

Just as a cyberattack exposes vulnerabilities in software and systems, an attack on democracy exposes vulnerabilities in our constitution and system of government. When lying and cheating are ignored, and insidiously become enshrined as “American values”, a venal, amoral, egomaniacal, psychotic windbag who admires foreign dictators more than any of his countrymen, can reach the highest office in the land. It can happen here. It did, in 2016.

Clearly, there are some things we need to fix. Here is a proposal to initiate a conversation about what needs to be fixed and how we can do it.

### **The Constitution:**

1. Make clear that the President is not above the law.

If a President violates the law and impeachment fails to address the issue, there should still be consequences, even if they only occur after leaving office.

2. Eliminate the Presidential pardon power, except for a turkey at Thanksgiving.

Do we really think that any one elected official has more wisdom than all the Justices of the Supreme Court ?

3. Repeal or revise the 2<sup>nd</sup> amendment.

We need to make clear that we do not want an armed citizenry, but only officially-sanctioned state militias. We have come a long way from Montesquieu’s ideal, adopted by the founding fathers, that "government should be set up so that no man need be afraid of another".

### **Congress:**

1. Institute term limits.

Three terms and you’re out. No more lifetime appointments. No more Strom Thurmonds, no more Mitch McConnells.

2. Eliminate the filibuster.

Should one lunatic be able to make the wheels of government grind to a halt ?

3. Eliminate lobbyists.

We should at least seriously restrict the ability of lobbyists to wine and dine and otherwise throw money at our elected legislators. Remind the legislators that they work for us, not Wall Street.

### **Society:**

1. Require national service.

We need to restore the ideal of a participatory democracy, where every person has a responsibility to contribute to the ongoing health of the nation in which they live. We can accomplish this by requiring 12 months participation in a social service organization, or the military by every 18 year-old. Social service could include existing community service

organizations, corporate or government internships, or specifically-created organizations like the WPA or CCC, with a goal of improving minority participation in the economy, as well as instilling democratic community values.

2. Institute and enforce national standards of policing.

Emphasize protecting the citizenry, and accountability. Without guns on the street, the police should be able to relax a bit, since they won't be fearing for their lives at every encounter with the public.

3. Increase environmental awareness.

We need to be better stewards of our shared resources on this planet. All of our actions need to be evaluated in regard to sustainability and environmental health.