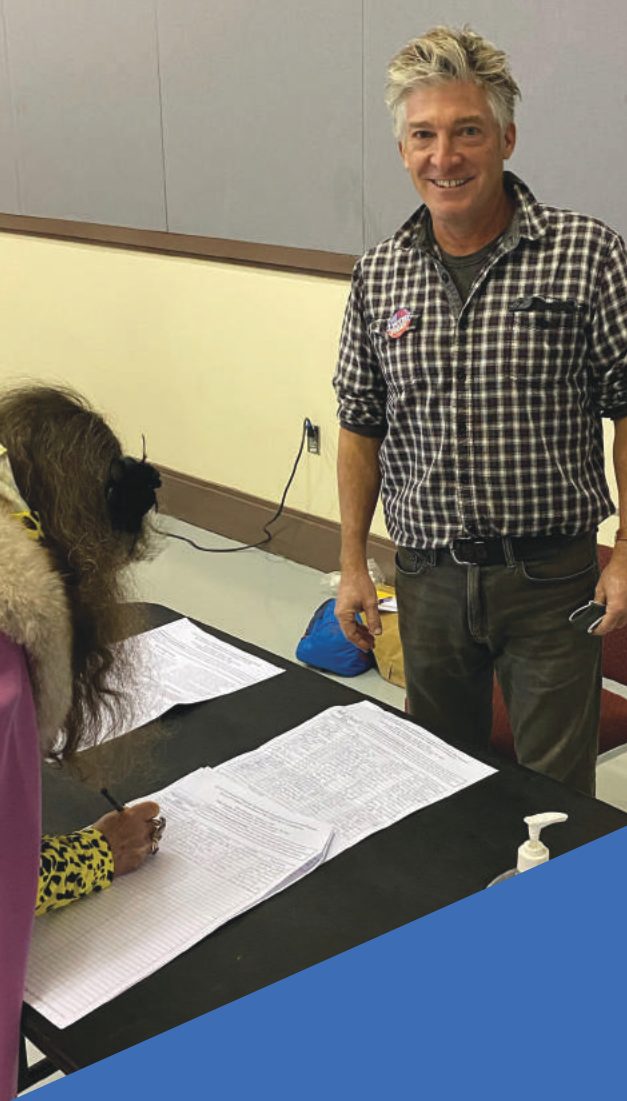


AMERICAN PROMISE

# 2021 Annual Report



For the  
future we  
are building  
together, we  
thank you.



**“AND WE MUST GO  
TOGETHER, PUTTING  
ASIDE DIVISIVE POLITICAL  
DIFFERENCES AND  
UNITING TOWARDS  
A COMMON GOAL:  
SAVING CONSTITUTIONAL  
DEMOCRACY FOR ALL  
AMERICANS.”**

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Friend,

2021 challenged American citizens to find new ways to connect, build community, and learn from one another. Faced with unprecedented threats to our constitutional democracy, a continued national public health crisis, and systemic inequalities, we embraced a new normal, not just in how we convene with one another, but also in how we think about the future of this republic.

We know that our national crisis and the fragility of the systems that govern us cannot be fixed easily. We need real solutions that restore civic trust and faith in our leaders to represent us.

Five years into our mission to loosen dark money's grip on our elections, we feel more confident than ever in our amendment's ability to rebalance power in this country to shape a future in which the voice of the people matters.

[With Phase Two in our 10-year plan to amend the U.S. Constitution and win our For Our Freedom amendment](#) well underway, your continued enthusiasm and belief in preserving our republic reminds us what is at stake in this urgent mission. As we move full steam ahead in 2022, we reflect on all you made possible in 2021 and want to thank you for your commitment to a brighter future.

**JEFF CLEMENTS**

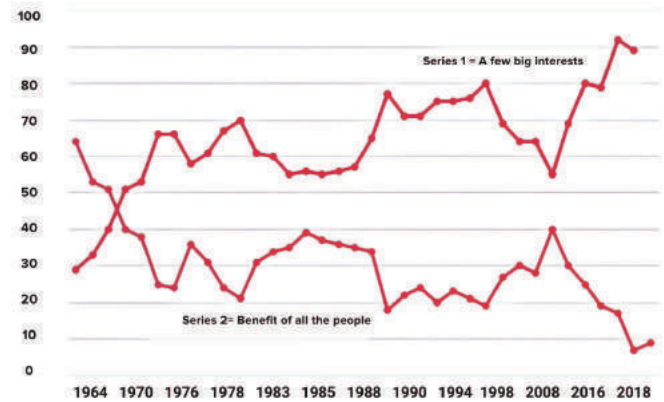


## We know the issue. We have the solution.

OVER

# 14 Billion

SPENT IN 2020 ELECTIONS – **MORE THAN DOUBLE** THE AMOUNT SPENT IN 2016.



American National Election Survey through Pew Research Center

THE PERCENTAGE OF AMERICANS WHO BELIEVE THE **GOVERNMENT IS RUN FOR A FEW BIG INTERESTS** VERSUS THE INTERESTS OF ALL AMERICANS IS RISING...

...BUT SO IS OUR COMMUNITY OF AMERICANS WHO BELIEVE IN OUR AMENDMENT.

## Lawmakers stepped up to end unlimited political spending.

On the 11th anniversary of the *Citizens United* Supreme Court decision, a bipartisan group of elected officials led by **Representatives Ted Deutch (D-FL), John Katko (R-NY), Jamie Raskin (D-MD), and Jim McGovern (D-MA)** [introduced a constitutional amendment](#) to end unlimited political spending by overturning the ruling. **Sen. Shaheen (D-NH)** followed with a [Senate introduction](#).



“The Supreme Court’s disastrous ruling in *Citizens United* made clear that a constitutional amendment would be required to address the outsized role of money in politics.”

**JOHN KATKO**  
U.S. Representative (R-NY)

## President Jimmy Carter Endorses American Promise and Our For Our Freedom Amendment



“As President Carter has expressed, we need to repair the Constitutional foundation for election spending reform so that all Americans may participate in self-government as equal citizens. I am glad to join President Carter and millions of Americans in the urgent, cross-partisan work to bring about this fundamental change.”



**- OLYMPIA SNOWE**  
Fmr. U.S. Senator (R-ME)

## Virginia Becomes the 22nd State to Call for Our Amendment

Affirming that our state-based, citizen-driven empowerment model works, [Virginia joined 21 other states](#) to back our For Our Freedom amendment when lawmakers passed legislation supporting efforts to amend the U.S. Constitution.



“Virginia is one of only five states with no limitation on campaign finance contributions. By becoming the 22nd state to support efforts for this constitutional amendment, Virginia will have taken an initial, highly symbolic step in restoring ordinary citizens’ voices.”

**MICHAEL DEAL**  
American Promise Chapter Member, Vienna, VA

# Maine's \$200 Million Senate Race

Following Maine's \$200 million election in 2020, we looked into the source of the money. The eye-opening findings of our resulting report underscore the massive amount of money eroding our political system. [Under the Avalanche](#) tells the story of money's influence on our leaders – a cycle of spending our amendment will end for good.



## 647 donations

over \$100,000 were made to the Super PACs operating in Maine. **Not one** such gift came from in state.



## Over 98%

of **ad spending** by Super PACs, the Senate Majority PAC and the Senate Leadership Fund, **was negative**.

ON A SINGLE COLD DAY IN NOVEMBER, AMERICAN PROMISE AND [PROTECT MAINE ELECTIONS](#) JOINED FORCES TO MOBILIZE HUNDREDS OF VOLUNTEERS ACROSS MAINE TO TALK WITH THEIR NEIGHBORS, GATHERING 30,000 SIGNATURES IN SUPPORT OF ENDING FOREIGN INFLUENCE ON OUR ELECTIONS.



# Scaling Our State-Based Model

Taking lessons learned from Phase One of our work, we continued connecting with our communities safely. Through both in-person and virtual gatherings, we welcomed many new citizens to our American Promise team.

## A Virtual World Did Not Stop NJ Leaders

New Jersey American Promise members connected virtually with **Congressman Andy Kim (D-NJ)**, [hosting a town meeting](#) and mobilizing the Congressman to publish an opinion piece in the media.







### National Advocacy Team Calls

Our talented and passionate volunteer leaders spent the last few years on the ground, learning grassroots skills and sharing them with other citizens in their communities. To help grow our movement nationwide, these leaders launched [monthly calls](#) to share action-oriented tips, such as **letter to the editor trainings**, **friend bankings**, and **meetings with elected officials**.

### American Promise Connect

We introduced a quarterly call to create space for citizens from all corners of the United States to learn more about our amendment. These calls highlight key themes and strategies in our efforts. For example, our final [AP Connect Call](#) of 2021 featured guest speakers **John F. Kowal** and **Wilfred U. Codrington III** discussing their book “**The People’s Constitution: 200 Years, 27 Amendments, and the Promise of a More Perfect Union.**”

As always in our state and Congress work, we partner with **dozens of organizations and people** to continue building a broad coalition of citizens. Many of our partners made guest appearances or co-sponsored our AP Connect calls in 2021.

### For Our Freedom Constitution Day Launch

We celebrated Constitution Day at Independence Hall in Pennsylvania where we heard from keynote speakers **Professor Craig Green** of Temple University; **Kyle Darby**, CEO of the Philadelphia-based Darby Public Strategies; **John Pudner**, the Executive Director of Take Back Our Republic; and many more as we launched our efforts to make Pennsylvania the 23rd state to call for a constitutional amendment in 2022. **Cross-partisan former Governors, legislators, faith and community leaders have endorsed the [Pennsylvania For Our Freedom campaign](#).**



American Promise supporter Representative Dean Phillips (D-MN) visiting the American Promise table at the Carver County Fair

### Minnesota County Fair Circuit



Minnesota American Promise members, led by American Promise leader **Vicki Barnes**, contacted thousands of Minnesotans across the state on the County Fair Circuit. They also garnered the endorsement of the **National Farmers Union**.

### Closing the Loophole on Dark Money in WI

Wisconsinites in the Green Bay area turned out to learn more about American Promise, and found inspiration from [the words](#) of **John Nusbaum**, a Silver Star combat veteran of the U.S. Air Force and former mayor of DePere, Wisconsin.

“It saddens me that today, the polarization prevents these two sides from fulfilling their constitutional duties and truly representing the will of We the People. It is my firm belief that if we can rescue them from this money-fueled mess, then they can go back to doing what they’re supposed to and we can get back to the civil society we all deserve.”

- **JOHN NUSBAUM**, Veteran and Former Mayor, DePere, WI



# Connect. Commit. Act.



- In May 2021, we hosted our 4th annual [National Citizen Leadership Conference](#) virtually. Speakers (pictured from left to right) included Advisory Council member and former Massachusetts Governor **Deval Patrick**; constitutional amendment leaders from across the political spectrum, including U.S. Representatives **Jamie Raskin**, **John Katko**, **Ted Deutch** and **Jim McGovern**; Former FEC Commissioner **Ann Ravel**; Our Common Purpose Commission Co-Chairs **Danielle Allen** and **Eric Liu**, joined by Commissioner **Pete Peterson**; a new generation of leaders, including Bridge USA CEO and American Promise Education Fund Board Member **Manu Meel**, Issue Voter founder **Maria Yuan**, R Street Fellow **Anthony Marcum**, and Millennial Action Project CEO **Layla Zaidane**; national security and democracy experts such as US Army **Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson**, **Nilmini Rubin**, and Protect Democracy's **Rachel Goodman**; as well as business, faith and other leaders.
- Our in-person and online events, civic trainings and educational trainings engaged with, educated, and secured support from thousands of Americans, bringing together citizen leaders and dozens of reform organizations from all 50 states, providing peer-to-peer networking and training, and concluding with a highly organized and effective citizen lobby day in Congress.
- We expanded our leadership and convening capacity, bringing together and strategically aligning and collaborating with other organizations helping to move our constitutional amendment in Congress.

“

*We may actually surprise ourselves with just how much in common we have. We may have different strategies for solving that problem, but we begin to see that we see the same problems and that they are worth our collective attention.”*

-Gov. Deval Patrick



# Business Leaders United Towards a Better Future

Our American Promise [National Business Network](#) — a well-connected network of civically responsible business professionals and a key group to winning our amendment — grew.



- Maine's [Stand With Maine](#) chapter welcomed over **130 new members** from Maine's business community, amplifying their united sentiment that big-money groups should not drown out the voices of small and mid-sized businesses.
- We launched our efforts in Pennsylvania, earning the support of **Alan Jennings**, former executive director of the Community Action Committee of Lehigh Valley and Program Host of WDIY 88.1 Radio, as well as **David Black**, former CEO/President of the Harrisburg Chamber of Commerce (retired) who is working with the 180 Chambers across the state for support.
- Following the insurrection at the Capitol last January, **Paul Polman**, Co-Founder and chair of IMAGINE, the chair of The B Team, and the former CEO of Unilever [urged businesses to rethink their relationships with politics](#) in the name of democratic preservation. Arguing that "*Citizens United* reinforced the notion that America's democracy serves the interests of those who can afford to buy political authority," he called for a constitutional amendment to end the Supreme Court ruling's dominance on our political system.
- We continue to center partnerships in our efforts to grow our business community. [A Green Bay, Wisconsin event](#) sparked a new national Rotarian initiative to elevate the money in politics problem, the latest development in a long relationship with Rotary Clubs across the country.
- **Maureen Kline**, Vice President of Public Affairs and Sustainability at Fortune 500 Company Pirelli Tire, sat down with us for an in-depth conversation about best practices for Pirelli's leadership in the corporate space, and the role such leadership plays in ending corrupt spending in our elections.

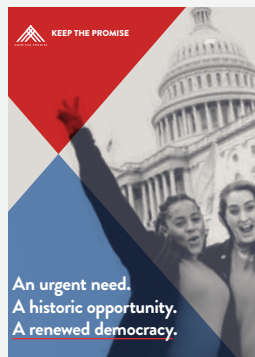


"Do we really want the strategic direction of our society, what we prioritize and what programs we kill, what we tax and what we incentivize, to be determined by so few, and not by We, the People?"

**MAUREEN KLINE**

V.P. of Public Affairs and Sustainability, Pirelli Tire

# Keep the Promise Campaign Fundraising Committees



As we ramped up Phase Two of our campaign, our volunteer community dedicating their time to building philanthropic energy around our amendment also grew. Our Keep the Promise Campaign Committee, chaired by John Wass, and our National Finance Council, chaired by Tara Edelman, play a crucial role in broadening our base of financial support. Both volunteer committees are hard at work in their communities and networks, spreading the word about this critical issue and amplifying the importance of making this amendment a reality.

### KEEP THE PROMISE CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE

Tara Edelman  
Beau Ryan  
Susan Ryan  
Mark Schlesinger  
Sterling Speirn

### NATIONAL FINANCE COUNCIL

Tara Edelman, Chair  
Julie Brogan-Uhrich  
Jack Doty  
John Gates  
Veronica Jorge-Curtis  
Lindsay Kafka  
Sarah Lazarus  
Susan Ryan

# Board Members



In 2022, we welcomed longtime American Promise supporter and political reformer Manu Meel to the American Promise Education Fund Board. Manu is the CEO of BridgeUSA, a national organization working to engage, educate and inspire the next generation of civic leaders. He was also listed to 2022's Forbes 30 Under 30: Education.

### AMERICAN PROMISE EDUCATION FUND

Jeff Clements, President  
John Wass, Chair & Treasurer  
Cheryl Clyburn-Crawford  
Jason Ford  
Manu Meel  
Buff Kavelman  
Debra Winger

### AMERICAN PROMISE

Jeff Clements, President  
John Wass, Chair & Treasurer  
Buff Kavelman  
Jim Rubens  
Debra Winger



American Promise Board Member and Former New Hampshire Republican State Senator Jim Rubens attended a first-of-its-kind cross-partisan event advocating for constitutional amendments, co-sponsored by American Promise.



# Advisory Council

The members of our American Promise Advisory Council support our bold mission through their diverse skills and backgrounds and differing paths to advocacy for our For Our Freedom Amendment. Together, they bring a snapshot of the American perspective that our amendment seeks to elevate and empower: one that is varied and in which cross partisanship thrives. We appreciate their passion and commitment to a different kind of future for their fellow citizens.



“We need to strengthen our democracy if we want good jobs with good wages, energy sources that are renewable and affordable, and strong, resilient communities.”

**-DONNEL BAIRD**, Entrepreneur, CEO and Founder of BlocPower



“It’s time for moral leadership within our businesses, our communities and our government that will return to fair competition, checks and balances, and accountability.”

**-MARYANNE HOWLAND**, Founder & CEO, Ibis Communications and Global Diversity Leadership Exchange



“We need a number of Constitutional Amendments to revitalize our republic, including campaign finance, fiscal responsibility and term limits amendments.”

**-DAVID WALKER**, United States Comptroller General (1998-2008); U.S. Naval Academy, Crowe Chair

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 Greg Behrman  
 Yael Bromberg  
 Kahlil Byrd  
 Prof. John Coates  
 Ben Cohen  
 Matthew Cox  
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 Hon. Nina Turner  
 David Trahan  
 David Walker  
 Marnie Walsh  
 Judy Wicks



**Thank you for your  
investment in this  
critical work.**

---

**Together, we will go big,  
go to the people, and go  
together. And we will  
win a future of equality,  
representation, and  
opportunity for all.**



## MULTI-YEAR COMMITMENTS

This year, the number of our funding partners committing to multi-year commitments more than doubled. Thank you to our donors who are committed to years of investing; your gift has a significant impact on our ability to plan for the future.

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Linzee Weld  
Debra Winger and Arliss Howard

## \$10,000+ Donors

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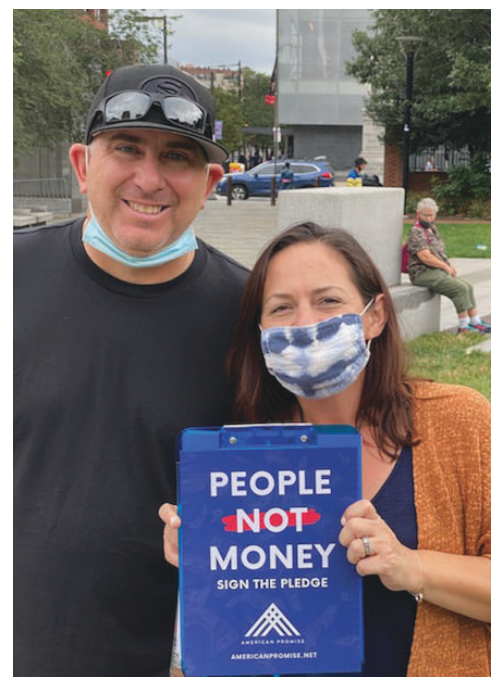
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A man and a woman are standing together at an outdoor community event. The woman is on the left, wearing sunglasses and a white tank top. The man is on the right, wearing a plaid shirt. In the background, a large banner reads "American Promise Big \$ Out of our E".

**Across the country, you continue  
to show up for your community  
and commit – and recommit – to  
renewing our American Promise.**

**YOU ARE BUILDING THE KIND OF FUTURE  
THIS REPUBLIC DESERVES.**

**Your partnership in this cause led to our second record-breaking year in a row.**

**2021 funding increased over 80% from 2020**, with 24% of donors at the \$1,000+ level giving multi-year gifts and supporting our ability to plan for growth through Phase 2.

## YEAR-OVER-YEAR

**\$2,105,878**

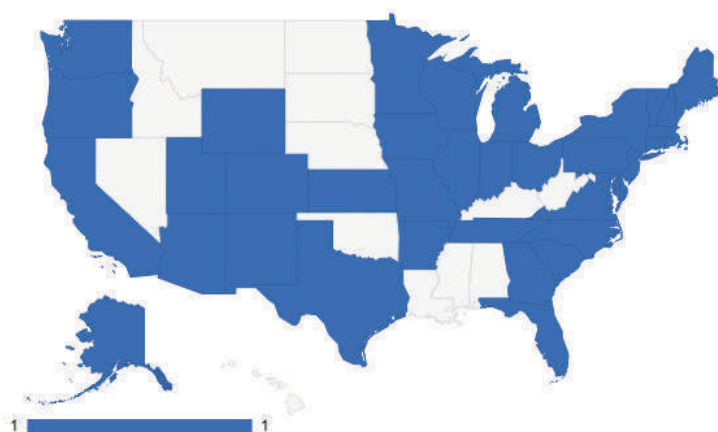
2020

# \$3,821,492

2021

Your generosity in 2021 did not just break records. It helped us build a strong foundation as we bring our campaign to scale in 2022, with **only 11% of funds raised in 2021 spent to fundraise.**

Revenue Total	\$3,821,492
Expenses Total	\$1,988,203
Program	\$1,309,071
Administration	\$240,350
Fundraising	\$438,782



*\* Financials represented for 2021 numbers are year-end summaries. The American Promise audited statements for 2021 will be finalized and available late spring 2022. For questions, or to receive a copy of our audited financial statements, please contact Liz Harvey at [lizh@americanpromise.net](mailto:lizh@americanpromise.net).*

This year's financials reflect the dedicated commitment of Americans from **37 of the 50 United States.**



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