NATIONAL ACADEMY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION®

Engaging Americans & Increasing Public Trust: An Agenda for 2021 and Beyond

Academy Election 2020 Project
Working Group:
Develop New Approaches to Public Governance and Engagement

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ABOUT THE ELECTION 2020 PROJECT

The Academy formed a series of Working Groups of its Fellows to address Grand Challenges in Public Administration. These Groups were charged with producing one or more papers to advise the Administration in 2021 (whether reelected or newly elected) on the key near-time actions that should be taken to begin addressing Grand Challenges. This is a paper of the Develop New Approaches to Public Governance and Engagement Working Group. It includes these Fellows' recommendations for new models for citizen-government engagement. An earlier paper of the Working Group focused on new opportunities to use greater collaborative governance in the United States..

ENGAGING AMERICANS & INCREASING PUBLIC TRUST: AN AGENDA FOR 2021 AND BEYOND

A REPORT OF AN ACADEMY WORKING GROUP

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
ELECTION 2020 WORKING GROUP:
DEVELOP NEW APPROACHES TO PUBLIC GOVERNANCE AND ENGAGEMENT

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THE CHALLENGE

Our country faces a crisis of national confidence in its governance processes. This crisis has deep roots that have grown silently for several decades. A recent report by a national Commission on the Practice of Democratic Citizenship identified "a fragmented media environment, profound demographic shifts, artificial intelligence and other technological advances, economic inequality, centralized power, and climate change" as contributing to this crisis. And these stressors have reached a crescendo this year – a presidential impeachment trial; the nation's fitful response to the health, economic, and societal impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic; and widespread protests in virtually every corner of our country in response to police brutality toward Black Americans. Each of these has brought into a clearer focus the roots of our crisis of confidence—including poorly performing institutions and social inequity—that hinder our ability to address challenges in an effective and efficient manner.

The commission concludes: "Overall distrust of the federal government has become a persistent marker of American politics. . . . More recently, our trust in one another has also begun to show signs of decline. . . Yet the data also show that Americans do not accept this state of affairs. . . Eighty-four percent of Americans think that the level of confidence we have in the government can be improved, and 86 percent think that we can improve the level of trust we have in one another."

WHAT IS HAPPENING NOW

Two multi-year commissions recently issued final reports that provide important insights and recommendations that directly inform the public dialog on revitalizing Americans' engagement in democratic life. One, a federal commission, was mandated by law to examine the role of public service in American life – military, national service, and public service.[1] The second, a national commission sponsored by the American Academy for Arts & Science (AAAS), examined the state of democratic citizenship.[2] Interestingly, both identify many of the same underlying challenges to democratic ideals, and both offer several recommendations that are remarkably similar.

Although both commissions focus on the citizen-government interface and reforms to political institutions and processes, they also emphasize the role of institutions of civil society – such as nonprofits, houses of worship, and social clubs – as important elements of democratic life. And they emphasized how essential being an active citizen is to a healthy democracy. The AAAS commission probably says it the best: "A broad ethical definition of citizenship focuses on participation in common

[1] National Commission on Military, National, and Public Service (March 2020). *Inspired to Serve*, Final Report. Retrieved at: https://inspire2serve.gov/sites/default/files/final-report/Final%20Report.pdf

[2] Commission on the Practice of Democratic Citizenship (June 2020). *Our Common Purpose: Reinventing American Democracy for the 21st Century*. Final Report. American Academy of Arts & Sciences, Cambridge, MA. Retrieved at: https://www.amacad.org/ourcommonpurpose/report

life, contributions to the common good, and efforts to serve common interests."

This paper focuses on the public administration aspects of contemporary governance challenges. It does not offer insights on important issues related to voting, political disengagement, and redistricting. These are the venue of political agents. Rather, we focused on issues in the realm of public administrators and their partners: improving the responsiveness of institutions, expanding the capacity to bridge differences, and creating a commitment to democracy through education and service.

Potential Models for Improving Citizen-Government Engagement

We identified several models in use in the U.S. and elsewhere that may serve as inspiration:

- ***White House-Level Leadership.*** The Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives was the George W. Bush Administration's marquee initiative to build bridges between the federal government and nonprofits, including religious organizations. It created counterparts in federal agencies and worked with governors' offices across the country to create points of contact, as well. (It was continued in the Obama Administration with a lower profile and the addition of an advisory council. The Trump Administration

downgraded the office to an initiative within the Office of Public Liaison)[3].

The Obama Administration also created two higher profiles offices that engaged the public. The first was the Office of Public Engagement, which supported his marquee initiative of creating an open and inclusive government and involving Americans in policymaking. This office saw itself as a communications mediator between the public and the government, sponsoring initiatives such as a petition-the-government website.[4] The second was the Office of Social Innovation and Civic Participation. That office focused on specific social issues and developed tools and techniques that would get better results for people and communities in need, such as pay-for-success bonds.[5] It promoted opportunities for national service and volunteerism and championed the use of evidence-based policy. It was abolished by the Trump Administration.

- ***Citizen Assemblies.*** A citizen assembly is a body comprised of citizens selected at random to be representative of a jurisdiction, to deliberate on an issue of local or national importance. The goal is to foster rational and reasoned dialogue and restore trust in the political process.

[3] Wikipedia (n.d.). Retrieved at:, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White_House_Office_of_Faith-Based_and_Neighborhood_Partnerships#Under_George_W._Bush
[4] Centre for Public Impact (2016). Case Study. Retrieved at: https://www.centreforpublicimpact.org/case-study/public-engagement-usa/
[5] Obama White House Archive (n.d.). *The President's Social Innovation Agenda*. Retrieved at: https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/administration/eop/sicp/about

It has been used successfully in several European countries, most notably Ireland, to help resolve contentious issues.[6]

- ***Deliberative Democracy Forums***. According to Participedia, "Deliberative forums are a space in which an issue or problem is introduced in a manner that prompts thoughtful consideration and discussion so that a consensus may be achieved around the steps, approaches, or options available for its resolution."[7] For example, the National Issues Forums -- a nonpartisan, nationwide network of locally sponsored public forums – brings together people from various walks of life to reason and talk about common problems, with the hope of creating a common understanding, if not agreement, about different public policy issues.[8]
- ***What Works Cities.*** The Bloomberg "What Works Cities" initiative is a multi-year effort to create a critical mass of analytic talent in 100 mid-size cities around the country to foster evidence-based decision making at the local level.[9] It involves piloting analytic initiatives to solve local problems as well as a cross-city network of young professionals who share best practices. The initiative also sponsors a certification program that other communities can benchmark against. Communities compete to receive technical assistance or grants for capacity building. This initiative could serve as a model for a philanthropic effort in the realm of citizen engagement.

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[6] Wikipedia (n.d.). Retrieved at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Citizens%27_assembly
[7] Participedia (n.d.). Retrieved at: https://participedia.net/method/4345 . Note: Participedia is a useful resource for a wide range of citizen engagement resources.
[8] National Issues Forum (n.d.). Retrieved at: https://www.nifi.org/
[9] Bloomberg Philanthropies (n.d.). What Works Cities. Retrieved at: https://whatworkscities.bloomberg.org/

- ***Federal Networks of Volunteers.*** There are a series of existing federal volunteer networks (IRS's volunteer tax assistance program, National Park Service volunteers-in-parks program, etc.) as potential models and practices currently in use. In addition to agency-specific volunteer programs, there are around 300,000 Americans involved with AmeriCorps, Senior Corps and Peace Corps.[10] In addition, there are ad hoc volunteer opportunities, such as the cross-agency citizen scientist program where individuals can volunteer to help solve science-related challenges.[11]

Examples of Current Practices for Meaningful Engagement

- ***Use of Technology for Town Meetings***. In the U.S., engaging the people in the policy decision-making process has been done on a larger scale by deploying technology. In 1999, the non-partisan Americans Discuss Social Security initiative launched a series of forums that engaged more that 50,000 Americans in all 50 states and created dialogue with elected officials and policy experts on the topic of Social Security reform. These 21st Century Town Meetings and the collective decisions of the participating public gave policymakers in both the Senate and the House crucial input and political cover that influenced their debates, culminating in the decision to raise the annual cap on payroll taxes.

[10] Commission on Military, National, and Public Service, Final Report, pg. 44.
[11] CitizenScience.gov. Retrieved at: https://www.citizenscience.gov/#

- ***National Dialogue on Mental Health.*** Another example in the U.S. took place after the school shootings in Sandy Hook in 2012, when President Obama called for a national dialogue on mental health. Creating Community Solutions produced resources for local and state-level groups to lead citizen deliberations, and tens of thousands of people took part in dialogues. As a result, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (within the Department of Health and Human Services) awarded community grants totaling $5 million to cross-sector partnerships to bring civic engagement and mental health first aid training into their cities. In addition, municipal governments, school systems, jails, and police departments created policies and deployed resources in line with citizen-established priorities.
- ***EPA Local Government Strategy Series.*** The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has created a series of background papers emphasizing local energy saving by collaboration on audits with the private sector. Its public power utilities survey found that energy prices are lower for consumers in nonprofit and public power utilities. The federal government can use such approaches to provide foundational information to incentivize states toward community problem-solving on renewable energy or other public issues.[12] These

[12] Environmental Protection Agency, "Energy Resources for State and Local Governments." Webpage. Retrieved at: https://www.epa.gov/statelocalenergy/local-government-strategy-series; See also: American Public Power Association: https://www.publicpower.org/our-members

are similar to the Issues Guide developed to conduct deliberative forums.[13]

- ***National Research Council approach to reducing local "food deserts."*** The federal government can incentivize states toward community problem-solving on local and co-production of food to ameliorate food deserts, prepare for supply chain disruptions, and adapt to changing growing conditions. See, for example, the National Research Council's research on ameliorating food deserts through local cooperative community co-production.[14]
- ***Fourth National Action Plan for Open Government.*** Every two years, the Administration develops an action plan of specific commitments it will accomplish to further Open Government. The current plan, released in February 2019, "outlines a selection of Trump Administration objectives to make government information more open and accessible for developers, academics, entrepreneurs and everyday Americans–ultimately fostering increased private-sector innovation, more advanced scientific research, stronger economic growth, improved public service delivery, and greater insight into United States Government operations."[15]

[13] National Coalition for Dialogue & Deliberation (2016). "Developing Materials for Deliberative Forums." Retrieved at: http://ncdd.org/rc/item/11342/

[14] National Center for Biotechnical Information, National Institutes of Health, "Ameliorating Food Desert Conditions." Retrieved at: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK208027/

[15] White House (2019). *The Open Government Partnership: Fourth Open Government National Action Plan for the United States* (February). Retrieved at: https://open.usa.gov/assets/files/NAP4-fourth-open-government-national-action-plan.pdf

- ***Use of Advances in Technology.*** Artificial or machine intelligence is now being used to facilitate wide-scale surveys and policy deliberations. In 2015, when Taiwan was wrestling with whether and how to allow the ride-sharing company Uber to operate, the government turned to an outside facilitator who used a tool called pol.is to engage thousands of citizens and stakeholders and then generate a series of recommendations around broadly agreed upon principles. The government bundled those into a new regulation.

Reassessing Legal Authorities That May Be Barriers to Building Bridges

- ***Reduce Barriers to Internet Access***. Municipal broadband has been outlawed or blocked in 25 states.[16] In 2010, the Federal Communications Commission recommended enhancing municipal broadband and internet access but little action has been taken to date.[17] The COVID-19 pandemic's stay-at-home mandate has vividly demonstrated the imperative that broadband be an essential part of an operational economy, everywhere in the nation. The federal government can incentivize community problem-solving via internet access.

[16] Kendra Chamberlain (2020). *Municipal Broadband is Roadblocked or Banned in 22 States.* Retrieved at: https://broadbandnow.com/report/municipal-broadband-roadblocks/
[17] Federal Communications Commission (2000). Deployment of Advanced Telecommunications Capability: Second Report. Retrieve at: https://transition.fcc.gov/Bureaus/Common_Carrier/Orders/2000/fcc00290.pdf

- ***Reduce barriers to government interaction with citizens.*** Revisit constraints at the federal level that are associated with the Federal Advisory Committee Act and the Paperwork Reduction Act. See studies and recommendations by the Administrative Conference of the U.S.[18]

[18] Administrative Conference of the United States (2011). Recommendation 2011-7, "The Federal Advisory Committee Act – Issues and Proposed Reforms," Retrieved at: https://www.acus.gov/research-projects/federal-advisory-committee-act-%E2%80%93-issues-and-proposed-reforms ; and Recommendation 2012-4, "The Paperwork Reduction Act." Retrieved at: https://www.acus.gov/research-projects/paperwork-reduction-act

RECOMMENDATIONS: A Vision and Agenda

Democracy is based on trust. However, over the past few decades, Americans have broken trust with key societal institutions – government, religious, media, and civil society. More recently, we have begun to break trust with each other. We need to rebuild trust at all levels of society. Democracy cannot work without trust in our institutions and each other. Following are some recommendations to begin the process. They are just a beginning.

Our vision is to revitalize American democracy by restoring trust in each other, our civil institutions, and our government. The agenda to act on this vision is five-fold:

- The president must demonstrate national leadership by dedicating attention and commitment to revitalizing American democracy.
- Elected and appointed leaders at all levels of government must take specific actions to increase engagement with, and responsiveness to, the public.
- Every individual must commit to respectful dialogue with each other and engage with institutions of civil society.
- A voluntary commitment to some form of public service must become a rite of passage for American youth and be seen as a lifelong responsibility for adults.
- As a nation, we must commit to proactively educate our youth in the basics of civics, democracy, engagement, and service.

Specific Actions to Be Taken

Beginning in 2021 and thereafter, the following specific actions would serve as elements of an initial roadmap for revitalizing American democracy.

National Leadership and Governance

Establish a White House Office of Public Engagement and Service. The President should establish a White House Office of Public Engagement and Service as a marquee initiative. Its scope would be national – not just federal - and include promoting public service, broadly defined. Its operations could be organized along the lines of the U.S. Digital Service – a central staff comprised of individuals on temporary assignment that provides expertise and project support to teams across all levels of government. It should be paired with a broadly inclusive advisory committee to inform its priorities, and engage appropriate federal, state, local, and nonprofits entities. Like the former White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, there should be federal agency-level counterparts, and state governors should be encouraged to do the same.

Engagement at All Levels of Government

The baseline for democracy is voting participation. It is lower in the U.S. than many other countries. However, as the AAAS commission notes, "Giving voice to voters is one thing, but making sure that somebody is listening to them is another." The challenge facing the nation is not just voter participation in elections, but public engagement in day-to-day governance processes outside of the electoral context. Accordingly, the Working Group recommends a number of important steps that should be taken by governments at all levels to increase their listening and engaging efforts:

Actions by Federal Executive Branch Agencies. As part of its charge, the Office of Public Engagement and Service should develop a plan of action that could include, for example:

- **Updating the Open Government Directive.** To further empower the people, all federal agencies should be required to take a series of steps to become more transparent, participatory and collaborative. Each agency should produce an open government plan and review policies and rules that impede the flow of available information. A cross-agency senior working group should be established to share best practices. This would update the engagement and partnership initiatives undertaken by federal agencies under the 2009 Open Government Directive. This effort should be led by the proposed White House Office of Public Engagement and Service.

- **Creating reusable platforms/tools for use at the local level**. One example is the federal Challenge.gov platform,[19] which allows all federal agencies to sponsor competitions to solicit ideas from the public to solve particular problems. Another example is the codigital.com platform[20], which helps large groups to generate, prioritize and refine ideas for action. These platforms or tools could include dialogue forums, volunteer engagement platforms, participatory budgeting, and sentiment analytic tools. This might be spearheaded by the Office of Customer and Stakeholder Engagement, located in the General Services Administration.[21]
- **Creating platforms and tools that support real-time engagement and co-production with those outside of government.** Federal agencies need to take advantage of thinking from citizens, the private sector and academia without the constraints imposed by pre-Internet statutory requirements (e.g., Federal Advisory Committee Act, Paperwork Reduction Act). The lead for policy revisions to existing directives would be the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs in OMB.

[19] Retrieved at: https://www.challenge.gov/
[20] Retrieved at: https://www.codigital.com/
[21] General Services Administration, Office of Customer and Stakeholder Engagement, About. Retrieved at: https://www.gsa.gov/about-us/organization/federal-acquisition-service/office-of-customer-and-stakeholder-engagement

Actions by the Legislative Branch. Congress, both as an institution and through each individual elected member, should commit to ways of engaging citizens in a more meaningful and proactive dialog than the traditional mechanisms of congressional hearings and members' town halls. Examples might include:

- **Organizing Citizen Assemblies.** The Speaker of the House and Minority Leader, and the Senate Majority and Minority Leaders should periodically jointly convene citizen assemblies comprised of Americans representing a bipartisan cross section of the country. The assemblies would help frame and inform national issues for legislative action that cut across the traditional boundaries of congressional committees, such as racial inequality, the national response to the effects of climate change, and economic inequality. Congress should adopt legislation to create a citizen assembly at the start of each session. These assemblies would deliberate to identify some of the top policy priorities for Congress and the Administration, then use strategy mapping and other planning and budgeting tools to craft a proposed strategy and policy recommendations to address these problems.[22]
- **Sponsoring Deliberative Dialogue Forums with Members of Congress.** Deliberative forums could be convened by a third party on behalf of individual members of Congress to participate in deliberations with a representative sample of their constituents on policy issues under consideration. This could be done using

[22] An alternative approach might be to leverage existing bipartisan congressional caucuses that include members from different committees that tackle shared concerns (e.g., The "What Works Caucus"). They could test out new ways to engage citizens using technology platforms.

technology. High-quality non-partisan information and briefing materials would inform the discussion. This effort could be organized via the House and Senate Committees on Administration, possibly with a non-partisan organization taking the lead.

Using Deliberative Processes. A recent report by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development describes how the use of representative deliberative processes is growing in member countries, including the U.S., and results in:

- Better policy outcomes
- Greater legitimacy to make hard choices
- Enhance public trust in institutions
- Empowers citizens
- Makes government more inclusive
- Strengthens integrity; reduces corruption
- Helps counteract polarization and disinformation

The report describes 12 different models, including citizen assemblies, and identifies where they have been used, how they are organized, and which model works best under different circumstances.

Source: Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (June 2020). *Innovative Citizen Participation and New Democratic Institutions: Catching the Deliberative Wave.* 198 pages. Retrieved at: https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/governance/innovative-citizen-participation-and-new-democratic-institutions_339306da-en#page1

Actions by State and Local Governments. Governors and mayors should pilot the use of reusable platforms/dialog forums – one approach might be along the lines of the What Works Cities initiative--to create capacity and share best practices. State legislatures and city councils might undertake similar engagement initiatives proposed for Congress, such citizen assemblies and deliberative dialogue forums. In addition, especially at the local level, consider:

- **Expand use of participatory budgeting.** Participatory budgeting is a democratic process whereby community members decide how a portion of their community's public budget will be spent. Typically, this is done at a neighborhood level. This is practiced in over 3,000 communities around the world, including about 700 communities in the U.S.[23]

Cross-Sector Engagement with Civil Society Institutions

The AAAS report observes that: "Making changes to our political processes and institutions is an insufficient response to our current predicament…The institutions of our civil society… libraries, houses of worship, parks, sports teams, universities, museums, performance space… all these institutions and more offer people ways to be involved in the lives of their communities that do not involve voting or attending public hearings or watching debates."

[23] Participatory Budgeting Project, "What is PB?" Retrieved at: https://www.participatorybudgeting.org/what-is-pb/ ; Map retrieved at: Carto.com

It further notes that these are the places "where Americans first develop the practical skills and 'habits of the heart' that are fundamental to democratic citizenship," and "Without a set of civil society institutions that work together and build bridge across divides, no level of government intervention will be sufficient to restore cohesion to communities that are fragmented by demography, ideology, income, and suspicion."

So, "public engagement" is not just a citizen-government relationship. It is a network of relationships individuals weave across society, across institutional constructs. Inspiring and incentivizing such engagement starts from the bottom-up. It happens in neighborhoods with micro-civic actions: dog walkers being responsible, customers returning carts to the store, acknowledging people on the street. It starts in families and among neighbors.

These small actions cumulate to social cohesion and interpersonal trust. These are building blocks for societal engagement, with volunteers to help neighbors and in schools, and community associations.

While these forms of engagement are by necessity locally driven, they could be catalyzed by the proposed White House Office of Public Engagement and Service via recognition programs not unlike former President George H.W. Bush's "Thousand Points of Light" initiative that recognized unsung heroes who provided service in their local communities.[24]

[24] Points of Light Foundation (n.d.). About Points of Light. Webpage. Retrieved at: https://www.pointsoflight.org/about-us/

Government needs to proactively support citizens in engaging in problem solving in their own communities. This is an important aspect of a democratic system. But, notably, the AAAS report declares: "To commit ourselves to constitutional democracy, we must first commit ourselves to — and have faith in — our fellow citizens."

A Commitment to Public Service

Both the National Commission and the AAAS recommend a voluntary year of public service as a rite of passage to adulthood. They see it as a way of creating a life-long expectation of service of some kind. The Commission's report says the benefit of such an approach would be that: "Service within and across communities breaks down culture barriers, builds respect, and strengthens collaboration, understanding, and dialogue. And in times of crisis, participatory civil society enables people to naturally join together, contribute to their communities, and defense the Nation."

The goal set by the Commission was one million participants by 2026 – the 250th anniversary of the country. Something on this scale would have to be championed by the President with significant congressional support for funding such an initiative. With high unemployment and the need for up to 300,000 contact tracers in the years following the pandemic, this is not an inconceivable proposal.

But a commitment to public service should not hang on a single "silver bullet." It should include opportunities for volunteerism and co-production – where citizens can contribute to the public good through actions such as helping museums transcribe Civil War letters so they could be read by students on the Internet. Other potential initiatives to catalyze a broader public service ethos might include:

- **Set up institutionalized structures for engagement across local, state, and federal levels of government—creating a "civic layer."** As noted earlier, its precise form will evolve, but the basic concept is to establish a centralized interface within a community to engage residents in governance decision making that interweaves digital and in-person engagement. One example might be how participatory budgeting initiatives are done at the local level.[25]
- **Create incentives for individual participation, such as "citizen engagement" accounts, badges, certificates, and bonds**. Incentivize individual participation in civic activities by creating for individuals or civil society organizations some form of recognition. This could be modeled after computer games – by earning "badges." Or it could be recognition for achieving a certain level of proficiency, such as the Presidential Fitness Awards. Or, as recommended in the AAAS report, might be the issuance of a $10,000 "baby bond" as each child is born and the money would accrue upon completion of a year of qualifying

[25] Hollie Gilman (2018). Chapter 15, "The Future of Civic Engagement," in Mark Abramson, et al (eds). *Government for the Future: Reflection and Vision for Tomorrow's Leaders*, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers: Lanham, MD. Pp. 232-240.

public service.[26] The National Commission report recommends, as an incentive, that completion of qualifying public service could offer noncompetitive eligibility in being hired into the federal government.[27]

Promote Civic Education

The National Commission's report concludes: "… the Nation is failing to prepare the next generation of Americans to participate actively in U.S. civic and democratic life through voting, service, civil discourse, and community involvement… America, as a whole, must value civic education as a critical foundation of the health and future of the Nation… without a solid base of knowledge about the principles of the U.S. system of government, many Americans are ill-equipped to become contributing members of civil society."

A concerted national effort to reinvigorate Americans' understanding of, and contributions to, civil society should be catalyzed at the federal level by the proposed White House Office of Public Engagement and Service, with support from the Department of Education. To maximize opportunities for success, this effort should be largely driven by state education agencies and their curriculum development bodies and linked to high school and university requirements.

[26] AAAS, Final Report, p. 58.
[27] National Commission on Military, National and Public Service, Final Report, p. 6.

This effort needs to reach beyond just the education system. As the AAAS report notes: ". . . having a healthy democracy is having the general population be educated about how to be engaged." It also observes: "democracy depends on a more durable sense of connectedness, as well as opportunities to practice it… having faith in our fellow citizens also requires believing that they share some sense of common purpose, and that they seek to and are equipped to make ethical and informed decisions about our shared fate."

CONCLUSION

The United States faces a crisis of national confidence in its governing capabilities. With great challenges, however, come great opportunities. As discussed in this paper, the Working Group believes that each level of government—and, indeed, all sectors—need to come together to strengthen public engagement in our day-to-day governance processes. Public engagement is critical to the development of workable solutions to today's most pressing social and economic challenges. By creating new ways to work together across governmental and sectoral lines, the nation can lay the ground for a more collaborative governance model that will enhance public trust, social connectedness, and government performance.

Develop New Approaches to Public Governance and Engagement: Working Group

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