THE BUILDING A BETTER AMERICA BLUEPRINT

BOOK ONE

AMERICA'S GOVERNMENT

Strong Foundations. Stronger Future.

Evidence. Opportunity. Accountability.

Founding Draft - July 2026
Prepared as a living policy document
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Publication Note

This edition consolidates and edits the first phase of the Building a Better America Blueprint. It is a policy proposal, not enacted law, an official government forecast, or legal advice. Current-law facts and budget baselines are cited to primary government sources. Proposed spending levels, institutional designs, and implementation schedules are clearly labeled as Blueprint proposals or illustrative targets.

Budget requests are not the same as enacted appropriations. National spending is not the same as a department's operating budget. Revenue estimates are not official until scored as an integrated package by the Congressional Budget Office and the Joint Committee on Taxation. This edition corrects those distinctions throughout.

Editorial standard

Facts are sourced. Proposals are labeled. Estimates are presented as ranges where uncertainty is material. Constitutional questions are identified rather than hidden.

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Preface: The American Promise

America is at its best when freedom is matched by opportunity, prosperity is earned through hard work, government is accountable to the people, and every generation leaves the nation stronger than it found it.

We believe government exists to protect liberty, uphold the Constitution, defend the nation, enforce the rule of law, and create conditions in which every American has a genuine opportunity to succeed.

We reject the idea that citizens must live in permanent political camps. Good ideas do not belong to one party, ideology, region, religion, or generation. They belong to the American people.

Public office is a public trust. Every taxpayer dollar should serve a clear purpose. Every program should be measured honestly. Every leader should remain accountable to the citizens they serve.

Every child deserves the opportunity to learn. Every worker deserves a path to a meaningful career. Every veteran deserves the care and respect earned through service. Every senior deserves dignity. Every family deserves the opportunity to build a safe and stable future.

This Blueprint is not a promise of perfection. It is a commitment to honest leadership, constitutional government, fiscal responsibility, and continuous improvement. If a policy works, strengthen it. If it fails, improve or replace it. If evidence shows a better path, follow it.

Our loyalty is not to ideology. Our loyalty is to the Constitution of the United States and to the American people.

The Builder's Oath

- I believe America is worth building, not merely criticizing.
- I believe freedom and responsibility belong together.
- I believe government exists to serve the people, not the other way around.
- I believe every taxpayer deserves honesty, transparency, and accountability from those entrusted with public office.
- I believe every American deserves a genuine opportunity to build a life through work, education, innovation, service, and personal responsibility.
- I believe success should be celebrated, competition should be fair, and opportunity should not depend solely on wealth or family connections.
- I believe veterans deserve the promises made to them, children deserve a quality education, workers deserve dignity, seniors deserve security, and justice must be equal under law.
- I pledge to judge policy by evidence, fairness, constitutional principles, fiscal responsibility, and measurable results - not by ideology alone.
- If evidence proves that a better path exists, I will have the humility to change course.
- The purpose of this Blueprint is not to preserve pride. It is to leave the United States stronger, freer, more prosperous, and more united than we found it.

Founding Principles

The People Come First

Every policy must be judged by whether it improves life for the American people while preserving liberty, equal protection, and constitutional government.

Evidence Before Politics

Policy should rely on facts, research, expert analysis, measurable outcomes, and transparent assumptions.

Fiscal Responsibility

Permanent spending requires permanent funding or recurring savings. Taxes must have a stated purpose and transparent use.

Transparency

The public owns its government and deserves understandable reporting on money, performance, failures, and corrective action.

Accountability

Programs that repeatedly fail should be reviewed, repaired, replaced, or ended through lawful and transparent processes.

Constitutional Government

When a proposal requires a constitutional amendment, the Blueprint will say so.

National Unity

Good ideas should be considered on their merits regardless of party.

Stewardship

Government spends money entrusted by the public, not money of its own.

Service

Public leadership exists to serve citizens.

Continuous Improvement

Evidence and results take precedence over pride and partisanship.

Chapter 1 - The Federal Budget

The problem

The federal government currently spends substantially more than it collects. The Congressional Budget Office projects a fiscal year 2026 deficit of about $1.9 trillion, equal to 5.8 percent of gross domestic product, under current law. CBO projects debt held by the public to continue rising relative to the economy without policy changes. [1]

As of the first nine months of fiscal year 2026, CBO estimated a cumulative deficit of about $1.4 trillion. Monthly figures are preliminary and do not replace the full-year baseline, but they reinforce the scale of the fiscal challenge. [2]

Budget philosophy

- Fund constitutional and essential obligations first.
- Separate mandatory benefits, operating budgets, and discretionary investments.
- Do not create a permanent program without permanent financing.
- Permit temporary deficits for severe recessions, declared wars, national emergencies, and major disasters.
- Reach structural balance gradually rather than through sudden cuts that damage essential services.
- After balance, divide surpluses among debt reduction, national investment, and an emergency reserve.

The Building a Better America fiscal rule

Proposed rule
During normal economic conditions, recurring federal revenue should cover recurring federal spending within five fiscal years. Once structural balance is achieved, 50 percent of annual surpluses should reduce debt held by the public, 30 percent should support the National Prosperity Fund, and 20 percent should build a national emergency reserve.

What this does not promise

- It does not promise to eliminate the national debt quickly.
- It does not pretend that one tax increase can fund every priority.
- It does not treat a presidential budget request as enacted law.
- It does not book speculative savings before they are independently verified.

Annual taxpayer report

Every taxpayer should receive an accessible annual report showing total revenue, total spending, deficit or surplus, debt, interest costs, major departmental outcomes, and areas that failed to meet targets.

Chapter 2 - Treasury and Fair Tax Administration

Current role and baseline

Treasury manages federal finances, borrowing, payments, tax administration, sanctions, and financial-crime enforcement. The IRS fiscal year 2026 budget request sought $9.8 billion in annual appropriations. A request is not the same as the amount ultimately enacted. [3]

The IRS estimates a 2022 gross tax gap of approximately $696 billion and a net tax gap of approximately $606 billion after late payments and enforcement. Those estimates include underreporting, nonfiling, and underpayment; they are not all immediately recoverable fraud. [4]

What we keep

- The current progressive marginal-bracket structure as the initial baseline.
- Payroll financing for Social Security and Medicare unless changed through a separate solvency plan.
- Legitimate deductions for real business costs, retirement saving, qualifying charity, and other congressionally approved purposes.
- Private tax preparation and accounting for taxpayers who choose it.

What we change

- Provide a free federal filing option with prefilled information for straightforward returns.
- Focus enforcement on complex high-income evasion, large corporate schemes, payroll-tax theft, offshore concealment, identity theft, and fraudulent preparers.
- Treat taxable stock compensation and economically comparable realized income consistently.
- Apply an economic-substance rule to sham transactions whose principal purpose is evasion.
- Give ordinary taxpayers a clear opportunity to correct good-faith errors before punitive treatment.
- Publish an annual tax-gap and taxpayer-service scorecard.

High-income reform reserved for formal scoring

The Blueprint retains the policy goal of a higher marginal rate on extraordinary annual income, including taxable stock compensation and realized investment income. However, because the current-bracket baseline was chosen for the first edition, the exact rate, threshold, interaction with capital-gains rules, and revenue estimate remain subject to integrated scoring by the Joint Committee on Taxation and CBO before inclusion in the governing budget.

Illustrative operating target

Treasury function	Blueprint target
IRS taxpayer service, processing, enforcement,	$18.0B

technology, appeals	
Fiscal Service and debt operations	$1.2B
Financial-crime enforcement and sanctions	$0.7B
Inspector General and tax-administration oversight	$0.3B
Departmental policy, cybersecurity, and shared services	$3.8B
Illustrative total operating budget	$24.0B

These figures are policy targets, not current appropriations. The justification is that a capable revenue agency can improve service and compliance at a cost that is small relative to federal receipts.

Chapter 3 - Health and Human Services

Current role and spending baseline

HHS oversees Medicare, Medicaid, public health, medical research, food and drug regulation, and family and social-service programs. The fiscal year 2026 President's Budget proposed $94.7 billion in discretionary budget authority for HHS. This excludes the much larger mandatory benefit flows administered through the department. [5]

National health expenditures reached approximately $5.3 trillion in 2024. Medicare spending was about $1.12 trillion, Medicaid about $932 billion, private health insurance about $1.65 trillion, and out-of-pocket spending about $557 billion. [6]

American Healthcare Guarantee

The long-term policy goal is continuous baseline coverage independent of employment, while preserving an optional role for private insurance. The public guarantee would cover primary care, emergency and hospital care, mental health, prescriptions, maternity and pediatric care, dental, vision, rehabilitation, and medically necessary support.

Private insurance choice

Private insurers may offer supplemental coverage, expanded networks, private rooms, international coverage, concierge services, and benefits beyond the guaranteed package. Private coverage may not become a gatekeeper for medically necessary care included in the public guarantee.

Prescription-drug integrity

- Prohibit direct-to-consumer advertising of prescription drugs across television, radio, streaming, social media, paid search, and print, subject to First Amendment review and carefully drafted exceptions for neutral public-health information.
- Permit regulated scientific communication with clinicians.
- Negotiate prices for publicly financed coverage using clinical value, competition, research costs, and public investment.
- Accelerate legitimate generic and biosimilar competition without weakening safety review.
- Require disclosure of clinical trial results and financial relationships under applicable law.

Financing principle

The guarantee must replace rather than merely add to existing premiums, deductibles, subsidies, and public health-benefit spending. Employer and household contributions would be structured to replace much of current private spending. Exact rates require actuarial modeling and formal scoring.

Illustrative transition envelope

Category	Illustrative annual range
Existing and redirected public health-benefit spending	$2.5T-$2.8T
Employer contributions replacing premiums	$1.0T-$1.3T
Household contributions replacing premiums and most cost sharing	$0.4T-$0.7T
Progressive general revenue and other financing	$0.2T-$0.4T
Initial system financing envelope	$4.1T-$4.8T

The range is intentionally broad. It is a planning envelope, not an official estimate. The first goal is lower combined household costs and slower national spending growth, not an implausible overnight reduction.

Research, regulation, and integrity

- Maintain strong NIH biomedical research funding.
- Fund FDA review capacity adequately; the FY2026 request described a total FDA program level of about $6.8 billion including user fees.
- Strengthen healthcare fraud analytics while distinguishing improper payments from proven fraud.
- Protect rural access, Indian Health Service obligations, maternal care, and public-health preparedness.
- Use medical AI only with clinical validation, privacy protection, human review, and clear accountability.

Chapter 4 - Education and Workforce Development

Federal role

States and localities operate public schools. The federal role is primarily to support lower-income schools, special education, student aid, civil-rights enforcement, research, and national priorities. The fiscal year 2026 Department of Education request is documented by the department, but proposed program reductions or consolidations were budget requests rather than enacted law. [7]

Core guarantee

A pathway for every student
Every student completing high school should leave prepared for college, an industry credential, a registered apprenticeship, technical education, military service, entrepreneurship, or supported employment.

What we keep

- Title I support for high-poverty schools.
- IDEA support and transition services for students with disabilities.
- Pell Grants and need-based assistance.
- Federal civil-rights enforcement.
- Independent research, statistics, and national assessments.
- State and local curriculum authority.

What we change

- Treat apprenticeships, trades, technical programs, and community college as respected pathways equal in dignity to four-year college.
- Require transparent college cost, completion, debt, and employment outcomes.
- Create one understandable income-based repayment path for existing federal borrowers, with protections against balances growing indefinitely when required payments are made.
- Teach personal finance, civics, digital literacy, and career exploration before graduation.
- Tie expansion of federal grants to evidence and measurable student benefit rather than administrative growth.

Illustrative annual federal education target

Mission	Annual target
Title I and high-poverty schools	$25B
Special education and transition services	$25B

Career, technical, and adult education	$15B
Apprenticeships and paid work-based learning	$15B
Community college and approved trade pathways	$35B
Pell Grants and need-based aid	$35B
Research, civil rights, administration, and targeted programs	$25B
Illustrative total	$175B

This target would require approximately $70-$90 billion in additional annual federal resources above comparable existing efforts, depending on program consolidation, state cost sharing, and the final design.

Chapter 5 - Veterans Affairs

Current role and baseline

The Department of Veterans Affairs provides healthcare, disability compensation, education benefits, home-loan guarantees, caregiver support, memorial services, and other earned benefits. The fiscal year 2026 VA budget request totaled approximately $441.2 billion across mandatory and discretionary funding. [8]

Governing principle

Earned commitment
Veterans benefits are not discretionary gifts. They are part of the nation's obligation to those who served.

What we keep and protect

- Service-connected disability compensation.
- VA healthcare and specialized expertise in military-related conditions.
- The Post-9/11 GI Bill and other earned education benefits.
- The VA Home Loan Guaranty.
- Caregiver support, survivor benefits, and memorial services.
- Community care when timely and appropriate VA care is unavailable.

What we improve

- Target faster disability decisions while preserving accuracy, due process, and appeal rights.
- Provide same-day crisis access and faster routine mental-health care.
- Expand rural telehealth, mobile clinics, travel support, and community partnerships.
- Modernize records, scheduling, claims technology, and interoperability.
- Create a voluntary Lifetime Veteran Advocate model to help navigate healthcare, benefits, housing, education, and employment.
- Pursue functional zero veteran homelessness through rapid housing access, treatment, and employment support.

Scorecard

Measure	Direction
Claims processing time	Down
Claims accuracy and appeal quality	Up
Healthcare wait times	Down

Mental-health access	Up
Veteran homelessness	Toward functional zero
Direct services versus avoidable administration	Shift toward services
Education and employment outcomes	Up
Caregiver satisfaction and support	Up

Chapter 6 - Justice and Constitutional Independence

Current role and baseline

The Department of Justice enforces federal law, represents the United States, protects civil rights, investigates national-security and interstate crime, and operates federal detention and prison functions. Its fiscal year 2026 discretionary request, exclusive of fee offsets, totaled approximately $33.9 billion. [9]

Governing principle

Justice independence
The Department of Justice serves the Constitution, the law, and the American people. It does not serve the personal interests of a President, party, donor, corporation, or political movement.

Political noninterference

- Codify limits on White House contact concerning pending or contemplated enforcement matters.
- Require confidential logging of substantive case-specific contacts, reviewable by the Inspector General and lawful congressional oversight.
- Prohibit corrupt pressure to open, close, delay, charge, decline, or disclose a matter for partisan advantage.
- Preserve lawful presidential supervision of the Executive Branch while creating documentation, recusal, review, and accountability safeguards.

Justice Integrity Review Board - revised constitutional design

An earlier draft gave an independent board broad review authority. This edition narrows that proposal to advisory, auditing, referral, and reporting functions. The board would not appoint prosecutors, command investigations, issue charges, or exercise executive power. Members who exercise significant federal authority must be appointed consistently with the Appointments Clause. [10]

Enforcement priorities

- Terrorism, espionage, cyberattacks, and foreign interference.
- Human trafficking and child exploitation.
- Public corruption and government-contract fraud.
- Organized crime and large-scale fentanyl trafficking.
- Civil-rights violations.

- Major financial, securities, healthcare, tax, consumer, and antitrust cases.
- Interstate violent crime and weapons trafficking.

Sentencing and rehabilitation

- Reserve mandatory minimums for a narrower set of serious violent, terrorism, exploitation, trafficking, and aggravated repeat-offender cases.
- Restore judicial discretion for appropriate lower-level, coerced, first-time, and nonviolent cases with written reasons and appellate review.
- Require identification, healthcare continuity, housing planning, employment preparation, and treatment connections before release.
- Measure recidivism, victim restitution, employment, prison safety, and wrongful-conviction indicators.

Illustrative DOJ target

Function	Annual target
Federal investigations and prosecution	$20.7B
Prisons and detention	$10.0B
State, local, tribal, victim, and access-to-justice grants	$6.0B
Civil rights, antitrust, oversight, technology, and management	$5.3B
Illustrative discretionary total	$42.0B

Chapter 7 - Election Administration and Security

Clarifying the institution

The U.S. Election Assistance Commission is an independent federal agency created by the Help America Vote Act of 2002. It supports voting-system standards and testing, election-administration research, grants, accessibility, and assistance to state and local election officials. It does not count ballots or determine election winners. [11]

Bipartisan structure and constitutional correction

The Blueprint supports a bipartisan commission with staggered terms and Senate confirmation. An earlier draft proposed direct appointment recommendations that could be read as giving congressional leaders appointment power. Under the Appointments Clause, officers exercising significant federal authority generally must be appointed by the President with Senate confirmation, or through another constitutionally permitted method for inferior officers. Congressional leaders may recommend candidates, but may not directly appoint principal officers. [12]

Election Administration Independence Act

- Preserve bipartisan membership and staggered terms.
- Require written cause and due process for removal to the extent constitutionally permissible, while recognizing that modern Supreme Court doctrine strongly favors presidential removal authority over executive officers.
- Guarantee operational continuity during vacancies without allowing acting officials to make major new policy without a bipartisan quorum.
- Require voter-verifiable paper records for federally funded systems and risk-limiting or statistically valid post-election audits under state law.
- Protect federal cybersecurity, accessibility, testing, data, and grant functions without converting the presidency into a national election office.
- Log substantive White House and campaign contacts.
- Create strong Inspector General review and vendor-conflict disclosure.

Removal protections for commissioners present a serious constitutional risk under current doctrine. The Blueprint therefore treats robust for-cause removal as an amendment-level or litigation-dependent reform if statutory protection cannot survive judicial review. [13]

Chapter 8 - Public Service Financial Integrity

Purpose

Public decisions should never be shaped by an official's personal stock portfolio. The public should not have to wonder whether a law, contract, enforcement action, or emergency response was designed to increase an officeholder's wealth.

Covered officials

- President and Vice President.
- Members of Congress.
- Cabinet secretaries and senior White House officials.
- Heads and senior decision-makers of independent agencies.
- Federal judges and Supreme Court justices, subject to constitutional and separation-of-powers safeguards.
- Other senior officials with regular access to material nonpublic government information.

Prohibited holdings and transactions

- Buying or selling individual publicly traded stocks.
- Trading options, derivatives, or instruments tied to individual companies or narrow sectors affected by official duties.
- Directing trades through a spouse, dependent child, controlled company, or intermediary.
- Using material nonpublic government information for personal benefit.

Permitted investments

- Broad diversified index funds.
- Diversified mutual funds.
- Target-date and retirement funds.
- U.S. Treasury securities.
- Other diversified vehicles approved by an independent ethics office.

Transition and enforcement

- A defined period to sell restricted holdings or place them in a genuinely qualified blind trust.
- Public disclosure and independent review.
- Civil penalties larger than the profit obtained.
- Disgorgement of gains.
- Criminal referral for intentional insider trading, false filings, or concealment.
- No exemption merely because a spouse or dependent executed the trade.

Constitutional note

Congress may regulate financial disclosure and conflicts through legislation, but restrictions involving the President, Vice President, judges, and constitutional officers must be drafted with particular attention to qualifications clauses, separation of powers, compensation protections, and enforcement mechanisms. The most durable design focuses on conduct, disclosure, divestment, trusts, and penalties rather than adding unconstitutional qualifications for office.

Chapter 9 - National Defense and Responsible Leadership

Current baseline

The Department of Defense fiscal year 2026 request totaled approximately $961.6 billion: $848.3 billion in discretionary funding and $113.3 billion expected through reconciliation. A request identifies the administration's proposal; Congress determines enacted appropriations. [14]

Strategic principle

Strength with restraint
America should possess the strength to deter aggression, the discipline to spend defense dollars wisely, and the wisdom to use military force only when necessary and lawfully authorized.

Global posture

The Blueprint supports maintaining, rather than automatically expanding or shrinking, the current broad overseas posture while conducting recurring mission-by-mission reviews. Bases and deployments should remain only when they support treaty obligations, deterrence, logistics, intelligence, training, humanitarian response, or clearly defined national interests.

Moral leadership and constitutional pluralism

The Blueprint recognizes a moral responsibility to help nations facing unlawful aggression and humanitarian catastrophe when assistance is practical and consistent with American law and capacity. This duty is stated in civic and constitutional terms so it represents Americans of every faith and Americans of no faith.

Foreign assistance

- Continue humanitarian and security assistance when it advances clear moral or strategic objectives.
- Require defined goals, auditing, anti-corruption controls, end-use monitoring, and regular reauthorization.
- Prioritize defensive aid, civilian protection, humanitarian relief, and allied burden sharing.
- Do not treat assistance as an unlimited commitment or substitute for diplomacy.

Needs-based defense budgeting

- Conduct a four-year independent National Security Review.
- Tie budgets to threats, readiness, force structure, personnel, munitions, maintenance, industrial capacity, technology, and treaty commitments.

- Protect military pay, housing, healthcare, childcare, family support, training, and transition assistance.
- Audit major procurement programs, contractor performance, cost overruns, and schedule failures.
- Review overseas missions before assuming annual continuation.
- Avoid a fixed defense number until the strategic review establishes requirements.

Use of force

- Require clear objectives and legal authority.
- Seek congressional authorization when constitutionally required.
- Define the mission, expected duration, risks, civilian-protection measures, and exit conditions.
- Report regularly to Congress and the public, with classified annexes when necessary.

Chapter 10 - Government Accountability System

The American Prosperity Test

Before Congress votes on major legislation, an independent public analysis should estimate effects on the deficit, taxes by income group, employment, wages, inflation, small business, housing, healthcare, energy, constitutional authority, and enforcement risk.

Department scorecards

- Each department publishes a limited set of meaningful outcome measures, not hundreds of activity counts.
- Auditors distinguish spending completed from results achieved.
- Major programs receive periodic independent evaluations.
- Congress publicly responds when a program repeatedly misses targets.
- Essential programs are improved rather than automatically ended when outcomes are difficult to measure.

Four-year review cycle

- Mission review.
- Legal-authority review.
- Budget and procurement review.
- Technology and cybersecurity review.
- Workforce and leadership review.
- Public scorecard and corrective-action plan.

Public reporting

Every annual federal report should identify facts, policy choices, assumptions, uncertainties, and results separately. That distinction is the core publishing rule of the Blueprint.

Appendix A - Consolidated Illustrative Budget

The following table is a planning framework, not a formal federal score. It combines selected Blueprint targets developed in Book One. It intentionally omits a final universal-healthcare total and defense total because both require integrated modeling and strategic review. Current mandatory benefits and interest must be reconciled with the full federal baseline in the final ten-year model.

Book One function	Illustrative annual target/status
Treasury operating budget	$24B
HHS administration, research, public health, regulation, integrity, and family programs	Approx. $197B outside benefit financing
American Healthcare Guarantee	Actuarial model required; planning envelope $4.1T-$4.8T replacing much current public/private spending
Education and workforce development	$175B
Department of Veterans Affairs	Use enacted baseline; protect earned benefits; reforms scored separately
Department of Justice	$42B discretionary target
Election Assistance Commission and election-security support	Separate small-agency score required
Public-service ethics enforcement	Separate score required
Department of Defense	No fixed amount; strategic review and congressional appropriation required
Debt reduction	Begins concurrently after the operating deficit is brought under control; accelerates after structural balance

Budget guardrails

- Do not add the healthcare guarantee on top of all current premiums and public spending.
- Do not count the same tax reform twice.
- Do not count all improper payments as fraud savings.
- Do not assume every agency request should be enacted.
- Do not promise a surplus until the complete package receives an integrated score.
- Use cautious, expected, and stress-case ten-year scenarios in Book Six: The Numbers.

Appendix B - Legal and Constitutional Roadmap

Proposal	Likely path	Primary risk
DOJ contact logs and ethics rules	Federal legislation and internal regulation	Executive privilege and law-enforcement confidentiality
Justice Integrity advisory board	Legislation with constitutionally appointed members	Appointments Clause if given executive authority
EAC bipartisan structure and continuity	Federal legislation	Presidential removal power and Appointments Clause
Congressional term limits	Constitutional amendment	Qualifications Clauses
Different House or Senate term lengths	Constitutional amendment	Article I text
Organizational campaign-spending prohibition	Likely constitutional amendment for broad ban	First Amendment precedent
Public-official stock-trading ban	Federal legislation with tailored enforcement	Separation of powers and constitutional-officer remedies
Prescription-drug advertising ban	Federal legislation	Commercial-speech First Amendment review
Four-day, 32-hour overtime standard	Federal labor legislation	Economic and small-business impacts
Universal healthcare financing	Federal legislation; possible state coordination	Taxing authority, federalism, transition, fiscal score

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Closing Note

Book One establishes the institutional foundation: honest budgeting, capable administration, constitutional justice, secure elections, ethical public service, strong national defense, and measurable accountability. Book Two will turn to the American economy - wages, work, competition, manufacturing, small business, trade, affordability, and the 32-hour workweek.

Living-document commitment

This Blueprint will change when evidence, law, or experience reveals a better path. Strong foundations are not rigid foundations. They are foundations capable of supporting improvement.