

How it works.

Step 1. Create a Cause and Effect Matrix- (Survey/Spreadsheet)... (see sample) that shows what the **eight problems** created by our government are and how those **eight problems** are linked to the **twenty seven symptoms** of societal decline that are already directly ruining the lives of over 160 million of our fellow citizens.

Step 2. Make available (via the Internet) a copy to every registered citizen/voter in America.

Step 3. Ask every citizen/recipient of the Cause and Effect Matrix (18 years old or more) to fill in their copy as follows:

Using a number scale of 0 through 10, where 10 indicates an urgent or extreme connection (between a problem and a symptom), and where 0 indicates that the connection is completely unimportant, unrelated, or at least not worth bothering about, replace each x with a number from 0 through 10 in *each* cell in the spreadsheet. The spreadsheet is designed so that totals for the rows and columns will be calculated automatically as the numbers are entered. A row can have multiple (same value) entries if you so choose.

Empty cells (or cells that didn't have the "x" changed to a number) would be tabulated as zero values. An "all zero" ballot would be construed as the recipient believing there were no problems needing government attention in America. These non-responses would be tabulated and published too. Average time to complete should be between thirty minutes and an hour, one time, which seems a very small amount of time to contribute to make our country all it CAN be.

Step 4. Publish the compiled and updated averages for each cell, and overall for each row and column on the Internet for all to view at the beginning of each year, district by district, state by state, and overall for the country. Keep the survey available worldwide on the internet all year long.

The result would be an independently gathered consensus on:

Row Totals: What priority should be assigned by Congress to temporarily easing the pain of each **symptom** of distress? Highest totals get the most attention.

Column Totals: What priority should be assigned by Congress to solving each **problem** (that is totally or partially causing multiple symptoms)? Highest totals get the most attention.

Now we will have created a **National Consensus**, and prioritized which problems we want the government to work hardest on, but how would we go about making sure the politicians followed the citizens' wishes? The politicians now routinely ignore requests by the citizens and pretty much just do as they please.

The Hammer:

Step 5. At the end of each year, citizens would be asked to fill in another copy of the same matrix (spreadsheet), but this time give the congress/administration a grade of 0 through 4 indicating how the country viewed their effectiveness in making things better... both symptoms and problems. Just like in school, a 0 would indicate complete failure, and a 4 would indicate exceptional performance. The **American Consensus APP** would at each year end calculate and publish the averages for all the citizens in the country, district by district, state by state, and overall for the whole country. Non-responses would be tabulated and publicized too.

Instead of the usual “polling” where a relative few people are asked questions cleverly worded to elicit predetermined responses (that the one who paid for the poll wanted to be able to publicize), this system would encompass everyone in the country and provide complete latitude for each individual to express their sentiments on every matter of national concern that the citizens have determined the United States government should be involved with. Further, this would provide an **annual national report card** on the effectiveness of the United States government as viewed by the citizens – whom the government is meant to serve and honestly represent.

Politicians that ignored the wishes of their constituents even once would likely not get a second chance.

How practical is this? Is it just another pie-in-the-sky dream?

The technology exists to do this and has existed for many years. One must wonder why the Congress and Administration haven't implemented such a foolproof and valuable data-gathering device.

It would be infinitely superior to having individual candidates shake hands with members of some small single-interest groups, or visit a few “town hall” meetings that have a limited, “mostly preaching to the choir” attendance, and then announce to the world that they've got “a good bead” on what the problems are that we face going forward as an entire society. What kind of limited and skewed vision of what our country's needs are is likely to come from a ridiculous candidate selection system like that?

Our government is floundering and has lost any sense of direction. They really need our help very badly right now. Our coming together to independently create an **American Consensus** to restore a sense of direction for them and help them set priorities along the lines the citizens feel are most important would help them (and us) no end.