

Earth Manifesto



A Bill of Rights for Future Generations

Dr. Tiffany B. Twain,
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"The status quo has many guardians, but the future is an orphan."

--- Timothy Wirth, United Nations Foundation and Better World Fund

Congress passed the original Bill of Rights in 1789 to guarantee essential human rights and personal liberties to the American people. This great Bill of Rights consisted of the first Ten Amendments to the Constitution. As stated in the Preamble to this Bill of Rights, former colonists, disgusted with despotism, expressed an insistent protective desire "to prevent misconstruction or abuse" of the powers of the new federal government over its citizens. They viscerally recognized the value of extending "the ground of public confidence in the Government", and sought reassurances in these guarantees that our democracy would generally be directed toward "beneficent ends."

Our Founders gave Congress the power in the Constitution to provide for the "general Welfare". In the long run, the general welfare and the common good are completely dependent on fair institutions, equitable laws, principled social policies, honest economic accounting, sensible fiscal discipline, the conservation of resources and a healthy natural environment. These needs can be satisfied in the long run only by a proper framework of respected rights for our descendants in the future. This, propitiously, just happens to coincide with our ultimate human moral imperative.

People tend to compete ruthlessly to gain advantages. Many interest groups seek a variety of goals in our society, and a lot of them strive to get more perks and benefits from the government. Some groups are exceedingly well represented - like rich people and big corporations - while many millions of others are miserably poorly represented. The interest groups that are most under-represented in our politics are young people under the age of 18, because they cannot vote, along with every one of the countless multitudes of voiceless persons to be born in the future.

This disenfranchisement results in extreme inequities and injustices. It is our ethical obligation to collectively make an overarching commitment to fairer guiding principles in the form of a Bill of Rights for Future Generations.

"Each generation, sharing in the heritage of the Earth, has a duty as trustee for future generations to prevent irreversible and irreparable harm to life on Earth and to human freedom and dignity."

--- Jacques-Yves Cousteau

This proposed Bill of Rights, once ratified worldwide, would represent a universal declaration of solidarity for making committed efforts to leave a legacy to all persons in the future of reasonable prospects for health, prosperity, financial security, dignity and a fair quality of life. And this Bill of Rights would help prevent damages and disruptions to our home planet's vital biosphere, natural ecosystems and global climate, which right now are recklessly causing numerous species of life to be driven toward eternal extinction.

"Freedom is not license but responsibility -- the gift we have received and the legacy we must bequeath. Although our sojourn in life is brief, we are on a great journey. For those who came before us -- and for those who will follow -- our moral, political and religious duty is to make sure that this nation, which was conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all are equal under the law, is in good hands on our watch."

--- The honorable journalist Bill Moyers

The ratification of this new Bill of Rights would demonstrate a vital and necessary commitment to the greater good in the long run. Leaders in nations worldwide would be "paying forward" good deeds through this action. This is how we will improve the prospects of leaving a livable world to our children, and theirs, and theirs, and theirs to the Seventh Generation, and beyond. This Bill of Rights could propitiously provide better confidence and trust in our governing institutions -- by succeeding in keeping system-rigging scoundrels in check, along with their influence abusing puppet masters. People deserve a more transparent, accountable and trustworthy government, and more integrity in leadership.

The incisive words of the progressive Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis must be remembered: "We may have democracy, or we may have wealth concentrated in the hands of a few, but we cannot have both." Trump Republicans strongly support narrowly concentrated wealth, so under their undemocratic minority rule, the USA is becoming an increasingly inadequately controlled corporatocracy and oligarchic plutocracy. This is consequentially contrary to the common good in the long run, as well as deeply antithetical to more broadly-shared well-being.

Today, let us be mindful of the fact that the well-being of all people in the future is seriously threatened by extremely short term oriented activities and present-day expediencies, and by excessive consumerism and the rash and profligate greed-driven exploitation of natural resources.

Let us eat the fruit of one of those sublime Trees of the Awareness of Right and Wrong, and share it universally, and acknowledge together that the ultimate moral good is to leave a fairer legacy to our descendants in the future than current trends portend, and better conditions than current policies and priorities make probable.

"Nothing is more powerful than an idea whose time has come."

--- Victor Hugo

PROPOSED BILL OF RIGHTS FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS:

Article 1. Sustainable Resource Use

Enact an Ecological Sanity Initiative that includes powerful incentives and smart green fees that will be effective in encouraging a cleaner energy regime, resource conservation, regenerative agriculture, healthier forests, reduced reliance on non-renewable resources, good protections of Clean Air and fresh water supplies, sustainable fisheries, the preservation of biological diversity, restorative urban renewal, and beneficial protections of open spaces, National Parks and Forests, BLM lands and wilderness areas. This Initiative should give priority to safeguarding the health of natural ecosystems and the crucially valuable services they provide to humanity. This goal would best be achieved by investing in stronger protections of public lands, forests, wetlands, marine sanctuaries and other wildlife habitats, and by striving to restore the resilience and symbiosis inherent in healthy biological diversity.

"The nation behaves well if it treats its natural resources as assets which it must turn over to the next generation increased, and not impaired, in value."

--- Theodore Roosevelt

Conservatives should naturally ally themselves with those who champion the conservation of resources. Instead, detrimentally, these folks tend to be looking backwards and throwing their lot in with right-wing authoritarian politicians whose top priority is to gain narrow advantages for themselves while imposing austerity and more oppressive control over others. To achieve these goals, they are treacherously willing to deny scientific facts and act in ways certain to be harmful to people in the future, and to evade individual responsibility for their harmful impacts and the broadly harmful influence of their overly self-serving agenda.

"Whatever happens to the Earth, happens to the children of the Earth ... All things are connected, like the blood that unites one family. Mankind did not weave the web of life; we are but one strand within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves."

--- Attributed to Chief Seattle in 1844, in a warning against the misuse of land, water, air and animal life.

This Ecological Sanity Initiative would salubriously have 12 primary provisions, as enumerated in *Three Bills of Right: A Triumvirate of Responsible Actions for the Greater Good*. See this essay in the Earth Manifesto online, or in *Healthy Recipes and Provocative Worldviews - Book Five of the Earth Manifesto*.

Article 2. Prevention of Anthropogenic Climate Disruption

Levy a cost on carbon to deal with the adverse impacts of global warming caused by greenhouse gas emissions, and of related changes in weather patterns, storm intensity and extremes of temperatures and precipitation. Create a progressive plan by fully offsetting the higher costs to everyone in the bottom half of income earners. And use funds generated by this plan for two purposes: first, to create a "rainy day fund" that covers the costs of natural disasters associated with climate disruptions, including more powerful and frequent hurricanes, floods, droughts, destructive wildfires, heat waves, cold snaps, ocean acidification and sea level rises; and second, to provide generous financing for the incipient, necessary 'green transition' to a cleaner and more renewable energy future.

Remember: "If we fail to act now, it is scientifically irrefutable that there will be catastrophic and irreversible consequences for humanity and the planet." Donald Trump knew this in December 2009 when he attested to it in a full-page ad in the New York Times signed by 100 prominent business leaders that urged bold and responsible climate action at the Copenhagen Climate Conference. Denial now is proving disastrous, and unconscionably costly.

This ad contained an existential plea: Lead the world by example "to ensure meaningful and effective measures to control climate change, an immediate challenge facing the United States and the world today."

Article 3. Pollution Control and Mitigation

Require corporations that pollute rivers, lakes, oceans and the atmosphere to pay for prevention and mitigation measures to offset the harmful impacts caused by their polluting activities. These costs should be included in prices of all products and services, rather than being allowed to be externalized onto the public and persons in the future. Strong steps should furthermore be taken to ensure that big corporations and governments adhere to precautionary principles that require cost-effective measures to be implemented to prevent the degradation of the environmental commons.

"As people alive today, we must consider future generations. A clean environment is a human right like any other. It is therefore part of our responsibility toward others to ensure that the world we pass on is as healthy, if not healthier, than we found it."

--- The Dalai Lama

Article 4. Peaceful Coexistence

Strengthen international institutions to build peace between nations, and to prevent violent conflicts between countries over resources. Finance this effort to minimize wars by levying a surcharge on all U.S. sales of arms abroad. Target this surcharge to raise a total \$100 billion per year. Also, seek to ratify nuclear arms control agreements with other nations, and dial down belligerence toward other countries like North Korea and Iran. On the home front, every American should agree to support a peaceful transfer of power to the next elected president and administration.

Article 5. Sensible Family Planning and Women's Reproductive Healthcare

Significantly increase funding at home and abroad for women's healthcare clinics, family planning services, AIDS prevention, and free contraceptives for all women and men who want them. Strongly support sex education programs that are truly comprehensive, and make sure they are medically accurate and socially sensible so that they will be successful in preventing sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancies.

Honor the primacy of ORIGINAL CHOICE. At some point in human history, after thousands of generations of evolution, a realization dawned on females that there is a direct correlation between a sex act with a specific male and the birth of a baby 9 moons later. This awareness altered instinctive drives, and motivated females to become much choosier about what male they would accept as a mate. Dr. Leonard Shlain labeled this biological prerogative "Original Choice" in his fascinating book *Sex, Time, and Power: How Women's Sexuality Shaped Human Evolution*.

This Original Choice cannot now be overridden by authority-abusing social conservatives who want to deprive women of any right to get a safe and legal abortion, even if the pregnancy resulted from rape or incest. Such hubristic prohibitions deprive females of agency over their lives and their destinies.

See that the 1973 Roe vs. Wade ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court was an eminently reasonable decision that established a fair balance between the natural rights of females to exert a measure of control in their own lives and an implied right of a fertilized egg and incipient clump of cells to be nurtured until it becomes viable. The revolution wrought by the birth control pill and the morning after pill in the 1960s altered the "dance of selves in relationship", causing women's liberation movements to blossom, and social reactionaries cannot now be allowed to turn back time and ruthlessly impose the hegemony of their oppressive control and false moralities on females.

By the end of their childbearing years, something like one out of every seven U.S. women in current times will have never had any children. Think about these women! A good portion of them freely choose to never reproduce, so it is particularly offensive to have dogmatic "be fruitful and multiply" Bible believers come along and insinuate themselves into power, and then conspire to force women to have children they do not want. This is wrong!

Making matters worse, "conservatives" have clearly used this emotion-hijacking hot button issue to galvanize zealous support from anti-choice voters, and pathologically parlayed this Trojan Horse subterfuge into shrewd rationalizations for structural gender discrimination, flagrant abuses of power, concerted efforts to undermine democratic fairness, a harsh war on the poor, scandalously corrupt governance, national debt swindles, wealth concentrating scams, cost externalizing schemes, and ominously consequential justifications for sacrificing the environment and the biosphere on the altar of exploitive greed and profligacy.

Aretha Franklin soulfully sang out, "R-E-S-P-E-C-T, Find out what it means to me!" Find out - See the Rationalizing Reasoning below.

Article 6. Stabilization of the National Debt

Prevent the federal government from using the expediency of deficit spending to excessively mortgage the future. People today should not be allowed to saddle future generations with high interest cost obligations on rapidly accumulating sums of borrowed money. This goal should be accomplished by establishing an effective mechanism that reduces the U.S. national debt to less than 100% of annual GDP, as it had been from a few years after the end of World War II until recently. Such a proposal is outlined in a Balanced Budget Initiative proposed in *One Dozen Big Initiatives to Positively Transform Our Societies*. This initiative would have a compelling influence on the primary drivers of our national policies -- rich people and giant corporations -- by pressuring them to SEEK COMMON CAUSE with the American people, rather than being stubbornly opposed to equitable and sensible solutions to our daunting budgetary challenges. A wealth tax would be broadly advantageous.

A significantly positive impact could also be achieved by implementing the proposals made in *Radically Simple Ways to Make America Fairer, and to Fix Both Social Security and Health Care So We Can Move On to Address Much Bigger Issues*. These proposals contain detailed plans on how we can help solve our tax, budget deficit, Social Security and healthcare challenges.

Article 7. Social, Environmental and Intergenerational Justice

Increase the fairness of economic opportunity and security for all people by creating a more level playing field in our currently winner-take-all societies. This would have a collateral benefit of reducing desperation, crime and the costs of mass incarceration. Also, improve environmental justice to assure that the disadvantaged poor do not bear such undue burdens of exposure to toxic wastes, air pollution, environmental damages and "natural disasters" being exacerbated by climate change. Provide fairer treatment and generous foreign aid to people in developing countries around the world to mitigate damages caused by excessive profiteering by big corporations.

Conclusion

Ratify this Bill of Rights for Future Generations -- in the United States and in countries worldwide -- in order to protect the interests of those in the future from need-driven and mindlessly materialistic and irresponsibly greed-driven consumerism.

Look, here's the deal. We Americans supposedly have the right to choose good governance that truly represents government "of the people, by the people and for the people." And we should demand that the leaders we choose genuinely represent us, and demonstrate greater concern for liberty and justice for all. Let's act to make ours a

nation united, indivisible, rather than one whose citizens are divided against each other by master manipulators who exploit antagonisms and resentments to take advantage of people and circumstances for their own personal gain.

Social cohesion is a public good, and the surest path for creating unifying bonds is by ensuring that prosperity is more broadly shared. The sad nature of the corrupt status quo is proof that our representatives care more for their own ambitions (and wealth) than for the public good. Elections have major consequences. Let's choose more wisely! And the citizenry should be alert to scams and swindles and public graft, and foreign intrigue treachery. The time has come for a radical revolution of values, informed by a strong commitment to this new Bill of Rights.

Thomas Paine valued freedom and despised oppression above all, and he noted of his times in revolutionary colonial days, "THESE are the times that try men's souls." And, "We have it in our power to begin the world over again." Let's just do it!

Truly,
Dr. Tiffany B. Twain

Tiffany Twain is a Doctor of Philosophy who is a modern day philosophic soul mate and valiantly illegitimate great-granddaughter of the highly esteemed and irreverent writer, lecturer, humorist and philosopher Mark Twain. Frankly, Dr. Tiffany B. Twain is a *nom de plume*, just like Mark Twain was a sly pen name used by Samuel Langhorne Clemens. How this whole project came about is a long and evolving story, and one that is better left a mystery than being disclosed in the full scope of more prosaic actual circumstance.

"Who the Author of this Production is, is wholly unnecessary to the Public, as the important thing is the IDEAS THEMSELVES, and not the author. Yet it is necessary to say that she is unconnected with any Party, and under no sort of influence, public or private, other than the influence of reason and principle."

-- Thomas Paine (gender revised)

Rationalizing Reasoning

In Ancient Greece, the people believed in Nemesis, a Goddess of Divine Retribution that meted out implacable justice against those who succumb to hubris. Demand that Trump Republicans and their wealthy influence-abusing puppet masters relent in their opprobrious abuses of influence.

The 2020 elections were the last best chance for the majority of the American people to begin "to save the world" by taking back control of the rudder of the ship of state by unprincipled conservatives, the religious right and the emotion-manipulating Fox News, conservative talk radio and the extreme alt-right. There is a profound truth in Thomas Paine's incisive observation, "A body of men holding themselves accountable to nobody ought not to be trusted by anybody."

Poet Robert Frost famously took the path less traveled by, when he came to a juncture where paths diverged in a woods. Let's all salute poetic justice and join like-minded responsible folks who favor drastically different courses of action than those being imposed on the populace under rule by wealthy conservatives and their treacherously obedient Trump Republican puppets.

Sir David Attenborough, the eminently renowned naturalist and natural historian, has produced an extraordinary new documentary film *A Life on Our Planet* that serves as his "witness statement" to the far-reaching changes that have taken place in his 93 years alive. In this must-see film, Attenborough makes vividly clear the basic existential reasons for his concerns about the increasingly grave consequences of human impacts on habitats and ecosystems, and he importantly issues a hope-inspired clarion call for remedial action. Wisdom is required, he says. And surely, we cannot continue to be guided by rich people's shrewd calculations, partisan scheming, materialistic consumerism, and myopic short term-oriented profit-prepossessed zeal for exploiting and in effect liquidating natural assets.

In defiance of Sir David's clear-eyed crucial understanding, "a vast right-wing cabal" of super-rich Big Money interests have bought domineering control of the White House, federal government agencies, the U.S. Senate and the Supreme Court, along with more than half of state legislatures, governorships and attorney general positions. They have done this despite not having support from a majority of the people. Vote to change this sorry state!

Another giant in conservation is the primatologist and anthropologist Jane Goodall, who once shared this simple

visionary insight: "There's a saying, 'We haven't inherited this planet from our parents, we've borrowed it from our children.' When you borrow, you plan to pay back. We've been stealing and stealing and stealing. And it's about time we got together and started paying back."

Once again, Bill Moyers' cogent words resonate in the interstices of my brain. Moyers noted not long after 9/11 that when he reads the news about all the things humanity is doing in the world, he concludes it's not as if "Father, forgive us, for we know not what we do." As he looked at photos on his desk of his five grandchildren, he thought: "We do know what we are doing. We are stealing their future. Betraying their trust. Despoiling their world."

Conservative judges and Supreme Court Justices strive mightily to set forth what economist John Kenneth Galbraith called "one of man's oldest exercises in moral philosophy; that is, the search for a superior moral justification for selfishness." They have become reactionary purveyors of ideologically technical interpretations of the U.S. Constitution that give the super-rich and far-right partisans and corporate entities excessive rights and power over real people and their destinies.

It is our overarching obligation to be good ancestors, and thereby treat our heirs considerately, responsibly and caringly by paying forward a considerable respect for the Golden Rule reciprocity principle, doing unto our descendents as we surely would have wanted them to have done a better job of doing unto us.

"Behold my brothers, the Spring has come; the earth has received the embraces of the sun and we shall soon see the results of that love! Every seed is awakened and so has all animal life. It is through this mysterious power that we too have our being, and we therefore yield to our neighbors, even our animal neighbors, the same right as ourselves, to inhabit this land.

Yet, hear me, people, we have now to deal with another race -- small and feeble when our fathers first met them, but now great and overbearing. Strangely enough they have a mind to till the soil and the love of possession is a disease with them. These people have made many rules that the rich may break but the poor may not. They take their tithes from the poor and weak to support the rich and those who rule. They claim this mother of ours, the earth, for their own and fence their neighbors away; they deface her with their buildings and refuse. The nation is like a spring freshet that overruns its banks and destroys all that are in its path."

- Sitting Bull, a Lakota Sioux Chief, 1877

See clearly. The bottom line drive that is so perverting our national policies and priorities is the compulsion to get money, social status and power.

For visionary good guidance, the enactment of a Bill of Rights for Future Generations will providentially ensure that each and every year we invest in the common good rather than letting rich people hubristically continue to get away with their rigged tax evasion schemes and Tax Cut swindles. See clearly: the current status quo wrongly allowed the nearly 650 billionaires in the USA to enjoy a wealth increase of \$845 billion — or about 30% — between mid-March 2020 and mid-September, according to the respectable Coalition on Human Needs.

Ponder this. "America's nearly 650 billionaires now have more than twice as much wealth as the bottom half of the population -- 165 million people." Highlighting the dastardly consequentiality of this economic rigging, the national debt has increased by more than \$3 trillion during this pandemic period, and 50 million people lost their jobs, and 30 million have gone hungry, and 12 million lost their employer-provided health insurance. This, during a six-month period in which 7.5 million Americans were infected by the contagious coronavirus, and over 210,000 died, many unnecessarily, due to the treacherously manipulative deceitful irresponsible divide-to-conquer shenanigans involved in Republican rule and the politicizing of science, mask wearing, social distancing and contact tracing.

The Federal Reserve released data in October 2020 showing rapidly increasingly stark disparities in U.S. wealth by race, age and class. The numbers cast a laser-like light on the structural systemic injustices that are so bad that White Americans hold 84% of the nation's wealth, compared with 4% for Black households. Shame on all who stand athwart progressive palms for ameliorating these adversity-engendering real world conditions.

An ethical rot lies at the core of the swamp monster culture of corruption in Washington D.C., and this violation of ethics is a main causative factor in perpetuating this grotesque degree of inequality and injustice in the land of the supposedly free.

The Fed data revealed that the top 1% of Americans have a combined net worth of over \$34 trillion, while the poorest 50% hold only a little over \$2 trillion of all household wealth. The 50 richest people in the country, by themselves, are worth almost \$2 trillion, according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, up more than \$300 billion from the beginning of 2020.

COVID-19 has exacerbated inequality in the U.S., with job losses falling heavily on low-wage service workers and the virus disproportionately infecting and killing people of color. Meanwhile, many upper-middle class professionals are working from home, and watching their retirement accounts rise in value in response to the U.S. Treasury and Federal Reserve pumping record large amounts of debt stimulus into businesses, the economy and markets.

And the Trump administration is mean-spiritedly pushing to get the partisan "conservatives" on the Supreme Court to take a stand for the rich against everyone else by declaring the Affordable Care Act unconstitutional because it assessed a 3.8% tax on their Net Investment Incomes in order to pay for expanded healthcare that has helped tens of millions of Americans. Lobbyists for rich people and giant insurance companies just hate any restrictions on their freedom to increase their profits, like by discriminating against anyone with "preexisting conditions".

"One commonsense reform to the tax code would be to enact a wealth tax, which would annually tax the net worth of the super-rich. It would be similar to the taxes on real estate and (in some places) personal property like luxury automobiles." A wealth tax could raise more than \$2 trillion annually, and only the wealthiest 0.1% -- or 75,000 households -- would be subject to the tax. A vote on this issue would rightly be 99.9% to .1%.

"Once the super-rich start paying their fair share in taxes, we could dedicate more funds to critical services for struggling families and vulnerable people, including making sure people have food, housing and health care." And we could do critical work of strengthening the social safety net, investing in good infrastructure, protecting the environment and so much more.

Alert here now! Consider the reckless Trumpian ruse of going rogue against humanity on the existential issue of human-caused rapid climate change. Look, specifically, at the Paris Accords. These are the most widely supported agreement in world history. They are a first step, albeit inadequate, towards trying to mitigate the most dire harbinger of future hard times that is found in anthropogenic climate disrupting activities.

"We are living at the expense of future generations. In this respect, it is plain that we are living in untruth."

--- Pope Benedict XVI, *Light of the World*:

In a climate change question at the Vice Presidential debate with Kamala Harris, Mike Pence doubled down on rigidifying the Trump Discords, in effect again declaring that America First is *über alles* — and that it is what some say is our "asshole government's absolute right" to categorically reject our ultimate moral responsibility to try to mitigate the extreme social and environmental injustices that climate change is causing in the world today.

Trump Republicans are arrogantly abusing power by stacking federal courts with religious conservatives who are biased against mainstream views that favor affordable healthcare, a woman's right to choose, stronger worker's rights, gun safety, equitable human rights, stronger voting rights, and real power to the people rather than to moneyed interests and corporate entities. Immediately after the eminently respectable Ruth Bader Ginsburg died, these diabolically scheming politicians seized the opportunity to ram through a far right partisan onto the Supreme Court, in an all-fired hurry to stack the court in anticipation of electoral fireworks as the November 3, 2020 elections approached.

The hubristic Trump Republican attempt to replace the laudably liberal-minded Ruth Bader Ginsburg with a religious absolutist and partisan conservative is a rude affront to Ruth Bader Ginsburg's great legacy of having strived to achieve fairer dealings for women in our overly male-dominated patriarchal society. Not only is this raw abuse of power a gross violation of the great liberty-strengthening Golden Rule principle of a strong separation of church and state, but it is also anathema to true democratic fairness and good governance.

Trump's nominee, Amy Coney Barrett, is a staunch Catholic, and a favorite of both the religious right and the far right Federalist Society. This choice is one more huge plank in the eye of the insidious Republican effort to consolidate their grip on power through the courts, instead of making honest, responsible and honorable efforts to

gain a popular majority by siding with the majority in promoting the greater good. "More and more, they are faced with a choice between THEIR power and OUR democracy — and they're making their choice clear." They apparently don't give a damn about democratic fairness, or the general welfare, or domestic tranquility.

I was recently perched on a hillside with a commanding view of San Quentin prison, and felt fortunate to be able to enjoy the freedom of the foreground over the complete lack of freedom in the background. Mass incarceration is only one aspect of the multitude of sins involved in the domineering status quo, with its structural sexism and racism, and white male supremacy. But make sure to see clearly right now.

Democracy is obviously better for the people than despotic authoritarian rule, and the slope is slippery, and getting very steep as the Trump tenure comes to a close. Trump's loss and desperate lies and the failure of his many post-election lawsuits represent a clearly marked last Exit Ramp to common sense and fair-mindedness.

Women should not be treated as pawns in culture wars, and never as handmaids forced into child-bearing slavery in a theocratic society as depicted in the dystopian novel *The Handmaid's Tale*. For this reason, fundamentalist religious people deserve the ridicule Mark Twain directed at them in *Letters from the Earth*, in which he wryly lampooned religious dogmas for their broadly preposterous claims, and made a merited critique of the Christian bible with the shrewd observation, "It is full of interest. It has noble poetry in it; and some clever fables; and some blood-drenched history; and some good morals; and a wealth of obscenity; and upwards of a thousand lies."

Mark Twain emulated the great Voltaire in using wit, satire and ridicule to throw a bright light onto the absurdities, follies and injustices embedded in established governments, societal hierarchies and reigning power structures. He lampooned both overweening government and religious authorities, and dished out cyclones of laughter with a goal of inspiring societal change and a needed remodeling in the face of established inequities.

It is consequentially wrong to replace the greatest champion in American history of fairer treatment of women with an orthodox ultra conservative defender of white male supremacy. Far from mainstream views, conservative women like Amy Coney Barrett are traitors to their sex and humanity when they ally themselves with fundamentalist male authorities in a conservative hierarchy that perpetuates the oppressive subordination of females in the name of a stodgy old Church and a jealous, judgmental, unjust, misogynistic, homophobic, capricious and vindictive 'Strict Father' male God.

It is diabolically wrong to stack federal courts and the Supreme Court with ideologically extreme judges who rationalize system-corrupting Big Money in our elections and the evisceration of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to let legislatures engage in the suppression of millions of people's voices. This anti-democratic action is profoundly wrong due to the harmful impacts such partisan rigging has on our governance and policy priorities.

Big Money in politics is a critically important problem. It is not merely some partisan political issue, for it directly affects people's day-to-day lives. In other words, it isn't just an arcane policy issue, it is an issue involving good governance and democratic fair representation, and has consequential impacts on decision making. **MOVE TO AMEND!** We need strong and smart leadership, not chaotic bad management, pathological deceit, and denials of facts, science, reality and truth. Dramatically strengthen our democracy by passing the For the People Act of 2019; and get rid of the Electoral College to fairly move to the direct popular election of presidents.

A wealth tax would help address the extreme inequities that let rich people like con man Trump and his family and "friends" and co-conspiratorial enablers pay little or no taxes. Look at Trump's slimy record on paying taxes. The *New York Times* made explosive revelations recently that he paid no federal income taxes in 11 out of 18 years, and paid just \$750 in 2016 and 2017. This shows that Trump routinely skirted tax law, and likely broke it, through improper deductions and other accounting maneuvers. It also points to the fact that it would be a positive plan to make America fairer by requiring rich people to contribute more to making our country more broadly prosperous.

Another reason that millionaires and billionaires like Trump can get away with paying zero dollars in income tax is because the enforcement capabilities of the IRS have been severely weakened by Republicans in Congress. Nine years ago, 12% of millionaires' tax returns were audited. Now, it's just 3%. Remarkably, the very poorest taxpayers -- those eligible for the poverty-fighting Earned Income Tax Credit -- are about as likely to get audited as the wealthiest 1%. Demand that Congress fully fund the IRS to hold tax cheats like Donald Trump accountable.

DEDICATION

The idea for this Bill of Rights for Future Generations recognizes the vital inspiration of Eleanor Roosevelt, a champion of human rights who spearheaded the effort by the United Nations' Human Rights Commission to enact the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, in the aftermath of the Second World War. Eleanor Roosevelt called this Declaration the "International Magna Carta for all mankind". The Bill of Rights for Future Generations would eminently equitably expand this respect for natural human rights to all people in the future.

This *Bill of Rights for Future Generations* is dedicated to one of the most perceptive and visionary persons I've ever met, a man who died tragically of a sudden heart failure a few years ago at the age of 49. He was a remarkable person who was boyish at heart and yet exceptionally aware, intelligent, energetic and gregarious. He greeted his friends and acquaintances alike with an enthusiastic hug, and conversed with them passionately about important causes and ecologically sane ideas, and he was commendably committed to making the world greener and more sustainable.

"Whatever you think or dream you can do, begin it.

Boldness has genius, power, and magic in it."

--- Johann Wolfgang von Goethe