free energy future to prevent climate catastrophes by implementing fairer and more farsighted policies. It would use smart incentives and regulations to curb pollution and create greater climate justice, and strengthen the Inflation Reduction Act to help generate millions of climate-friendly jobs while reducing greenhouse gas emissions and advancing clean energy programs.

9) Project 2025 aggressively promotes plans to benefit religious schools and private schools at the expense of

improved public education for the vast majority of young people. It would also eliminate the Department of Education in an extraordinarily pernicious Orwellian policy imposition plan, partially to keep young people ignorant. And it would prevent relief for tens of millions of borrowers saddled with mounting levels of student debt.

A more sensible Common Sense 2025 Plan would strengthen our commitment to improving public education for the vast majority of young people, rather than subsidizing religious schools and private schools, and give debt relief to tens of millions of borrowers saddled with onerous amounts of student debt.

10) Project 2025 plans would give states the ability to impose work requirements on Medicaid, which would reduce benefits for low-income people that help cover their medical costs, and in general reduce federal spending on the social safety net and poor people, and those in the middle class, while achieving another longtime conservative priority -- ramping up military spending and facilitating more crony capitalist private profiteering.

Project 2025 includes a plan to gut and privatize Medicare, which would be a huge gift to private insurance corporations that would make health care for seniors much worse.

A Common Sense 2025 Plan would expand Medicaid, improve Obamacare and Medicare, and sensibly strengthen the social safety net, and more adequately control military spending and corporate "greedflation".

11) Project 2025 would ramp up assaults on LGBTQ rights and wipe out certain federal protections for gay Americans, which would facilitate an increase in the current avalanche of anti-LGBTQ legislation being introduced in Republican-led statehouses. It would also make the "epidemic of violence" much worse against these people, due to the woeful impacts of extremist rhetoric. And it would undo marriage equality.

A Common Sense 2025 Plan would protect the civil rights of all people, including straight people, gays, bisexuals and transgender individuals, and it would strive to reduce hate crimes.

12) The Project 2025 agenda on guns would favor profit making by gun manufacturers to the detriment of gun safety and a more secure citizenry.

A Common Sense 2025 Plan would improve public safety from gun violence by banning private ownership of assault weapons and limiting the use of bump stocks and other machine gun-like devices that allow rapid fire of ammunition.

13) The right-wing Project 2025 blueprint contains rhetoric claiming that the biggest problem in America today is "anti-white racism", in furtherance of efforts to deny the anti-black racism that persists in the USA today. One goal is to permanently cement white supremacy in the status quo by abolishing affirmation action programs, among other things. Another goal is to ignore the onerous racism against people of color and "to erode 1960s-era policies that have nourished economic opportunities for Black Americans, as well as diversity, equity, and inclusion programs that have flowered since the 2020 murder of George Floyd."

A fairer Common Sense 2025 Plan would teach history accurately, and make our society fairer and more secure.

#### Common Sense 2025 Plan - A Proclamation

Whereas moderation is broadly advantageous, extremism is excessively narrow and widely undesirable from the standpoints of societal well-being as well as with regard to the economy, politics and the environment;

Whereas the Project 2025 plans are retrogressive, it would be broadly desirable for us to rededicate our Country to its founding Constitutional principles: that *We the People* be honorably dedicated to trying to "form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity."

And whereas the 2024 elections will have determinative impacts on democratic fairness and future well-being;

Let it therefore be resolved that our representatives boldly embrace the goals set forth above in the Common Sense 2025 Plan by strengthening our democracy and democratic institutions and the checks and balances in our government against political corruption by scheming authorities in the White House, Congress or the judiciary.

Let us also commit to strengthening the accountability provisions in our Constitution to prevent political corruption and ensure that the federal government is not weaponized for political purposes against courageous individuals or

opposing parties. And let's strengthen the separation of church and state to prevent religious discrimination and the corruption of our federal and state governments by religious authorities.

### An Important Environmental Perspective

A core idea in the Earth Manifesto is that we must pay forward a positive legacy to those in future generations. Considering this, it is wrong that Project 2025 is particularly onerous for its anti-environmental offensives:

It would curb the Environmental Protection Agency's oversight capacities, preventing it from managing pollutants, tracking methane emissions, and conducting research on causes of climate change and destabilization.

It would eliminate the legal mechanism that requires the EPA to address carbon pollution, putting all of our nation's most vital climate policies at risk.

It would dismantle the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and eliminate many of its functions, even though the agency plays a mission-critical role in extreme weather events like hurricanes. This is crazy, for public safety depends on accurate weather information -- and accurate data saves lives. Yet a hurricane of rumors, lies and misinformation swirls in MAGA echo chambers about hurricane evacuations, disaster responses, recovery efforts and FEMA funding. This is creating much anger, misunderstanding and distrust, unnecessarily endangering vulnerable people. These manipulative emotion-hijacking falsehoods are unconscionably reckless and irresponsible, just as conspiracy-addled misinformation during the Covid pandemic about vaccinations had such harmful effects, costing tens or hundreds of thousands of people their lives.

Project 2025 would dismantle offices within the Department of Energy focused on clean energy research and implementation, severely hindering progress at a critical time for developing renewable energy technologies.

It would rubber-stamp permits for fossil fuel drilling on public lands and new fossil fuel power plants -- encouraging more sunk-cost investment in dirty-energy sources that are fueling climate change and climate catastrophes.

It would curtail federal investments in renewable energy technologies, such as solar and wind power.

These radical changes would take a fossil fueled wrecking ball to much climate progress, and make the U.S. climate commitments under the Paris Climate Agreement unachievable. And, of course, they would also endanger public health and well-being, and disproportionately impact low-income communities and people of color.

### Damning Denunciations of Project 2025's MAGA "Mandate" for Dictatorial Rule

As The New Republic notes, the dystopian Project 2025 is "a remarkably detailed guide to turning the United States into a fascist's paradise." The primary document of Project 2025, the magazine explains, lays out what is essentially a "Christian nationalist vision of the United States, one in which married heterosexuality is the only valid form of sexual expression and identity; all pregnancies would be carried to term, even if that requires coercion or death; and transgender and gender-nonconforming people do not exist."

"It's a terrifying vision of what American life could look like, but what's most concerning about Project 2025 is its playbook for the first 180 days of a hypothetical second Trump term. Much of the 180-Day Playbook reads like a cult's recruiting pamphlet, explaining how department and agency heads should be vetting potential candidates."

Paul Dans, a former Trump administration official who led Project 2025's Presidential Transition Project, wrote in the introduction to the Playbook: "Our goal is to assemble an army of aligned, vetted, trained, and prepared conservatives to go to work on Day One to deconstruct the Administrative State."

By blaming and villainizing the "Deep State", this cloaked offensive would undermine democratic fairness and protections of people from oppressive right-wing extremists who want to destroy Constitutional protections of people's freedoms and the general welfare and the common good. Don't doubt that the army they assemble would instantly become an enemy to the people!

A Facebook post summarizes: "The MAGA right is declaring war, and Project 2025 is their battle plan. Project 2025 threatens our rights, attacks communities of color, hurts middle- and working-class families, and undermines our democracy. But we will not back down or let Trump steamroll our nation."

Trump/Vance and Project 2025 call for infringing on our freedoms and privacy. They plan on banning abortions nationwide, and attacking LGBTQ+ families. Kamala Harris and Tim Walz have one simple and powerful response for those trying to dictate our lives: "Mind your own damn business!"

The most significant mention of Project 2025 at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago came from Mallory McMorrow, a Michigan State Senator, who brought the entire fascist manifesto as a prop with her on stage, enlarged to appear to be a huge format book. Her poise and delivery were excellent, and most importantly, her message was received loud and clear -- Project 2025 is a brazen, unapologetic, undemocratic, unhinged attempt by MAGA Republicans to permanently install Donald Trump as an unrestrained and cruel dictator-like king. We simply cannot risk underestimating how massive a threat Project 2025 is to our democracy and general well-being.

### Cogent and Persuasive Endorsements

To save our great constitutional republic, American citizens must vote, and a majority must reject Trump's brazen and increasingly dystopian and unhinged bid to grab power again. Vote for Kamala -- and Democrats in Congress!!

The Biden/Harris administration has managed to create an economy that is the "envy of the world", with low unemployment and now low rates of inflation. And experts have assessed proposals made by Kamala Harris and Donald Trump, and found that Trump's proposals would destroy Social Security within 6 years, and his aggressive plan to impose tariffs on all imports would hyper stimulate inflation, and his tax plans and promises would increase the national debt much more than Kamala Harris' proposed policies would do.

The highly esteemed magazine and multi-platform publisher *The Atlantic* recently gave a powerful endorsement to Kamala Harris, observing that she "respects the law and the Constitution. She believes in the freedom, equality, and dignity of all Americans. She's untainted by corruption, let alone a felony record or a history of sexual assault. She doesn't embarrass her compatriots with her language and behavior, or pit them against one another. She doesn't curry favor with dictators. She won't abuse the power of the highest office in order to keep it. She believes in democracy. These, and not any specific policy positions, are the reasons *The Atlantic* is endorsing her."

The New York Times had earlier endorsed Kamala Harris, on September 30, spelling out the persuasive reasons why, and declaring her to be "*The Only Patriotic Choice for President.*"

"It is hard to imagine a candidate more unworthy to serve as president of the United States than Donald Trump. He has proved himself morally unfit for an office that asks its occupant to put the good of the nation above self-interest. He has proved himself temperamentally unfit for a role that requires the very qualities — wisdom, honesty, empathy, courage, restraint, humility, discipline — that he most lacks.

Those disqualifying characteristics are compounded by everything else that limits his ability to fulfill the duties of the president: his many criminal charges, his advancing age, his fundamental lack of interest in policy and his increasingly bizarre cast of associates.

This unequivocal, dispiriting truth -- Donald Trump is not fit to be president -- should be enough for any voter who cares about the health of our country and the stability of our democracy to deny him re-election. For this reason, regardless of any political disagreements voters might have with her, Kamala Harris is the only patriotic choice for president.

The *Philadelphia Inquirer* endorsed Harris in a blistering editorial, saying: "America deserves much more than an aspiring autocrat who ignores the law, is running to stay out of prison, and doesn't care about anyone but himself."

The *New Yorker* endorsed Kamala with these words: "The 2024 election also comes at a moment of national crisis. This time, however, the threat to the country's future -- to its rule of law and its democratic institutions, its security and its character -- resides not in a foreign capital but at a twenty-acre Xanadu on the Florida coast. For nine years, Donald Trump has represented an ongoing assault on the stability, the nerves, and the nature of the United States. As President, he amplified some of the ugliest currents in our political culture: nativism, racism, misogyny, indifference to the disadvantaged, amoral isolationism. His narcissism and casual cruelty, his contempt for the truth, have contaminated public life. As Commander-in-Chief, he ridiculed the valor of fallen soldiers, he threatened to unravel the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and he emboldened autocrats everywhere, including



Vladimir Putin, Kim Jong Un, and Viktor Orban. When Trump lost to Joe Biden, in 2020, he tried every means possible to deny the will of the electorate and helped incite a violent insurrection on Capitol Hill."

"In contrast, the Democratic Party's nominee, Vice-President Kamala Harris, has displayed the basic values and political skills that would enable her to build on the successes of the Biden Administration and to help end, once and for all, a poisonous era defined by Trump."

### More Introspection into the Republican Mandate

The upcoming U.S. elections are perhaps the most consequential in all of U.S. history, so it is our duty to *See Clearly* and act sensibly. I urge readers to peruse my latest Earth Manifesto essay *He Said, She Said, The Vastly Greater Desirability of Democratic Fairness Over Dictator-like Despotism*.

Trump has made consequentially deceitful denials that he knows much about the totalitarian takeover Project 2025. This is preposterous, suspicious and weak. And these devious denials don't diminish the gravity of the existential dangers the Republican Party poses to citizens, and to the longevity of our democratic republic.

Surprisingly to most, Project 2025 is not some sudden plot materializing in our midst like an insidious seditious authoritarian subterfuge set forth by fringe extremists. It is, in fact, merely the latest iteration of far right plans that the Heritage Foundation has been pushing on America for decades, with lavish funding from anti-social billionaires and scheming corporate executives and immoral Christian nationalist extremists.

"Project 2025 is not a new plan; it has been in the works for decades. The first version was published just after Ronald Reagan took office in 1981. In 2015 the Heritage Foundation gave the incoming Trump administration the seventh iteration. Should you think that Trump and his cronies know nothing about any of this, the Heritage Foundation boasted that Trump instituted 64% of the policy recommendations in that document, including leaving the Paris Climate Accords." And in red states, many Project 2025 plans are already being ruthlessly imposed on the citizenry, especially disadvantaging women, LGBTQ folks, and Blacks, Latinos and other people of color.

This is happening at the same time that our American society is becoming ever more multicultural and diverse, and long-term demographic trends show Whites as steadily diminishing from 90% in the 1950s to about 60% in the 2020 Census -- and will become a minority of less than 50% before 2050. It sure seems to me like it would be a good time for today's white majority to set a precedent of treating people in minority groups better, and not so savagely inequitably.

Yet the reactionary architects of Project 2025, and its proponents, want control in America to be wielded permanently by white men, heterosexuals and far right Christians. "The ideals of our 250-year-old form of government, in which majority rules, are anathema to them. They want to inflict their beliefs on everyone, representative democracy be damned."

Many of Project 2025's recommendations are deeply unpopular with Americans. A survey conducted by YouGov found that almost 60% of respondents opposed several big tenets, including the elimination of the Department of Education, giving more tax cuts to corporations, upending the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare), and changing the law to allow the president to fire civil servants.

"It is difficult to convince voters that the project's policy recommendations are real because they are so radical," said Anat Shenker-Osorio, a political strategist who spoke about the challenges of discussing Project 2025 with focus groups on the podcast *The Wilderness*.

"When we actually cut and paste verbatim from the Heritage document, people are like, that's a bunch of bull\*\*\*\*. Like, why did you make that up? And what is wrong with you? And why are you lying to us?" she said.

To that end, here are just a few of the most democracy-threatening suggestions, *verbatim*:

On child labor: "With parental consent and proper training, certain young adults should be allowed to learn and work in more dangerous occupations."

On education: "Federal education policy should be limited and, ultimately, the Federal Department of Education should be eliminated."



On LGBTQ+ rights: "The next secretary should also reverse the Biden Administration's focus on 'LGBTQ+ equity,' subsidizing single-motherhood, disincentivizing work, and penalizing marriage, replacing such policies with those encouraging marriage, work, motherhood, fatherhood, and nuclear families."

On families: "Families comprised of a married mother, father, and their children are the foundation of a well-ordered nation and healthy society ... The male-female dyad is essential to human nature and ... every child has a right to a mother and father."

And it has several highly publicized recommendations on abortion and women's rights that are an effort to return to America of the 1950s. "We won't go back", chant those who honorably and courageously oppose the oppressive Republican plans.

"I cannot state it strongly enough: Project 2025, with Donald Trump at the helm, is the greatest existential threat to American democracy in recent history. And make no mistake, should Trump win in November, he will usher in many if not most of the project's recommendations."

Project 2025 can be understood as Big Money corruption incarnate, and it threatens to permanently overthrow the reasonable rule of law and the U.S. Constitution, depriving the people of the protections they provide.

The rule of law is vital to ensuring stability, justice, and equality in society. It guarantees that all individuals, regardless of power or status, are subject to the same laws, thereby preventing arbitrary governance and abuses of power. It creates predictability and reliability in legal proceedings, which fosters trust among citizens and encourages economic development by safeguarding property rights and enforcing contracts. Furthermore, the rule of law protects individual freedoms and human rights, as it limits the power of the state and provides mechanisms for accountability. Without the rule of law, society risks descending into chaos, where power rather than justice dictates outcomes, undermining democracy and equality. Chaos is bad.

The Supreme Court has already been taken over by a supermajority of right-wing extremists, and they are overturning precedents at an alarming pace, and in drastically consequential ways. They are ruling imperiously on issues in ways that diminish people's freedoms and undermine public health and safety. For insightful clarity on this rogue state of judicial affairs, see Sheldon Whitehouse's many speeches about "The Scheme" -- and my incisive essay *Calamitous Consequences of Success of a Secret Conspiratorial Scheme to Capture the Courts*.

The Project 2025 plotters are now trying to further upset the great balance of power that protects *We the People* from attempts like this to give the executive branch vastly increased power, and allow Republicans to impose imperious control over federal agencies and their expertise and independence. This takeover attempt is a despotic threat that is severely detrimental to common good goals and honorable values and the greater good.

The prospects of having Republicans be able to appoint even more extremist partisans to the Supreme Court in the next four consequential years are a compelling reason to vote for Kamala Harris and Democrats in the Senate, and against Trump and Republicans in Congress.

The legislative branch has already been too critically influenced by the extremism inherent in unconstitutionally unfair and egregiously discriminatory gerrymandering, which makes our politics undesirably polarized, and subversive of collaborative decision-making. This adversely affects Congress and our hopes for succeeding in achieving good solutions to problems. It makes it unnecessarily difficult to cope effectively and properly with the grave challenges that confront overburdened societies in the world today.

### Incisive Assessment

It is vastly preferable for the people to have a fairly representative democracy governed by the rule of law and a Constitution designed with a separation of powers between executive, legislative and judicial branches of a federal government, and checks and balances to safeguard governance from abuses of power, and enforced accountability provisions, and a strong separation of Church and State.

For the people, constitutional democracy with free and fair elections and a healthy balance of power is much better than heavy-handed autocracy or dictatorial rule that corruptly does the bidding of wealthy elites and amoral profit-repossessed corporations, and scheming loyalists in a crony capitalist system, and religious

extremists.

Americans cherish the blessings of liberty and personal freedoms, and deserve leaders who honestly try to unify *We the People* around common good goals by promoting the general welfare and creating truer justice and working to make the citizenry more secure, and trying to improve vital social cohesion and domestic tranquility.

All responsible and patriotic citizens in our democracy should support free and fair elections, and the integrity of the voting process. And it should be clear that our elections are NOT fair in the USA today.

One big factor in this is extremely unfair gerrymandering that causes increasing polarization and facilitates extremism in politics. In North Carolina, state lawmakers created such contortedly gerrymandered district maps that a panel of three judges in 2019 threw out the maps, writing that the partisan maps had been drawn with "surgical precision" that gave decidedly unfair advantage to Republicans. This violated the state's constitutional protections of free elections, free speech and assembly, and equal protection under the law, according to the judges in a 357-page ruling "that reads as a stinging condemnation of partisan gerrymandering."

And Republicans have stacked the Supreme Court with political partisans that outrageously fail to protect *We the People* from extreme gerrymanders like this, and from harmful Big Money influence peddling.

The competition for fair representation is seriously compromised by having many scheming Republican billionaires like Charles Koch and Elon Musk contribute huge amounts of money to finance the campaigns of MAGA extremists.

Red-state Republicans are putting their dirty hands on the scale of Justice by passing an alarming number of new voter suppression laws, and using devious tactics like poll closures and purges of voter rolls, and by intimidating voters at polling places, and by shrewdly making partisan power grabs of election administration offices, with a goal of undermining the proper certification of the voters' will.

Republicans already cheat and lie to win elections by promoting misinformation and disinformation, and using Trump's big lie about voter fraud to stoke discord and incite distrust, anger and violence. This undermines public trust in the electoral process and democratic institutions. By sowing doubts about the legitimacy of election outcomes, a dangerous precedent is created where losing candidates may refuse to concede, further destabilizing the peaceful transfer of power and undermining one of the fundamental tenets of democracy.

Republicans also take advantage of undemocratic provisions in the U.S. Constitution to gain undeserved power, such as these four things:

- 1) The Electoral College allows the loser of the popular vote to win the presidency.
- 2) The Constitution gives every state two U.S. Senators, so it allows equal influence in the most powerful chamber of Congress. This is the case even though small states, like Wyoming that has the smallest population of the 50 states, with less than 600,000 people, has equal say to California, the largest, which has almost 39 million people.
- 3) Washington D.C. has almost 700,000 people, and yet its citizens are not represented in the U.S. Senate or the House. The residents of D.C. pay more in federal income taxes than the residents of 22 states, so this is an outrageous injustice of taxation without representation.
- 4) The Constitution is deliberately challenging to amend, requiring a two-thirds majority in both chambers of Congress and ratification by three-fourths of the states. This makes it very difficult for the Constitution to evolve and adapt in response to changing democratic needs and societal values and ecological realities.

These 4 undemocratic aspects of the Constitution allow Republicans to gain an unwarranted amount of undeserved power. And they are helped in this ability by grotesquely biased conservative media platforms like Fox News, One America News Network, Newsmax, Breitbart and The Epoch Times. And by social media echo chambers that stoke people's fear and push emotion-manipulating content on right-wing platforms like Elon Musk's Twitter — now X — which opposes content moderation in order to propagate propaganda favorable to rule by "conservatives" who do the bidding of wealthy people and giant corporations and immoral Christian fundamentalists.

Once they illegitimately gain power, partisan Republicans broadly abuse this power, especially in red states, in order to unfairly discriminate against their political opponents and torpedo the common good, for selfish political

advantages -- and money.

"The Project 2025 agenda is already taking root in many states such as Texas, Florida, Idaho, Missouri, and more. Taking freedom away from individuals and giving more to corporations; ripping reproductive rights away from women; endangering worker safety; outlawing local living wage minimums or the ability for businesses to voluntarily recognize unions; centralizing power away from the people; fomenting retributive political violence; prosecuting librarians over books radical extremists have deemed obscene or dangerous: This is the future the extreme far right wants for all Americans -- and it has already succeeded in making it a reality for many."

For deeper and valuable perspective, see my essay *The Common Good, Properly Understood*. For a much more expansive understanding see *Common Sense Revival - Book One of the Earth Manifesto*. It contains the insightful *One Dozen Big Initiatives to Positively Transform Our Societies*.

And understand these three relevant essays: (1) *Core Values of Democracy - and How to Thwart Conspiratorial Threats Against These Values*; and 2) *Demagoguery and The Dangers of the Demise of Democracy*; and *Thirteen Main Methods Used to Increasingly Concentrate Wealth and Power*.

And properly be aware of the insights in *Women's Rights - Let Freedom Ring - Honestly!* The understandings in these essays are broadly expanded upon in many other essays in the Twelve Books of the Earth Manifesto, which are all available right now from the on-demand publisher Lulu Press. All of these essays can be found online, linked to my Home Page at [EarthManifesto.com](http://EarthManifesto.com).

#### Concluding Words on the Threats Posed by the Far Right

Trump/Vance and Elon Musk and the right-wing media are poisoning the minds and consciousness of the American people. And they are on an authoritarian offensive, as revealed by Trump claiming that immigrants are "poisoning the blood of our country." That Trumpian assertion virtually quotes Adolf Hitler, who wrote in *Mein Kampf* that "All great cultures of the past perished only because the originally creative race died out from blood poisoning."

The dictator wannabe Trumpster recently said, "The bigger problem is the enemy from within. ... We have some very bad people, sick people, radical left lunatics, and I think it should be very easily handled by, if necessary by National Guard, or if really necessary by the Military, because they can't let that happen."

This is a demented and dastardly threat to our freedoms and sanity. And the most serious threat posed to most Americans is this cult leader-like retribution-obsessed vindictive demagogue who is acting like a real enemy from within to tens of millions of Americans.

When Trump talks about the greatest threats to our nation, he doesn't talk about Russia, or Iran, or North Korea testing long range missiles, or an increasingly expansionist China. He talks about the people who would dare to stand up to him at home, in the United States.

"This man is a fascist, through and through. We've seen his like before. He uses the same rhetoric, sometimes the same exact words and phrases, as men like Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini. And at this point, it's fair to say that he shares many of their goals."

For additional incisive insights on the grave undesirability of fascist governance, see my essay *He Said, She Said: The Vastly Greater Desirability of Democratic Fairness Over Dictator-like Despotism*.

I urge readers to be real patriots, and stand up for more responsible, honest and honorable leaders, and more democratic goals!

Truly,

Dr. Tiffany B. Twain

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#### Appendix: The Titanic Tax Cut Swindle

Inequalities in income and wealth are extreme in the USA today due to tax policies enacted to primarily benefit

the well-to-do. And tax policy is one of the most politically determined and highly corrupt aspects of our political system, due to the ways in which it can be influenced by special interests, exploited for loopholes, and structured to benefit the wealthy and powerful to the detriment of broader public interests.

The biggest factor in this: During the administration of Ronald Reagan in the 1980s, the top marginal tax rate was slashed from 70% to 28%, so rich people reaped enormous gains, and federal tax revenues were significantly reduced, irresponsibly driving up the national debt.

Another big factor in causing inequality to increase is the corporate tax cuts enacted in 2017. Taxes on corporate entities ranged from 40% to 52% from World War II until 1986, and were then reduced to 34% to 35% from 1988 through 2017. Then Trump Republicans slashed them in their partisan 2017 tax law from 35% to 21%, again giving enormous benefits to the top 1%, due to the fact that the persons in this small group receive about 70% of all dividends and capital gains on equities.

Corporations once paid about one third of the total tax revenues that finance the federal government, but due to abuses of influence by corporations and rich people, this total has been reduced to less than 10%.

Other important considerations are that taxes on long-term capital gains have been kept low, at a maximum of 20%, and estate tax provisions allow the cost basis of appreciated equities to be reassessed when anyone dies, "stepping it up" to the fair market value at the time of the owner's death, thereby allowing huge amounts of money to be inherited without paying any tax on them.

These tax cut policies have foolishly contributed to gigantic increases in the national debt and the annual interest expense cost on these obligations. In fact, the federal government spent \$658 billion on net interest costs on the national debt in fiscal 2023, a shocking 38% increase from fiscal 2022. This is the largest amount ever spent on interest expenses, and the Congressional Budget Office projects they will spike to over \$950 billion in 2025.

Consider this: In 1980, when Ronald Reagan was elected, the national debt stood below \$1 trillion, and the top 1% of Americans had an estimated \$3 trillion in net worth. Today, the national debt has surged to more than \$35 trillion, while the total net worth of the top 1% has increased to something like \$45 trillion. This means that, in a sense, we have borrowed over \$34 trillion and given it to rich people by allowing them to get away with not paying their fair share in taxes.

All of these factors together constitute unaffordable and unacceptably generous benefits to the wealthy at the expense of everyone else.

Influence peddling is a form of legalized institutional bribery that involves billions of dollars spent on elections and lobbying to influence laws, and especially tax laws. This absurdly includes like creating rules that allow the rich to shelter profits offshore to minimize their tax liabilities.

Also, tax codes are notoriously complicated and filled with intricate rules and exceptions. This complexity benefits those with access to legal and financial expertise, and allows them to take advantage of loopholes. One of the most outrageous of these loopholes is the "carried interest" provision that allows hedge fund managers and private equity investors to pay low tax rates on huge profits.

In addition, there is inadequate transparency and accountability for forms of public corruption like this. Making matters worse, Republicans always push to cut funding for the IRS to reduce its audit and enforcement capacities, helping big tax evaders and tax cheaters get away with their shenanigans. Studies indicate that the public treasury is deprived of over \$500 billion in revenues every year by failing to close the "tax gap" -- the difference between what is legally owed and the taxes paid. This foolishly helps drive up the dangerously large national debt.

Accurate understandings of issues point the way toward sensible reforms. Vote for Kamala Harris, and strongly encourage her as president to focus on reducing inequality and unfairness by fixing these problems and enacting common good reforms.