

The American Compact: A Primer

What It Is

The American Compact is a proposed new foundation for the United States, designed to replace the current Constitution via Article V. It's not a simple amendment; it's a complete re-imagining of our government to meet the challenges of the 21st century and beyond. Its core goal is to create a republic that is both principled and practical, capable of securing dignity, liberty, and a common future for all.

The Compact recognizes that our current system is trapped in a cycle of gridlock, corruption, and obsolete solutions. We don't just need new policies, we need a new foundation. Instead of wasting more time on patchwork fixes to a broken system, the Compact offers a clean-slate design with the tools to solve the problems we already agree on.

It's like owning a worn 250-year-old house. Strengthening the foundation and updating the amenities is expected, and possible, without disturbing its historic legacy.

The Compact also recovers a lost American tradition: the understanding that a republic cannot survive as an oligarchy. From Andrew Jackson's war on the "moneyed aristocracy" to Franklin Roosevelt's condemnation of "economic royalists," Americans once knew that extreme concentrations of wealth and power threaten constitutional democracy. The Compact modernizes this Anti-Oligarchy Constitution for the 21st century.

The Core Idea: A Three-Layer Design

Instead of one static document, the Compact is built in three distinct layers, each with a specific purpose:

The Covenant (Layer 1): The Bedrock Principles. This is our supreme law. It doesn't list government powers; it declares our fundamental duties: to secure human dignity, material foundations (like healthcare and education), ecological integrity, and democracy free from corruption. These are the unchanging stars we navigate by.

The Framework (Layer 2): The Lasting Structure. This layer creates the government—a reformed Congress, a single-term President, and a redesigned judiciary—and enshrines a modern bill of rights. It is designed to end the gridlock and corruption that paralyze our current system, with new guardrails and institutions that empower the people and hold power accountable. It can be updated with substantial consensus when needed, but its anti-corruption and anti-oligarchy core remains.

The Codex (Layer 3): The Adaptable Systems. Here are the detailed rules to make it all work: how to run fair elections (with ranked-choice voting and public financing), how to root out corruption, how to provide tuition-free college, and how to tackle the climate crisis. These systems can be refined more easily as times change, without touching the core principles above.

Key Innovations

Built to Last and Adapt:

Each layer has its own, thoughtful amendment process. The sacred principles of the Covenant are the hardest to change, requiring a supermajority and a citizen convention. The Framework's structures require broad consensus. The Codex's operational systems are easier to update. This balance prevents gridlock without sacrificing stability.

An End to Corruption as We Know It:

It creates permanent, independent agencies—an Electoral Commission, a Government Accountability Office, and a Judicial Conduct Board—with real power to investigate, expose, and enforce rules on everyone, from politicians to judges. This is the foundational fix to the rigged system.

Real Democracy, Beyond Voting:

You get a vote, but you also get more. A Citizens' Assembly, chosen by lottery every 25 years, reviews the entire system. Citizens can also trigger national referendums to change laws or even the structure of government itself. This empowers people to break the gridlock directly.

A Judiciary Designed for Its Job:

The Compact replaces the overburdened Supreme Court with two specialized high courts. A limited Constitutional Court, with 15 justices serving single 15-year terms, guards the Covenant's principles—but can only strike down laws with a supermajority vote. A separate Supreme Court of Appeals ensures uniform interpretation of federal law

without constitutional interference. This design prevents judicial supremacy while preserving robust protection for fundamental rights.

Action, Not Just Argument:

The Codex translates universal principles into working systems. It moves us from knowing what's broken (like healthcare, political financing, or a warming planet) to constitutionally starting the fix. It provides the stable, legitimate framework to build the future we discuss but never seem to reach.

Rights That Mean Something:

It guarantees not just freedom from government overreach (free speech, privacy) but freedom to thrive: the right to a good education, healthcare, housing, and a healthy planet. The government has a duty to make these rights real.

Rooted in American Tradition

The Compact is not a radical break. It reclaims a long American tradition—from the Jacksonians to the Progressives to the New Deal—that understood the Constitution as a charter against oligarchy. It provides the 21st-century tools to finish that unfinished work: independent agencies to police corruption, a citizens' assembly to check concentrated power, and constitutional guarantees of the material foundations of democratic citizenship.

In a Nutshell

The American Compact starts from two simple premises:

1. We must first fix the broken machine of government by ending corruption and gridlock with new rules and institutions.
2. Then, we must let that working machine build the solutions we already agree we need.

It learns from the failures of our current system and offers a clear, ambitious, and meticulously designed way forward without being unstable or too radically different. It is a blueprint for a republic that is anchored in principle, alive to the future, and finally capable of getting things done.

THE AMERICAN COMPACT

v0

January 28, 2026

PREAMBLE

We the People, recognizing that our current institutions have been corrupted by concentrated power and fail to secure our dignity, liberty, or common future, do hereby dissolve the old constitutional order and ordain this new Compact. We establish three layers of governance:

a **Covenant** of enduring principles,

a **Framework** of lasting structure,

and a **Codex** of adaptable implementation.

Each layer stands upon the last, each with its own method of amendment, creating a Republic that is both anchored and alive, capable of securing justice, liberty, and dignity for all generations.

LAYER 1: THE COVENANT

Preamble

We hereby establish this Covenant of inviolable principles: human dignity as the foundation of law, liberty secured by material foundation, democracy guarded from corruption, power forever accountable to the People, and the Earth held in trust for generations to come. These truths form our supreme law, enduring across ages and open to the People's deliberate renewal.

Article 1: The People's Principles

Section 1. Sovereignty: All power originates from and returns to the People.

Section 2. Dignity: Government exists to secure the inherent and equal dignity of all persons.

Section 3. Material Foundations: All persons have the right to the material conditions necessary for the effective exercise of their liberties, including security in health, housing, sustenance, education for meaningful work and civic life, and a stable environment. These foundations are

indispensable to secure the economic independence required for full political citizenship and to prevent the deprivation and dependency that enable oligarchic control.

Section 4. Ecological Integrity: The Republic has a non-delegable duty to preserve the ecological systems necessary for human civilization and dignity, with particular urgency regarding climate stability.

Section 5. Integrity: The Republic must maintain the integrity of its democratic, legal, and ecological systems against corruption, decay, and domination, ensuring they remain capable of securing the common good for generations.

Section 6. Equality: No person may be denied the equal protection of the laws on any basis such as race, sex, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity. All persons, including government officials, are equally bound by and accountable under the law. No agent of the state shall be immune from personal liability for violations of constitutional rights.

Section 7. Liberty & Security:

(a) Every person has an inherent right to life. The death penalty is hereby abolished. No person shall be executed by the state, nor shall any sentence of death be carried out.

(b) Every person has the right to family integrity and to maintain family relationships free from arbitrary state interference. In all actions concerning children, the child's best interests shall be a primary consideration.

(c) Freedom of thought, expression, conscience, religion, privacy, association, peaceful assembly, petition, and movement shall not be abridged.

(d) No one shall be held in slavery or servitude, nor subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment.

(e) The right of the people to keep and bear arms for the security of a free state, the defense of self and others, and other lawful purposes shall not be denied.

Section 8. Due Process:

(a) No person shall be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law.

(b) Private property shall not be taken for public use without just compensation.

(c) Parents have the fundamental right to direct the upbringing, education, and care of their children, subject only to necessary limitations to protect children from harm.

Section 9. Democracy: The People retain the right to govern themselves through free and fair elections and continuous deliberation.

Article 2: Amendment of the Covenant

Section 1. Proposal:

Proposals to amend this Covenant may be made only by the Congress of the United States, acting upon a vote of three-fourths of all the members of both the House of Representatives and the Senate. Upon passage, the proposal shall be referred to a Citizens' Constitutional Convention as provided in Article 2, Section 2.

Section 2. Deliberative Convention:

(a) A **Citizens' Constitutional Convention** shall be convened for any proposal under Section 1. It shall be composed of three hundred (300) citizens eligible to vote in federal elections, selected by a fair and random process (sortition) in a manner to be prescribed by law, which shall ensure proportional representation by age, gender, race and ethnicity, and state of residence. Should Congress fail to prescribe such manner within two years of this Compact's ratification, the Convention shall be selected by a panel comprising the Chief Justice of the United States, the Presiding Officer of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House, using sortition principles set forth in Article 11, Section 1.

(b) The Convention shall convene for a period not to exceed one year. It shall have the power to hear expert testimony, deliberate, and may refine the proposal's language by a three-fifths vote of its members. The Convention shall then vote on whether to submit the proposal to national referendum. Submission requires a majority vote of the Convention.

Section 3. Ratification:

A proposal from a Convention shall be ratified only if approved in a national referendum by two-thirds of voters casting ballots, with a concurrent majority in two-thirds of the states.

Section 4. Time Limit:

The entire process for any amendment, from congressional passage to final referendum, must be completed within six (6) years. Failure to do so renders the proposal null.

Section 5. Protection of Amendment Process:

Any amendment that would alter the process for amending this Compact, or the relationship between its layers, shall be considered an amendment to this Covenant and shall require the procedure set forth in this Article.

LAYER 2: THE FRAMEWORK

Preamble

To give life to our principles, we establish a government of separate powers, federal structure, and protected rights, designed to check ambition, empower the People, and adapt to the ages. This Framework shall structure our common affairs, balancing stability with the capacity for renewal, always faithful to the Covenant above it. These structures may be amended by substantial consensus, ensuring they evolve without sacrificing the Republic's foundational balance.

Article 3: The Structure of Government

Section 1. Legislative Power:

Vested in a Congress of a House of Representatives and a Senate. Members of the House shall be chosen every second year by the people of the several states, apportioned by population. The Senate shall be composed of two Senators from each state, chosen for staggered six-year terms. Each house may judge the elections of its members, determine its rules of proceedings, and punish members for disorderly behavior.

Section 2. Congressional Operations:

- (a) Seating arrangements in each house shall minimize partisan signaling and prioritize deliberation.
- (b) Senators shall maintain regular consultation with their state legislatures on matters of federal concern.
- (c) Each house may, by rule, provide for voting by secret ballot on the final passage of any bill to raise revenue, appropriate public funds, or alter the public debt limit.

Section 3. Executive Power:

Vested in a President of the United States. The President and Vice President shall be elected together by nationwide popular vote for a single six-year term. The President shall be Commander in Chief of the armed forces, and shall have power to grant reprieves and pardons and to commission officers of the United States.

Section 4. Judicial Power:

(a) The **Constitutional Court of the United States** is hereby established. It is the only federal court with authority to adjudge the conformity of governmental acts with the Covenant (Layer 1) and the Framework (Layer 2).

(b) **Jurisdiction.** The Constitutional Court shall have jurisdiction **only** over:

- (i) Claims that an act of Congress, the President, or a state government violates the **Covenant**.

(ii) Disputes between branches of the federal government concerning their constitutional powers under this Compact.

(iii) Disputes between the federal government and a state concerning constitutional boundaries under this Compact.

(iv) Challenges to the constitutional validity of a national referendum or the process of a Citizens' Assembly.

(c) **Excluded Jurisdiction.** The Court shall have **no jurisdiction** to review:

(i) The interpretation, application, or wisdom of federal **statutes** or the provisions of the **Codex (Layer 3)**, except where a party claims the statute or Codex provision itself is in direct conflict with the Covenant or Framework.

(ii) Ordinary criminal appeals, civil litigation, or administrative law, which shall be finally adjudicated by inferior federal courts and state supreme courts.

(d) **Composition & Terms.** The Court shall consist of fifteen Justices. Justices shall serve single, non-renewable terms of fifteen years.

(e) **Panel Review.** The Court shall normally sit in rotating panels of seven Justices, selected by lot. A panel may, by unanimous vote, refer a case of profound national significance for en banc review by all fifteen Justices.

(f) **Supermajority Invalidation & Purpose.** Any judgment of the Constitutional Court that invalidates an act of Congress, a state, or the President must be approved by at least **twelve of the fifteen** Justices. Any judgment resolving a dispute between branches of the federal government or between the federal government and a state must be approved by at least **ten of the fifteen** Justices. This supermajority requirement ensures that the fundamental policy choices of the people's representatives, enacted to fulfill the mandates of this Compact, are not lightly set aside, guarding against judicial supremacy in matters of political economy.

(g) **Appointment.** Justices of the Constitutional Court shall be appointed by the President, subject to confirmation by a three-fifths vote of the Senate, from a slate of **three qualified nominees** provided by the **Judicial Nominating Commission**, established in **Annex P**. If the President fails to submit a nomination within sixty days, or if the Senate rejects a nominee, the Commission shall transmit a new slate within thirty days.

Section 5. Inferior Federal Courts.

(a) The judicial power of the United States, except that reserved to the Constitutional Court, shall be vested in such inferior courts as Congress may from time to time ordain and establish.

(b) These courts shall have jurisdiction over all cases, in law and equity, arising under the statutes and treaties of the United States, and over all other cases as provided by the Framework and by law.

(c) Judges of these inferior courts shall hold their offices during good behavior. They may be removed by the process established in Article 3, Section 17.

Section 6. Supreme Court of Appeals.

(a) Congress shall establish a **Supreme Court of Appeals**. This Court shall be the court of last resort for all appeals concerning the interpretation and application of federal statutes and the provisions of the Codex (Layer 3), and for all other cases not within the exclusive jurisdiction of the Constitutional Court.

(b) Its decisions on matters of statutory and Codex interpretation shall be final and binding on all other federal courts and state courts.

(c) It shall have no jurisdiction to adjudicate claims under the Covenant or the Framework, which are reserved to the Constitutional Court.

(d) Judges of the Supreme Court of Appeals shall hold office during good behavior and shall be appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate, as provided by law.

Section 7. Appointments.

(a) Justices of the Constitutional Court shall be appointed as provided in Article 3, Section 4(g).

(b) Judges of the Supreme Court of Appeals and inferior federal courts shall be nominated by the President and confirmed by a majority of the Senate.

(c) The President shall nominate, and with the advice and consent of the Senate, appoint ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, and all other officers of the United States whose appointments are not otherwise provided for in this Compact.

(d) Congress may by law vest the appointment of such inferior officers as they think proper in the President alone, in the courts of law, or in the heads of departments.

(e) For courts of specialized jurisdiction established by law, Congress may establish alternative appointment processes that promote expertise and impartiality, provided such processes are consistent with the principles of accountability in Article 1.

Section 8. Impeachment:

The President, Vice President, and all civil officers shall be removed on impeachment for and conviction of treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors. The House of Representatives shall have the sole power of impeachment. The Senate shall have the sole power to try all impeachments.

Section 9. Independent Agencies:

Congress may establish by supermajority statute independent agencies for essential functions requiring insulation from partisan politics (e.g., elections, monetary policy), insulating them from arbitrary removal.

Section 10. Commerce Power:

Congress shall have power to regulate commerce and economic activity substantially affecting more than one state, while preserving state authority over purely local matters.

Section 11. Intellectual Property:

Congress shall have power to secure for limited times to authors and inventors the exclusive right to their writings and discoveries.

Section 12. Federal Debt:

The validity of the public debt of the United States, authorized by law, shall not be questioned. Payment of debt and interest shall be the first claim on the Treasury.

Section 13. Presidential Succession:

Congress shall establish by law a publicly known line of succession beyond the Vice President, which may not be altered during a crisis.

Section 14. Independent Electoral Commission (IEC):

(a) An **Independent Electoral Commission (IEC)** is hereby established as a permanent, non-partisan agency.

(b) Its core constitutional functions are to:

(i) Administer and certify Citizen Petitions under Article 2, §1, Article 7, §1, and Article 9, §2;

(ii) Administer the selection and convening of the Citizens' Assembly (Article 11) and Constitutional Conventions (Article 2, §2)

(iii) Administer federal elections as provided by law.

(c) Commissioners shall be appointed by a non-partisan, multi-branch process as established by law, serve staggered, single terms, and may be removed only for gross neglect of duty or felony conviction.

(d) Funding for the IEC's core constitutional functions shall be a mandatory, non-discretionary appropriation.

Section 15. Office of Government Accountability (OGA):

(a) An **Office of Government Accountability (OGA)** is hereby established as a permanent, independent investigative and audit agency.

(b) Its core mandate is to investigate and expose corruption, systemic failure, and violations of this Compact's democratic and ethical principles, and to protect whistleblowers.

(c) To fulfill this mandate, the OGA shall have authority to:

(i) Conduct independent investigations into all federal institutions, officials, and programs, and into state and local government compliance with the provisions of this Compact applicable to them, with particular focus on corruption, systemic failure, and violations of democratic and ethical principles;

(ii) Compel testimony and documents through subpoena power;

(iii) Issue public reports and refer potential criminal violations to the Department of Justice or Congress;

(iv) Administer and enforce whistleblower protections.

(d) The Director shall be appointed for a single, non-renewable nine-year term by a joint public vote of the President, the Majority and Minority Leaders of the Senate, and the Speaker and Minority Leader of the House. The Director may be removed only for gross neglect, felony conviction, or permanent incapacity.

(e) Funding necessary for the OGA's core functions shall be a mandatory, non-discretionary appropriation and may not be reduced in response to a specific investigation.

(f) Specific administrative procedures and structures shall be established in the Codex Layer.

Section 16. Federal Law Enforcement Authority:

(a) The executive power shall include a principal department, to be known as the **Department of Justice**, as established by law, charged with prosecuting federal offenses, representing the United States in legal matters, enforcing federal civil rights and anti-corruption laws, and administering the federal prison system.

(b) Its head shall be a cabinet member. Its prosecutorial and investigative functions shall be exercised independently of partisan influence, as provided by law.

(c) This department shall be the primary recipient for criminal referrals from the OGA and other constitutional accountability institutions.

Section 17. Judicial Conduct & Discipline:

(a) An **Independent Judicial Conduct Board (IJCB)** is hereby established to investigate complaints of misconduct against federal judges.

(b) The IJCB shall be composed and appointed to ensure independence from the branches it oversees, as provided by law. Members shall serve staggered, single terms and may be removed only for cause.

(c) The IJCB shall have power to investigate, subpoena, and, upon finding probable cause of serious misconduct, refer charges to a judicial tribunal.

(d) A finding warranting removal from office may be made only by a tribunal of judges and requires a subsequent vote for removal by three-fifths of both houses of Congress.

(e) Specific procedures for the IJCB, the tribunal, and for sanctions short of removal shall be established in the Codex Layer.

Section 18. Coordination of Judicial Power.

(a) If a case before the Supreme Court of Appeals raises a substantial question under the Covenant or Framework, the Court shall certify that question to the Constitutional Court and stay its proceedings pending resolution.

(b) If a case before the Constitutional Court involves interpretation of a statute or Codex provision not necessary to resolve the constitutional question, the Court shall decide only the constitutional question and remand the remainder to the appropriate appellate court.

(c) The two Courts may by joint agreement establish procedural rules for the efficient transfer of cases and questions.

Article 4: Federal Relations & Rights

Section 1. Reserved Powers: Powers not delegated to the United States, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people.

Section 2. State Guarantee: The United States shall guarantee to every state in this Union a republican form of government, and shall protect each of them against invasion; and on application of the legislature, or of the executive (when the legislature cannot be convened), against domestic violence.

Section 3. Full Faith & Credit: Full faith and credit shall be given in each state to the public acts, records, and judicial proceedings of every other state. Congress may by general laws prescribe the manner in which such acts, records, and proceedings shall be proved, and the effect thereof.

Section 4. Interstate Compacts: No state shall, without the consent of Congress, enter into any agreement or compact with another state, or with a foreign power.

Section 5. Extradition: A person charged in any state with treason, felony, or other crime, who shall flee from justice, and be found in another state, shall on demand of the executive authority of the state from which he fled, be delivered up, to be removed to the state having jurisdiction of the crime.

Section 6. Tribal Sovereignty:

(a) The United States affirms the inherent sovereignty of the Indigenous Tribal Nations. Congress shall establish structures for meaningful consultation on matters affecting tribal interests, honoring treaty obligations. All treaties made with Tribal Nations shall be faithfully honored and enforced.

(b) Congress shall have the power to enforce this section. It shall establish structures for meaningful consultation with Tribal Nations on matters affecting their interests.

Section 7. Citizenship: All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the state wherein they reside. Congress shall have power to establish a uniform rule of naturalization.

Section 8. Religious Establishment: No law shall be made respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.

Section 9. Prohibitions: No bill of attainder or ex post facto law shall be passed by Congress or any state.

Article 5: Prevention of Oligarchy

Section 1. Excessive private concentrations of economic power that distort democratic processes, undermine equal opportunity, or threaten the republican form of government are contrary to the principles of this Compact.

Section 2. Congress shall have the power and duty to enact laws preventing monopolization and oligarchic control, and to ensure the wide dispersion of economic opportunity and initiative. This power shall be exercised to secure the political-economic order required by the Covenant.

Article 6: Judicial Rights & Protections

Section 1. Habeas Corpus: The privilege of the writ of habeas corpus shall not be suspended unless, when in cases of rebellion or invasion the public safety requires it, and then only upon specific congressional authorization limited to 60 days.

Section 2. Search & Seizure: The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects against unreasonable searches and seizures shall not be violated. No warrants shall issue but upon probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched and the persons or things to be seized.

Section 3. Criminal Prosecutions: In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial by an impartial jury of the state and district wherein the crime shall have been committed; to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against them; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in their favor; and to have the assistance of counsel for their defense.

Section 4. Self-Incrimination & Double Jeopardy: No person shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against themselves, nor be subject for the same offense to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb.

Section 5. Bail & Punishment: Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel or unusual punishments inflicted. The administration of punishment and rehabilitation shall be exclusively a public function, accountable to democratic governance.

Section 6. Civil Jury Trial: In civil suits where the value in controversy exceeds a threshold set by law, the right to trial by jury shall be preserved.

Section 7. Quartering: No soldier shall, in time of peace, be quartered in any house without the consent of the owner, nor in time of war but in a manner prescribed by law.

Section 8. Right to Keep and Bear Arms.

(a) The right of the people to keep and bear arms for the security of a free state, the defense of self and others, and other lawful purposes shall not be denied.

(b) **Regulatory Authority:** This right is not unlimited. The United States and the States shall have power to enact regulations consistent with the nation's historical tradition of firearm regulation. Such regulations may include, and are deemed consistent with that tradition:

(i) Prohibiting possession by persons adjudicated as a substantial danger due to mental illness or convicted of violent felonies;

(ii) A universal system of background checks for all commercial and private transfers, with reasonable exceptions for transfers among immediate family members;

(iii) Regulations on the safe storage and handling of firearms;

(iv) Regulations on weapons and accessories whose primary design and customary use is for the mass killing of persons in civilian contexts.

(c) **Judicial Standard:** Any regulation challenged under this Section shall be upheld if it is consistent with the historical tradition of firearm regulation. The regulations enumerated in (b) shall be afforded a strong presumption of consistency.

Section 9. War Powers: Only Congress may declare war. The President may deploy armed forces without declaration only to repel sudden attacks upon the United States, its territories, or its armed forces, or for the emergency evacuation of citizens facing imminent threat to life. No such deployment may exceed 60 days without specific congressional authorization.

Section 10. Treaties: The President shall have power, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, to make treaties, provided two-thirds of the Senators present concur.

Section 11. Case Resolution & Guilty Pleas:

(a) No person shall be compelled to waive their right to trial through threat of disproportionately severe punishment.

(b) Any admission of guilt must be made voluntarily, knowingly, and intelligently, after full disclosure of evidence by the prosecution.

(c) The court shall conduct a searching inquiry to ensure the voluntariness of any plea and the existence of a factual basis.

(d) Waiver of the right to appeal or to challenge ineffective assistance of counsel is prohibited as a condition of any plea agreement.

(e) Congress shall establish standards for plea transparency and proportionality.

Section 12. Official Accountability:

(a) Every person whose rights under this Compact are violated by any government official acting under color of law shall have a cause of action against that official in their personal capacity.

(b) No immunity shall bar suit or liability for violations of clearly established constitutional rights. A right is clearly established if its contours are sufficiently definite that any reasonable official in the defendant's circumstances would have understood that their conduct violated that right.

(c) An official who proves by a preponderance of evidence that they acted pursuant to a reasonable interpretation of law, binding appellate precedent, or a good-faith belief in the necessity of their action shall not be personally liable for monetary damages, but shall remain subject to injunctive relief and the government entity shall remain liable. Governmental entities shall indemnify employees for acts within scope, except in cases of bad faith, recklessness, or intentional misconduct.

(d) Governmental entities shall be liable for constitutional violations by their employees acting within the scope of employment.

(e) No public funds shall indemnify officials for judgments arising from intentional, reckless, or discriminatory constitutional violations.

Section 13. Law Enforcement Standards:

(a) Law enforcement officers may use force only when necessary and proportional to the threat encountered.

(b) Deadly force is justified only as a last resort to prevent imminent death or serious bodily injury.

(c) All officers have a duty to intervene to prevent excessive force and to report constitutional violations.

(d) Warrants authorizing unannounced entry require specific judicial findings of exceptional necessity.

Section 14. Family Integrity & Child Welfare.

(a) The integrity of family relationships shall be preserved against arbitrary state interference.

(b) In all state actions substantially affecting family relationships, including child welfare proceedings, the following due process minima shall apply:

(i) **Notice & Hearing:** Timely notice and a meaningful hearing before an impartial tribunal.

(ii) **Right to Counsel:** The right to competent, state-provided counsel for any indigent parent or guardian facing the potential removal of a child or termination of parental rights. A child shall have a separate, state-provided guardian *ad litem* or counsel in such proceedings.

(iii) **Burden of Proof:** No child shall be removed from the home except upon **clear and convincing evidence** of imminent danger of serious physical or psychological harm. Termination of parental rights requires proof **beyond a reasonable doubt**.

(iv) **Expedition & Permanency:** Proceedings must be resolved with all practicable speed to minimize trauma and instability for the child. The state shall prioritize family reunification where safe; if reunification is not possible, it shall pursue permanent placement without undue delay.

(c) The parental right to direct the upbringing of a child is fundamental. This right shall not be construed to justify the neglect or abuse of a child, nor to deny a child the material and educational foundations guaranteed by this Compact.

(d) **Congressional Power:** Congress shall have the power to establish, by law, minimum national standards for family court procedure, child welfare administration, and the training of relevant officials, and to provide funding to states to meet these standards, in order to secure the rights enumerated in this Section.

Section 15. Right to Vote.

The right of citizens to vote in all federal elections shall not be denied or abridged. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation to ensure the right is practically exercisable and to secure the integrity and accessibility of the electoral process.

Section 16. Right to Education All persons shall have the right to an education adequate for full participation in civic life and for securing meaningful work. This right encompasses access to tuition-free academic, technical, and vocational education at the post-secondary level.

Article 7: Mandate for Realization

Congress shall establish and maintain institutions sufficient to secure the principles of the Covenant for all persons including a diverse system of post-secondary education that values and equally supports academic, technical, and vocational pathways. These institutions shall be democratically accountable, protect human dignity, and operate alongside regulated private enterprise.

Article 8: Amendment of the Framework

Section 1. Proposal:

Proposals to amend this Framework may originate by one of two pathways:

(a) **By Congress:** By a two-thirds vote of all members of both the House of Representatives and the Senate.

(b) **By the People:** By a Citizen Petition containing signatures equal to three percent (3%) of the total votes cast in the most recent presidential election, from each of one-half of the states, as certified by the Independent Electoral Commission.

Section 2. Ratification:

A proposal from either pathway in Section 1 shall be ratified only if approved:

(a) By a majority vote in both houses of the Congress; and

(b) Subsequently, by a majority of voters in a national referendum.

Section 3. Time Limit:

The entire process for any amendment, from proposal to final referendum, must be completed within three (3) years. Failure to do so renders the proposal null.

LAYER 3: THE CODEX

Preamble

To implement our principles and structure, we establish systems for elections, justice, and administration that are transparent, accountable, and adaptable. This Codex learns from the historical struggles against oligarchy, which demonstrated that supreme principles require specific, enforceable mechanisms to become real. It translates the enduring mandates of the Covenant into working systems, providing the constitutional tools—from public financing of elections to guarantees of healthcare and education—that past reformers fought to secure. These systems shall be refined by each generation to meet the challenges of their time, through mechanisms accessible to both citizens and their representatives.

Article 8: Implementing Systems

The specific systems for implementing the Covenant and Framework shall be detailed in Annexes, which have the force of constitutional law. These Annexes establish initial rules and parameters that may be updated as provided herein.

Article 9: Amendment of Operations

Section 1. Legislative Pathway: By a three-fifths vote of both houses of Congress.

Section 2. Citizen Pathway: By a majority vote in a national referendum, triggered by a Citizen Petition of signatures equal to 2% of the votes cast in the last presidential election from each of one-quarter of the states, certified by the Independent Electoral Commission.

Section 3. Time: Process must be completed within two (2) years.

Section 4. Technical Updates:

(a) **Process:** Congress may, by a simple majority vote of both houses following a public comment period of no less than 90 days, enact amendments to the specific numerical thresholds, monetary amounts, percentages, dates, or formulae within any Annex of Layer 3, **provided that such amendments do not alter the fundamental purpose, structure, or rights established by that Annex.**

(b) **Challenge & Review:** Any citizen or state may challenge such an amendment before the Supreme Court on the grounds that it constitutes a fundamental alteration, and the Court shall hear the matter on an expedited basis.

(c) **Non-Regression:** No Technical Update may reduce the level of protection or benefit guaranteed by an Annex below its originally established minimum standard.

Article 10: The Annexes

The following Annexes are hereby established and shall take effect upon ratification:

Annex A: Electoral Integrity & Representation

Provides detailed procedures for the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), as established by Article 3, §12, to implement public financing of federal elections, ranked-choice voting, independent algorithmic redistricting, automatic voter registration, a four-day national voting holiday.

Federal general elections shall be conducted over two consecutive days, one of which shall be a weekday and one a weekend day. Both days shall be national public holidays. The Independent Electoral Commission shall also administer a period of early in-person and mail voting of no less than seven days preceding this two-day election holiday.

Annex B: Anti-Corruption & Government Accountability

Provides detailed procedures for the Office of Government Accountability (OGA), as established by Article 3, §13, with investigative and subpoena powers, mandates audits of government compliance, creates a public registry for political transactions, imposes lobbying bans and conflict-of-interest rules, and enforces whistleblower protections.

Annex C: Congressional Operations & Ethics

Restructures congressional seating to minimize partisanship, allows secret ballot for key fiscal votes, imposes a single-subject rule for legislation, and reforms filibuster rules to require sustained debate.

Annex D: Federal-State, Tribal & Interstate Relations

Clarifies procedures for interstate compacts and extradition, establishes a framework for meaningful consultation with Indigenous Tribal Nations, and implements Full Faith and Credit and state guarantee clauses.

Annex E: Judicial Accountability

Provides detailed procedures for the Independent Judicial Conduct Board (IJCB) and judicial discipline tribunal, as established in Article 3, Section 17. Sets forth composition, appointment, investigative powers, subpoena authority, referral procedures, tribunal composition, removal process, and sanctions short of removal. Implements the abolition of qualified immunity under Article 6, Section 12, including procedures for actions against officials and standards for good faith defenses. Creates a National Decertification Registry for law enforcement officers whose certifications have been revoked due to misconduct. Establishes law enforcement standards implementing Article 6, Section 13, including use-of-force protocols, duty to intervene requirements, and warrant procedures.

Annex F: Legal Process & Family Courts

Implements the plea-bargaining reforms required by Article 6, Section 11, including standards for voluntariness, disclosure, and judicial inquiry. Unifies family-court procedures as authorized by Article 6, Section 14(d), establishing:

- **Federal Standards:** Federally-funded, state-run Family Justice Centers that integrate low/no-cost legal services, mediation, social work, and mental health support.
- **Shared Parenting Presumption:** A statutory (not constitutional) rebuttable presumption that shared parenting (joint legal and physical custody) is in the child's best interest post-separation, absent evidence of abuse, neglect, or domestic violence.
- **Systemic Goals:** Maximum case timelines, caseload limits for social workers, and specialized judicial training.

Annex G: Firearm Safety & Regulation

Implements universal background checks, establishes a licensing system for commercial firearm sales, defines prohibited arms, and creates grant programs for state red-flag laws.

Annex H: Emergency Powers & National Security

Sets procedures for declaring, extending, and terminating states of emergency; implements war-powers reporting and authorization timelines; enumerates rights that may never be suspended; and provides for expedited judicial review.

Annex I: Monetary System & Public Finance

Reorients the Federal Reserve mandate to prioritize full employment and public investment, establishes a Public Infrastructure Bank, creates a postal banking network, and enforces debt-management rules.

Annex J: Economic Concentration & Tax Justice

Enforces anti-monopoly measures including market-share caps, institutes a progressive wealth tax and financial-transaction tax, reforms corporate charters to require worker representation, and eliminates regressive tax loopholes.

Annex K: Climate Stabilization & Ecological Stewardship

Declares a climate emergency, establishes a declining national carbon budget, creates an independent Climate Integrity Office, imposes strict liability for ecological harm, and launches a Civilian Climate Corps.

Annex L: Material Foundations Framework

Defines minimum-core obligations for universal healthcare, affordable housing, food security, and tuition-free public education; allows state innovation waivers; includes non-regression clauses and a phased implementation schedule.

Establishes a federal-state partnership to provide tuition-free technical and vocational education. The federal government sets baseline standards for credentials and equipment; states and regional consortia adapt curricula to local economic needs; programs require governance partnerships with industry and labor to ensure alignment with high-quality employment.

Annex M: Information Commons & Digital Rights

Ensures public broadband infrastructure, regulates algorithmic transparency and political advertising, protects against non-consensual data collection and surveillance, and endows independent public media.

Annex N: Transition Timeline & Failsafes

Details a 36-month phased activation of institutions, includes sunset provisions for congressional inaction, allows citizen override via referendum, and sets annual progress metrics.

Annex O: Government Transition & Operations

Governs the immediate post-ratification period: interim authority of officials, first-election procedures, judicial transition (including interim oversight of judicial conduct), continuity of laws and contracts, and initial funding of new agencies. Provides a clear, sequential startup protocol including:

1. An Interim IEC formed within 30 days of ratification via provisional method.
2. The Interim IEC administers the first Citizens' Assembly within 6 months.
3. The first Citizens' Assembly has a special mandate to design and recommend permanent appointment processes for the IEC and selection laws for future Assemblies and Conventions.
4. Congress must vote on these recommendations under expedited rules.

Annex P: Foundational Definitions

This Annex provides authoritative definitions for key terms used across the Compact to ensure consistent interpretation and implementation. Definitions herein shall be used to interpret the Operational Annexes (Layer 3) and, where applicable, the Framework (Layer 2). In the event of any conflict, the principles and text of the Covenant (Layer 1) shall prevail.

Sample High-Value Definitions:

- **Public Official:** Any person holding a legislative, executive, judicial, or administrative office of the United States, any state, or any political subdivision thereof, whether elected or appointed, and whether permanent or temporary, or any person acting under color of such law or office.
- **Corruption:** The abuse of entrusted power for private gain, including but not limited to bribery, embezzlement, fraud, extortion, nepotism, and the use of public power for partisan political advantage.

- **Sortition:** The random selection of persons from a stratified pool designed to be descriptively representative of a larger population.
- **Universal Background Check:** A mandatory check, conducted by the licensed system established under Annex G, of all proposed transferees of firearms against federal and state databases of prohibited persons, prior to any transfer, with exceptions only as specified in Article 6, Section 8.
- **Ecological Harm:** A direct or indirect adverse alteration of the natural environment, including air, water, soil, and living organisms, that degrades ecosystem function or human well-being.

Annex Q: Judicial Nominating Commission

Establishes the independent, non-partisan commission responsible for vetting and nominating candidates for the Constitutional Court, as provided in Article 3, Section 4(g). Sets forth composition, selection process, qualifications, ethics rules, emergency fallback procedures, and the requirement to transmit slates of three nominees per vacancy.

GENERAL ARTICLES

Preamble

To ensure the faithful interpretation, renewal, and transition of this Compact, we establish these rules of construction, generational review, and supreme law. These articles bind the layers together and guide our Republic's ongoing journey toward a more perfect union. They provide the mechanisms for the Compact's own evolution and the peaceful implementation of the People's will.

Article 11: The Generational Review

Section 1. Assembly & Selection: Every twenty-five years, a **Citizens' Assembly** shall convene. It shall be composed of **150 citizens eligible to vote in federal elections**, selected by a **fair and random process (sortition)** administered by the **Independent Electoral Commission (IEC)**.

(a) **Stratification:** The selection pool shall be stratified to ensure the Assembly is proportionally representative of the national adult population by **age, gender, race and ethnicity, educational attainment, and state of residence**.

(b) **Exemptions & Alternates:** Congress may, by statute, establish narrow grounds for exemption or deferral and provide for the selection of supplemental members to serve as alternates.

(c) **Remuneration:** Members shall serve full-time and receive remuneration commensurate with the national median wage, plus all necessary costs.

Section 2. Mandate: The Assembly's sole mandate is to review the functioning of the entire Compact and recommend amendments to any layer. It shall have the power to hold hearings, request information from government agencies, and consult experts.

Section 3. Output: Its recommendations shall be compiled into a final report and **introduced directly into the respective amendment tracks** for each layer of the Compact, where they shall receive expedited consideration as specified by law; provided that any statute governing such consideration shall guarantee a final vote by each house of Congress within one year of a recommendation's submission.

Section 4. Covenant Interpretation Referral:

(a) The Constitutional Court, by a vote of two-thirds of its Justices, may refer a question concerning the interpretation of a principle within the Covenant to **be considered by the next convened** Citizens' Assembly for an advisory opinion, if the Court finds the question to be one of profound national significance and first impression.

(b) The Assembly shall consider the referred question as part of its mandate. Its opinion, while non-binding, shall be accorded the highest deference by the Court and all branches of government.

(c) Congress may, by a three-fourths vote of both houses, also refer a question of Covenant interpretation to the Assembly.

Article 12: Rules of Construction

Section 1. Layered Supremacy: No lower layer may contradict a higher layer. The Covenant prevails over all.

Section 2. Purposive Interpretation: The Compact shall be interpreted according to its text and its purposes as a whole, with the principles of the Covenant guiding the resolution of all ambiguities.

Section 3. Non-Delegation: Congress may not delegate its essential legislative powers to other branches.

Section 4. Progressive Realization: Duties to secure rights shall be construed as requiring continuous, deliberate, and reasonable progress toward their full realization.

Section 5. Hierarchy of Justiciability: Rights framed as immediate prohibitions shall be directly enforceable by courts. Duties to secure positive rights and guarantees shall be construed as obligations of progressive realization, subject to judicial review for reasonableness, non-retrogression, and good-faith effort, with due deference to legislative and executive choices in resource allocation and method.

Section 6. Proportionality: Any limitation on a right or freedom must be proportionate to its legitimate aim, using the least restrictive means available.

Section 7. Remedial Authority: Courts shall have the power to fashion appropriate remedies for violations of this Compact, including structural injunctions where necessary to secure compliance.

Section 8. Amendment of General Articles: The General Articles shall be amended according to the process established for the Framework Layer in Article 7, unless such amendment would constitute an amendment to the Covenant under Article 2, §4.

Section 9. Amendment Dispute Resolution:

(a) The Constitutional Court shall have original and exclusive jurisdiction to resolve any dispute concerning which layer an amendment affects, and therefore which amendment procedure applies under this Compact.

(b) Such disputes shall be resolved on an expedited basis, with a decision required within 90 days of the filing of a petition.

(c) **Mandatory Pre-Ratification Review:** Upon the certification of any amendment proposal for any layer, the proposal shall be automatically referred to the Constitutional Court for a determination of the correct applicable layer and procedure. No proposal may be submitted to any ratification vote until the Court issues its determination. The Court's review shall be limited to this jurisdictional question.

Section 10. Clarity of Technical Parameters: Any provision within the Codex (Annexes) that establishes a specific numerical threshold, monetary amount, percentage, date, or formula for the purpose of calibration or implementation shall be clearly identified as such by the phrase 'as set by law' or 'as determined by Congress' following the provision. Only provisions so identified may be amended via the Technical Update process under Article 9, §4.

Section 11. Limits on Delegation of Legislative Power.

(a) Congress may not delegate its essential legislative powers, which include the fundamental policy choices necessary to give life to the principles of this Compact, particularly the determination of rights, duties, and the allocation of public burdens and benefits.

(b) When enacting laws to fulfill its duties under the Covenant, particularly those under Article 7 (Mandate for Realization), Congress may delegate regulatory and administrative authority to implement such laws.

(c) A delegation is permissible only if the statute provides:

(i) An **intelligible principle** that is **consonant with and gives effect to the specific Covenant principle or Framework right being implemented**; and

(ii) **Clear standards** sufficient to guide the delegate's exercise of authority and to enable meaningful judicial review; and

(iii) **Procedural safeguards**, including a mechanism for congressional oversight and review, as established by law.

(d) In reviewing a delegation, courts shall distinguish between:

(i) Delegations to **execute and technically adjust programs implementing Covenant mandates** (e.g., healthcare delivery rules, emissions trading protocols), to which deference is due provided standards in (c) are met; and

(ii) Delegations involving **the creation of new legal obligations, the distribution of significant public benefits, or the definition of fundamental rights**, which require a far more precise and restrictive statutory framework.

(e) No delegation may be made to the executive branch to alter, suspend, or create exceptions to the provisions of this Compact.

Section 12. Construction of Defined Terms.

(a) The definitions contained within Annex O shall be used to interpret the provisions of the Codex (Annexes A-N) and, where applicable, the Framework Layer, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise.

(b) **A term may be defined within Annex O only if it is explicitly utilized in at least two other Annexes, or if its definition is necessary to secure a right or duty enumerated in the Covenant.** Any law or amendment proposing to add a definition to Annex O must state the justification for its inclusion with reference to this standard.

Article 13: Transition & Supremacy

Section 1. Supreme Law: This Compact, upon ratification, is the supreme law of the land. All prior constitutional provisions are superseded.

Section 2. Continuity: Existing laws, debts, and engagements not inconsistent with this Compact remain in force until altered by competent authority.

Section 3. First Elections: The first elections under this Compact shall be held within one year of ratification.

Section 4. Oath: All federal and state officials shall take a new oath to support this Compact.

CLOSING PROVISION

This Compact shall take effect at noon on the twentieth day of January following its ratification. That moment shall be known as Renewal Day, commemorating the People's re-founding of their Republic.

ANNEXES

(Detailed text incorporated by reference)