



Political Reform

Year in Review

2025

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Letter from Mark

Five years ago, in [Breaking the Two-Party Doom Loop](#), our colleague Lee Drutman foresaw a moment of democratic crisis, in which the structurally unsound U.S. electoral system would fail dramatically and force us to revisit our constitutional structures and institutional assumptions. Rather than reforming around the edges of the process, Lee predicted we might finally rethink winner-take-all elections and single-member legislative districts, and move toward a more fluid, multiparty system that would promote political compromise and sustainable policies that support the aspirations of all.

At the end of 2025, here we are—at that very moment of crisis, though still far from the moment when the gateway to reform opens. The form the crisis has taken, to this point, is a staggering concentration of, and abuse of, power, within a corrupt presidency. Congress has all but abdicated its role as the first branch of government and its power over spending, tariffs and war; the Supreme Court has embraced the dubious theory of the “unitary executive” that grants the president largely unchecked authority, particularly over once-independent agencies. Watergate-era reforms intended to constrain what was then called the “imperial presidency,” such as the principle that the Department of Justice must be independent of political influence, have fallen in a matter of months, along with older civil service and whistleblower protections.

Of even greater concern, institutions outside of government, including journalism, law firms, and higher education, have been bullied and bribed to conform to the administration’s directives and, in particular, to reverse decades of progress toward racial equity. This concentration of autocratic

power, combined with extreme concentration of economic influence, is both unprecedented and unsustainable, unless we are willing to give up the pluralistic promise of American democracy altogether.

Democratic reform has one priority in both the short and long term: To break the concentration of power and reconstruct the formal, constitutional separation of powers, as well as the pluralism and autonomy of institutions that can make democracy possible. Our country thrives when not only a wide range of viewpoints are represented and heard, but also when an unrestrained chorus of civil society institutions—community organizations, schools, charities, advocacy groups, and even private companies—operate with autonomy and their own sense of purpose, fully within the law but independent of government control. And we should aspire to elections and legislatures that fully reflect the range of viewpoints and experiences in a complex, multiracial continental nation, a challenging ideal even in the best of times.

These principles have been inherent in the vision of New America’s Political Reform program since before the current moment, although we haven’t always described them in these terms. Our work on structural reforms to our elections, parties, and legislatures, including proportional representation and ballot fusion (which would allow new parties to emerge and forge new coalitions), can offset the concentration of power and ensure broad representation. This year, we embarked on a [project to expand the number of states](#) that allow voters to initiate policy change through questions on the ballot. In the 24 states that allow that process, they have reflected the

public's true views on Medicaid expansion, the minimum wage, LGBT rights, and other causes.

We also continued to pursue ideas that might lead to the emergence of newer political parties that would represent novel dimensions of political contestation and compromise. Ballot fusion is a viable small step toward multi-party democracy. In 2025, we organized well-attended conferences in [Kansas](#) and [Wisconsin](#), two of the states where newer parties are asking state courts to relegalize the once commonplace practice that would allow them to cross-endorse candidates from other parties. We also hosted a conference bringing together academics and political practitioners to consider the characteristics of a healthier party system and representative, meaningful parties, which will lead to a blueprint for party reforms which we will publish in 2026.

Similarly, our work on [co-governance](#) and [citizens' assemblies](#) aspires to create new means for people to be heard in the policy process and grow their civic power, and voice. In 2025, we saw an explosion of interest in using deliberative methods to find consensus on local problems and overcome ideological division.

But we also were reminded this year that, if the scope of democracy, and the threats to it, extends beyond the official boundaries of government, so must our work. Higher education helps people reach their aspirations, practice civic dialogues, and generate new knowledge and ideas; that makes the 4,000 colleges and universities that anchor our communities as central to the democratic promise as our state and national capitals. In 2025, we started two projects that highlight the democratic promise of higher education: One effort will bring citizen assemblies to community colleges, strengthening the role of those remarkable institutions in solving local problems. In the second, we joined New America's Higher Education program to help

launch a new organization that would respond to political threats to higher education at the state and federal level, and make the case for the value of higher education beyond its economic and workforce development role.

Finally, the Political Reform program has put serious thought into the task of rebuilding democratic governance after the current crisis recedes. The fragile structures of the administrative state that provide health security, environmental protections, equal opportunity, financial stability, education, and much else were built incrementally over many decades. Over the last year, they have been greatly damaged. Those systems, or better alternatives, cannot be restored in their previous form, but we also don't have decades to wait for their reinvention. We believe that democratic governance goes beyond elections and legislation and must include responsive, well-designed agencies, with clear lines of responsibility across federal, state, local government and civil society. We are engaged in two projects that will launch formally in early 2026 to help envision this democratic future.

The democratic crisis is deep, the work is challenging, but we take it up with an optimism based in the belief that this moment of reckoning can bring our nation to a better place.

Sincerely,

Mark Schmitt

Director, Political Reform



Year in Numbers

46

Op-eds

30

Outlets

15

Reports & Policy
Papers

27

Podcast Episodes

14

Radio & TV
Appearances

30

Events

16

Conferences,
Speeches &
Panels

70

Quotes &
Citations

57

Publications
Referencing
Our Work

6

Staff

5

Fellows

Our Four Pillars of Work

- 01 Fixing Representation at the Source
- 02 Expanding Citizen Agency in Policymaking
- 03 Renovating Civic Institutions to Meet the Moment
- 04 The Future of Governance

01 *Fixing Representation at the Source*

Reforming electoral and party structures to broaden and deepen representation and prevent unhealthy consolidation of political power.

A healthy democracy is one that allows for genuine electoral competition and coalition building. Instead, the United States' winner-take-all system has led the country to dangerous zero-sum thinking and parties that struggle to represent voters and govern effectively. We believe that the way out of these problems will require reimagining our electoral system so that it can enable the emergence of more parties that can better engage constituents, represent voters across ideologies and ethnic groups, and attract and build political talent nationwide.

As champions of this vision, we released original research and analysis, and organized convenings that build upon our years of work on electoral reforms.

This year, our work on pro-parties reform focused on core democratic values and concrete applications. We published papers exploring how proportional representation and

multimember congressional districts could bring more people into politics, lead to greater accountability in our political system, and affect constituent services.” In October, we convened academics, funders, operatives, and journalists to design a realistic framework for a healthier party system.

In 2025, we also advanced our research and public education on fusion voting, which would expand representation and strengthen smaller parties—including co-organizing conferences in Kansas and Wisconsin.

“By making opportunities for younger candidates and by making voting more meaningful through more choices, proportional representation can help increase youth representation in politics in addition to attenuating the influence of barriers to elected office, like incumbency”

—Oscar Pocasangre and Dustin Wahl, [“The Age Divide,”](#) *Protect Democracy and New America*



Parties, Power, and Possibility: Revisiting Fusion Voting in Wisconsin, November 2025.



Lee on CBS Morning Plus to discuss proportional representation, October 2025.

RELATED WORK

[“How to Fix America’s Two-Party Problem”](#)

Lee Drutman and Jesse Wegman
The New York Times

[“Escaping the Political Groundhog Day: How Proportional Representation Can Fix Our Democracy”](#)

Lee Drutman
The Thread

[“How would constituent services in American multi-member districts work?”](#)

Lee Drutman and Anne Meeker
Protect Democracy

[“Eight Reasons to Champion Proportional Representation for the US”](#)

Oscar Pocasangre
New America

“Democratic systems often become stuck... but pressure builds beneath the surface, and change can happen suddenly...”

—Lee Drutman, [“America’s Winter of Political Discontent Could Spark a Democratic Spring,”](#) *The Thread*

[“Why Electoral Reform is Key to the Abundance Agenda”](#)

Oscar Pocasangre
New America

[“How fusion voting builds the new parties that can break the two-party doom loop”](#)

Lee Drutman
Undercurrent Events (Substack)

[“Doomier & Loopier: Why our two-party system will not—and cannot—self-correct on its own”](#)

Lee Drutman
Undercurrent Events (Substack)

[“No Country for Young Politicians—and How To Fix That”](#)

Oscar Pocasangre
The Fulcrum

RELATED WORK (CONTINUED)

“How a simple electoral change could marginalize political extremism”

Lee Drutman
The Contrarian (Substack)

“Why Mamdani and Sliwa Appeared Twice on the New York City Ballot”

Oscar Pocasangre, *The Fulcrum*

“How to break the doom loop of modern American politics”

Lee Drutman and Barry Burden
The Wisconsin State Journal

“Is There Room in American Politics for the Don Bacons of the World?”

Lee Drutman and Dustin Wahl
The Ripon Forum

“Where Did Political Parties Come From?”

Lee Drutman and Didi Kuo
Democracy Deciphered Podcast

“Is American Politics Stuck in a Gerontocracy?”

Oscar Pocasangre, Dustin Wahl,
and Lee Drutman
Politics in Question Podcast

“Opinion | What Elon Musk Gets Wrong About Our Broken Political System”

Lee Drutman
POLITICO

“The Age Divide”

Oscar Pocasangre and Dustin Wahl
Protect Democracy and New America

“Election Reform in America: A Path Forward Out of Political Discontent”

Lee Drutman
The Thread

“Are you being served? How proportional multi-member districts could improve your relationship with government”

Lee Drutman
Undercurrent Events (Substack)

“Pathways to Minority Representation”

Michael Latner and Oscar Pocasangre
The Houston Institute for Race & Justice (Substack)

02 *Expanding Citizen Agency in Policymaking*

Giving voters direct and meaningful influence over the laws and decisions that shape their lives.

In an era of government mistrust and surging populism, models that empower people outside of government to engage directly in policymaking are vital. In an era of institutional mistrust, unresponsive leadership, and surging populism, it's vital that we invest in processes that empower people outside of government to engage directly in policymaking, such as ballot initiatives and citizens' assemblies.

In partnership with FIDE North America and Columbia World Projects, we've conducted a series of public convenings to demystify citizens' assemblies for the public and practitioners, and amplify stories and lessons from the ground to national audiences. We're also exploring opportunities to adapt this model to new contexts. We're now working with community colleges to organize assembly pilots on campus, whereby students and faculty will tackle concrete issues in their communities.

When our representative institutions break down, ballot initiatives are a time-tested mechanism for repair—and democratic renewal. Since initiatives swept the Western states in the Progressive Era, voters have leveraged them to reform their states' elections and governance systems and override out-of-step legislatures on issues ranging from labor rights to reproductive freedoms. However, direct democracy is under threat in many states, and more than half of Americans lack



Hollie and Sarah at New Building Blocks convening hosted by Lumina Foundation with Gabe Lerner and Richard Young, April 2025.

any access to initiatives at the state level. The Political Reform program is producing new research and resources to help advocates and policymakers responsibly expand access to initiatives for the first time in decades.

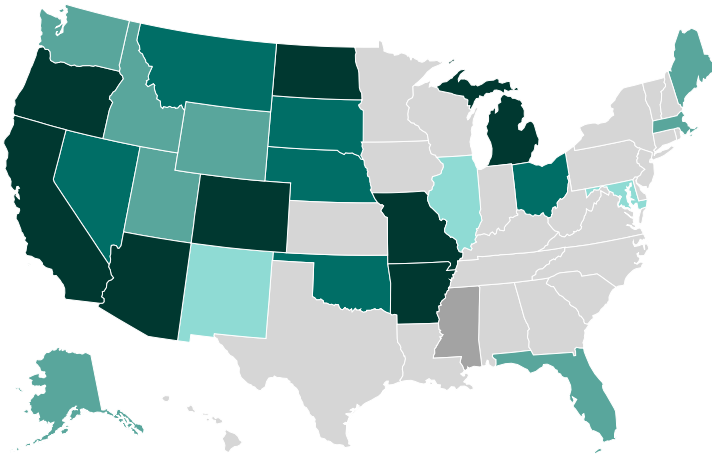
“Community colleges are especially well-positioned to support deliberative, place-based engagement because of their hyperlocal focus and their ties to regional economies.”

—Hollie Russon Gilman, Sarah Jacob, and Logan Hage, [“Centering Community Colleges in Civic Engagement and Local Deliberation,”](#) *New America*

Only About Half of States Provide Access to Statewide Direct Democracy

Of the 26 states with statewide direct democracy systems, just nine offer full access and usability.

■ Full Access & Usable ■ Full Access, Limited Usability ■ Partial Access
■ Very Limited Access ■ Inactive/Suspended ■ None



For information on each of the above categories, see the full report.

Map from New America report “Expanding Citizen-Led Policymaking in the Twenty-First Century”.

“Where other branches of government fail or falter, direct democracy can offer a constitutional release valve for public discontent.”

—Maresa Strano, Mark Schmitt, and Oscar Pocasangre, “[Expanding Citizen-Led Policymaking in the Twenty-First Century](#),” *New America*

RELATED WORK

“[A Case for \(Responsibly\) Expanding Citizen-Led Policymaking in the United States](#)”

Maresa Strano
New America

“[Expanding Citizen Led Ballot Initiative Access with Maresa Strano New America](#)”

Maresa Strano
Digital Politics with Karen Jagoda

Event: [Testing Public Trust and Institutional Legitimacy](#)

Co-hosted by New America, Columbia World Projects, and FIDE North America

Event: [Democracy Beyond Elections](#)
Webinar Series: [Citizens’ Assemblies and Institutional Reform](#)

Co-hosted by New America, Columbia World Projects, and FIDE North America

RELATED WORK (CONTINUED)

Event: Civic Assemblies in Action: Lessons on Civic Engagement from Fort Collins

Co-hosted by New America, American Public Trust, and Local Policy Lab

“The People’s Plan for Hughes”

Hollie Russon Gillman and Sarah Jacob
New America

“Dollars for Democracy: Financing Citizens’ Assemblies in North America”

Hollie Russon Gillman and Sarah Jacob
New America

“Exploring An Innovative Approach to Democratic Governance: A Funder’s Guide to Citizens’ Assemblies”

Hollie Russon Gilman, Maya Ingram, Lance Bitner, and Hillary Hooke
Democracy Funders Network and New America

“The Practice of Democracy Through Citizen Assemblies”

Hollie Russon Gilman
New America

“Expanding Citizen-Led Policymaking in the Twenty-First Century”

Maresa Strano, Mark Schmitt, and Oscar Pocasangre
New America

“Give Wisconsin voters more say through ballot initiatives”

Maresa Strano and Matt Rothschild
The Wisconsin State Journal

“What 4/20 Can Teach Us About Direct Democracy”

Maresa Strano and Mark Schmitt
The Thread

“Once Again, Politicians Are Choosing Their Voters. It’s Time for Voters To Choose Back.”

Maresa Strano
The Fulcrum

“Episode 13: What Are Ballot Initiatives and How Are They Used?”

Maresa Strano and Chris Melody Fields Figueredo
Democracy Deciphered Podcast

“The Practice of Democracy Through Citizen Assemblies”

Hollie Russon Gilman
New America

“Listening at Scale in California: Inside the Possibility Lab’s Collaborative Model”

Hollie Russon Gilman and Sarah Jacob
New America

03 *Renovating Civic Institutions to Meet the Moment*

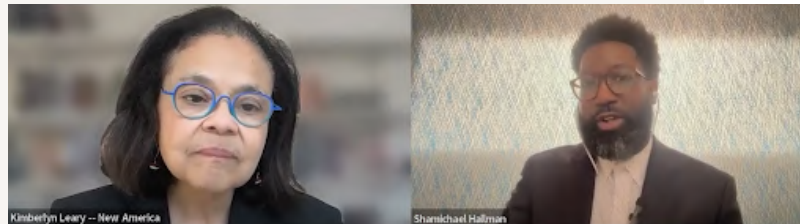
Supporting the people, places, and spaces that promote belonging and resilience across democratic society.

In the United States, an epidemic of loneliness and isolation is colliding with crises of misinformation, affective polarization, and democratic legitimacy. With so many things competing for our attention, we explore ways to strengthen the anchors of civic life that ground and connect us, and to meet people where they are.

In 2025, we examined—through events, case studies, podcast interviews, and other products—how physical spaces like libraries and churches, as well as online spaces like Discord chats, can revitalize our communities by offering resources, human connection across political and class divides, and meaningful public engagement.

“With Discord, organizers can use moderated channels to host discussions on everything from housing policy to youth mental health, offering a space for real-time dialogue and meeting people where they are at.”

—Hollie Russon Gilman and Sarah Jacob, [“Tech Can Help Cities Rebuild Civic Life, If We Let People In,”](#) *NextCity*



Kim moderating a virtual discussion on libraries as a hub for civic engagement with Shamichael Hallman, May 2025.

We also confronted the broader institutional pressures of this moment, helping organize a coalition of think tank leaders to develop new approaches that are relevant to current circumstances. Recognizing higher education’s central role in democracy, we also partnered with New America’s Higher Education program to launch a new organization dedicated to protecting academic autonomy and reinforcing colleges and universities as civic institutions. Through this work, we aim to support a civil society resilient enough to withstand this moment and meet the challenges ahead.



Hollie at the American Academy of Arts and Sciences convening, November 2025.

“Think tanks that once had elite partnerships with government should find new ways to instead engage with and support community-based organizations and social movement groups that are ...working at the local and state levels.”

—Mark Schmitt, [“Think Tanks in an Authoritarian Moment,”](#) *Democracy Journal*



Hollie at a Democracy Notes convening at the Kettering Foundation, December 2025.

RELATED WORK

Event: [Meet Me at the Library](#)

Hosted by New America

[“Designing the Future”](#)

Kim Leary
New America

[“15,000 Churches Will Close This Year. Each Could Be a Home for Civic Revival”](#)

Hollie Russon Gilman and Ryan Eller
Chronicle of Philanthropy

[“The Moral Stakes of Budgeting”](#)

Hollie Russon Gilman
Stanford Social Innovation Review

[“Inclusive Leadership in Action: How the All In Allegheny Initiative Is Engaging Communities to Drive Change”](#)

Hollie Russon Gilman and Sarah Jacob
New America

[“Listening at Scale in California: Inside the Possibility Lab’s Collaborative Model”](#)

Hollie Russon Gilman and Sarah Jacob
New America

[“Tech Can Help Cities Rebuild Civic Life, If We Let People In”](#)

Hollie Russon Gilman and Sarah Jacob
NextCity

[“Democrats keep saying America is an ‘oligarchy.’ Is that true?”](#)

Lee Drutman
Vox

[“How to Buy an Election”](#)

Mark Schmitt
The Boston Review

[“Think Tanks in an Authoritarian Moment”](#)

Mark Schmitt
Democracy Journal

04 *The Future of Governance*

Redesigning governance systems to withstand—and evolve with—conflict.

Looking ahead, we aim to sharpen our focus on reimagining and rebuilding governance. The challenges of technological disruption, demographic change, and institutional fragility demand creative models that can manage conflict, harness complexity, and engender legitimacy with the public. In 2025, we began laying the foundation for this future-oriented agenda. Our new collaboration with the Federation for American Innovation (FAI) is developing both a fresh vision and practical tools to modernize the legislative and executive branches and “future-enable” core functions of government, integrating foresight, cross-partisan and cross-sector expertise, and grounding theory in institutional practice.

In the coming year, this project will unfold across multiple mediums—convenings, thought pieces, and on our podcast, [*Politics in Question*](#), co-hosted by New America’s Lee Drutman and FAI’s James Wallner since 2019.

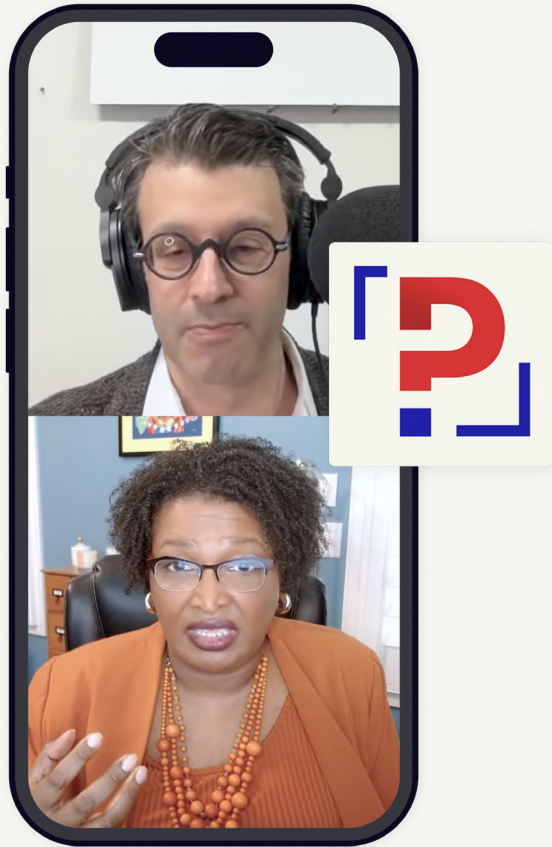
Complementing this effort, our program is hosting the Reconstructing Democracy Initiative, led by Cornell law professor and former OIRA associate administrator Sabeel Rahman. This initiative is producing new research, analysis, and convenings to help develop forward-looking approaches to rebuilding and redesigning governmental institutions and their capacities so that they can more effectively provide essential services and protections for families and communities.



Mark and Lee at A Blueprint for a Healthier Party System conference dinner, October 2025.



Hollie moderating a panel at an event on democratic innovation for New America’s 25th anniversary, October 2025.



Lee chats with Leader Stacey Abrams on “Politics in Question”, November 2025.



A Blueprint for a Healthier Party System conference at New America Headquarters, October 2025.

SNAPSHOT OF RELATED WORK

Private Event: Democratic Governance for the Climate Crisis Salon

Co-hosted by New America and Policylink

Event: “Everyday Democracy”

Co-hosted by New America, Democracy Notes, Campus Compact and Philanthropy for Active Civic Engagement

“How Do We Stop the Rise of Autocracy? Politics in Question Podcast feat. Stacey Abrams”

Lee Drutman

Politics in Question Podcast

“How Are Social Movements Built?”

Lee Drutman and Julia Azari

Politics in Question Podcast

“Do We Need Conflict in American Politics?”

Lee Drutman and James Wallner

Politics in Question Podcast

Private Event: A Blueprint for a Healthier Party System

Hosted by New America

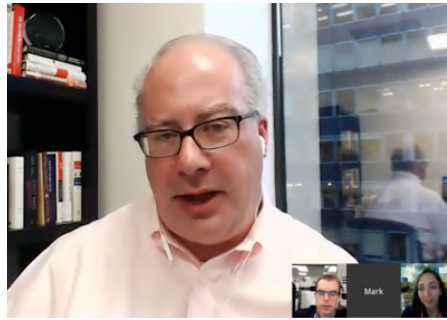
10 Years of Political Reform

Since its launch in 2014, the Political Reform program has consistently produced events, publications, and initiatives that invite the public to reimagine our political systems and consider what a multiethnic, multiparty democracy could look like in the United States. Over the years, a wide range of scholars, fellows, and thinkers have come through the program and shaped its direction. From our inaugural event on campaign finance reform to publications on proportional representation, we have covered a broad spectrum of topics related to democratic innovation and renewal.

2014

OCTOBER

Mark Schmitt during online panel on campaign finance reform for Political Reform's first public event



NOVEMBER

Mark Schmitt at Political Reform's first in-person event panel discussion on Zephyr Teachout's book *Corruption in America: From Benjamin Franklin's Snuff Box to Citizens United*



2015

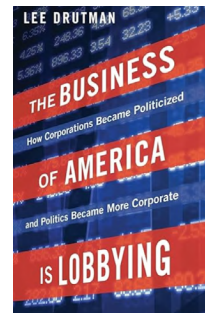
FEBRUARY

"Can We Make American Democracy Work?" panel with Perry Bacon, Jr., Bruce Crain, Frances Lee, John Lawrence, and Mark Schmitt



APRIL

The Business of America is Lobbying book launch event with author Lee Drutman and Peter Overby



2016

MAY

Launch of Legislative Branch Capacity Working Group (LBCWG) with R Street Institute

2017

APRIL

The Givers: Wealth, Power, and Philanthropy in a New Gilded Age with author David Callahan, Kristin A. Goss, and Mark Schmitt



2018

MARCH

“Building Democratic Infrastructure”
Stanford Social Innovation Review
Hollie Russon Gilman, K. Sabeel Rahman, and Elena Souris

NOVEMBER

“Where Residents, Politics, and Government Meet Philadelphia’s Experiments with Civic Engagement”
New America
Chayenne Polimédio, Elena Souris, and Hollie Russon Gilman

2019

MARCH

Launch panel for “The ‘Consensual Straitjacket’: Four Decades of Women in Nuclear Security” report, featuring Ambassador Bonnie Jenkins, former Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Michèle Flournoy, and then-Deputy Secretary General of NATO Rose Gottemoeller



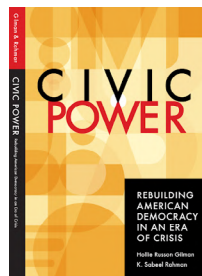
JUNE

Airing of the first episode of *Politics in Question*, “Should the Electoral College be abolished?”



SEPTEMBER

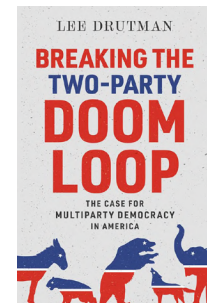
Civic Power book launch event with authors Hollie Russon Gilman and K. Sabeel Rahman



2020

JANUARY

Breaking the Two-Party Doom Loop book launch event with Anne-Marie Slaughter and author Lee Drutman



FEBRUARY

Electoral Reform Research Group research development conference on ranked-choice voting



APRIL

“Democracy Beyond COVID-19 The Politics of Crisis Policymaking”
New America
Lee Drutman, Maresa Strano, Hollie Russon Gilman, Alexandra Stark, Heather Hurlburt, Mark Schmitt, Elena Souris

2021

NOVEMBER

[“What We Know About Ranked-Choice Voting”](#)

New America

Lee Drutman and Maresa Strano

2022

JUNE

Jointly won Lever for Change’s \$10 million [Stronger Democracy Award](#), which launched an effort to legalize fusion voting

2023

APRIL

“Making Equity Work Through the Federal Government: A Conversation with Recent Senior White House Leaders” public event



APRIL

“More Parties, Better Parties: Building a Stronger Democracy in America” conference at Stanford University

2024

JANUARY

[“Democracy Hypocrisy: Examining America’s Fragile Democratic Convictions”](#)

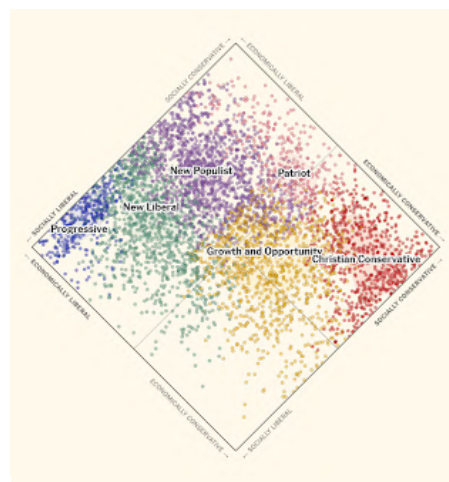
Democracy Fund and New America

Joe Goldman, Lee Drutman, and Oscar Pocasangre

2025

JANUARY

Graphic from Jesse Wegman and Lee Drutman’s graphic *New York Times* [“How to Fix America’s Two-Party Problem”](#) article on what proportional representation might look like in the United States.



Leadership Behind the Scenes

In addition to public activities—such as publishing op-eds, drafting reports, and attending events—our team works consistently behind the scenes with organizations and influential thinkers and leaders to advance political reform. We inform stakeholders across various institutional contexts, from lecturing at universities to hosting private, cross-partisan discussions, and sharing insights with and learning from others to expand our community and increase our impact.

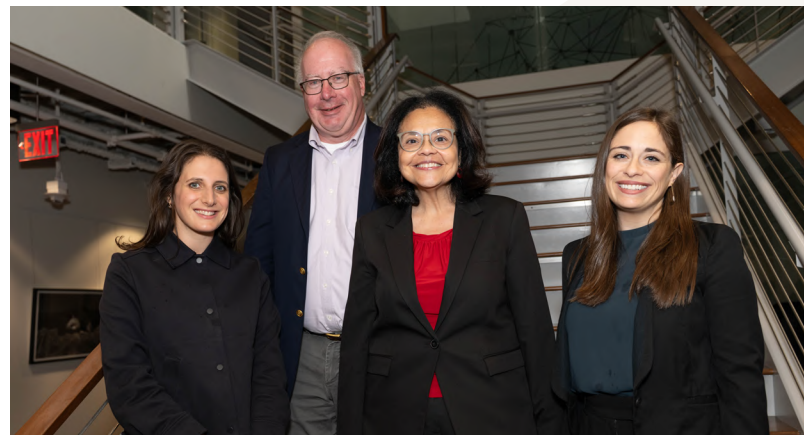
Lee Drutman participated in the American Academy of Arts and Sciences working group on proportional representation, which published the report *Expanding Representation: Reinventing Congress for the 21st Century*. Lee testified before charter reform commissions in New York City and Los Angeles and advised several members of Congress on electoral reform.

Oscar Pocasangre continued his work with the Guinier Project on Race, Reform, and Multiracial Democracy hosted at Harvard Law School, collaborating with academics and lawyers on research related to electoral systems and minority representation. He also provided expert testimony on primary election reform in New York City and has been invited to speak on electoral systems at conferences and with groups engaged in reform efforts.

Hollie Russon Gilman is participating in the American Academy of Arts and Sciences working group on Local Democracy. She worked with Democracy Funders Network on a funders guide on citizens' assemblies, as well as a new pooled fund, and attended this year's democracy summit.

Mark Schmitt served on the advisory committee that helped design a new organization, launching in early 2026, to mount a strong defense of higher education and its democratic purpose. Mark also helped organize the Constitutional Collaborative.

Maresa Strano served on the advisory boards of the Center for Ballot Freedom, ProRep Coalition, and Rank the Vote. She also organized a conference on fusion voting at the University of Wisconsin, launched a new project to expand access to ballot initiatives, attended BISC's Road Ahead conference, and was invited to present her team's research at democracy reform conferences and meetings.



From left to right: Hollie Russon Gilman, Mark Schmitt, Kim Leary, and Maresa Strano, April 2025. Not pictured are Lee Drutman, Sarah Jacob, and Oscar Pocasangre.

About Us

OUR TEAM



Lee Drutman
Senior Fellow



Sarah Jacob
Program Associate



Oscar Pocasangre
Senior Data Analyst



Hollie Russon Gilman
Senior Fellow



Mark Schmitt
Director



Maresa Strano
Deputy Director

FELLOWS

Lydia Bean

Ann Florini

Ilyse Hogue

Didi Kuo

Kimberlyn Leary

FRIENDS OF THE PROGRAM

Our co-governance partners include [Columbia World Projects](#), [FIDE North America](#), and [Bloomberg Harvard City Leadership Initiative](#). We're especially grateful for the collaboration and support of the [Regen Foundation](#), [Berkeley Possibility Labs](#), [PA Heart and Soul](#), [Campus Compact](#), [Democracy Notes](#), and [Philanthropy for Active Civic Engagement](#).

We'd also like to thank [Protect Democracy](#) for their partnership in co-publishing a series of [white papers on proportional representation](#), Didi Kuo and Stanford's Center on Democracy Development and the Rule of Law for co-organizing our political parties convening, as well as the [Center for Ballot Freedom](#), the [Foundation for American Innovation](#), [Fix Our House](#), University of Wisconsin Law School, and the Guinier Project at Harvard Law School.

Our Funders

Democracy Fund
Independence Initiative/Center for Ballot Freedom
Omidyar Network
Open Society Foundations
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
William and Flora Hewlett Foundation
W.K. Kellogg Foundation
David and Lucile Packard Foundation
Lumina Foundation
Freedom Together Foundation
Porticus Foundation
New Venture Fund
Protect Democracy
Mellon Foundation
Marguerite Casey Foundation
American Opportunity Action
Packard Foundation
PolicyLink

[Donate here](#)

Our Mission

New America’s Political Reform program develops ambitious, evidence-based strategies to repair government dysfunction, rebuild civic trust, and realize the potential of American democracy. We combine structural and cultural approaches to reform, exploring how people engage in democracy not only at the ballot box but through everyday decisions that shape their communities. Our work exposes the dangers of the current “two-party doom loop” and champions the processes and policies needed to achieve a more representative and responsive democracy. We publish books, policy ideas, and practical tools that reimagine self-governance, and we partner with policymakers, community organizations, advocates, journalists, and funders to translate analysis into action. Together, we seek to build a democracy with the capacity, legitimacy, and resilience to serve a dynamic and diverse nation for generations to come.



You can stay in touch with the **Political Reform program** by following us on X (@PolReformNA) and Bluesky (@politicalreform.newamerica.org) and **subscribing to our program’s email list**.