

The Four Pillars of American Citizenship

A Framework for Understanding How You Participate in Democracy and the Economy

Voter



Your Power at the
Ballot Box

Consumer



Your Power in the
Marketplace

Worker



Your Power in the
Workplace

Owner



Your Stake in the
Economy



You Already Play These Roles. You vote. Or you try to, and wonder whether it matters. You buy groceries, pay for housing, fill prescriptions, and cover utility bills. You go to work, trade your time for compensation, and hope the arrangement is fair.

And you either own something, a home, a share of a business, a piece of the economy, or you watch other people build wealth from the same transactions that leave you where you started. These aren't abstract categories. They're your daily life.

Every American participates in the political and economic systems around them through four roles: as a voter, as a consumer, as a worker, and as an owner.

You don't choose these roles. You're already in them.

The question is whether the system is designed to **protect you in each one.**



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Votership

Votership is your relationship to democratic governance. It's the weight of your vote, the integrity of your representation, and your ability to hold the people who write the rules accountable for what those rules produce.

When Votership is Strong:

Elected officials answer to the people who elected them. Campaign funding comes from public sources or small donors, not corporate treasuries. Districts are drawn fairly. Every eligible citizen can vote without obstruction, and when they do, their vote carries equal weight. The people have direct mechanisms, like citizen assemblies and participatory budgeting, to shape how public money is spent and how public institutions operate.

When Votership is Weak:

Money determines representation. Gerrymandering lets politicians choose their voters instead of the other way around. Lobbying gives concentrated interests a louder voice than millions of individual citizens. Voters are left choosing between candidates who were pre-selected by the same donor class regardless of party.

Consumership

Consumership is your relationship to the markets that provide what you need to live. It's the fairness of the prices you pay, the safety of the products you buy, and whether you have real choices or just the illusion of them.

When Consumership is Strong:

Markets are competitive. Multiple providers compete for your business, which keeps prices fair and quality high. Essential goods like healthcare, housing, and utilities are regulated to prevent exploitation. You can see what you're paying for and why.

When Consumership is Weak:

Consolidation replaces competition. A handful of corporations control entire industries, and prices reflect their market power rather than the actual cost of providing the good. Healthcare costs three times what it costs in comparable countries. Prescription drug prices are whatever the manufacturer decides. The "consumer choice" that's supposed to discipline the market doesn't exist when you have one hospital within fifty miles and one internet provider in your zip code.



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Workership



Workership is your relationship to the economy as someone who works. It's the fairness of your compensation, the safety of your conditions, your voice in how your workplace operates, and whether the value you create is reflected in what you take home.

When Workership is Strong:

Wages rise with productivity. Workers have the right to organize and bargain collectively. Workplaces are safe because enforcement agencies are funded and empowered. The people who generate the revenue share in the returns.

When Workership is Weak:

Productivity can rise, yet wages stay flat. That's not a hypothetical. American worker productivity has increased roughly 60 percent since the late 1970s. Compensation for most workers has barely moved. The gap between what workers produce and what they're paid is the clearest measure of how power has shifted in the American economy. When workers try to organize for better terms, the legal and economic deck is stacked against them.

Ownership



Ownership is your relationship to wealth. It's your ability to build equity, to hold a stake in the enterprises that profit from your labor and your consumption, and to pass something to the next generation.

When Ownership is Broad:

The wealth generated by the economy is distributed among the people who contribute to it. Workers own shares in the companies they build. Homeownership is accessible. Small businesses can compete. The people who create value capture a meaningful portion of it.

When Ownership is Concentrated:

Wealth accumulates at the top regardless of who created it. The richest 10 percent of Americans own roughly 67 percent of all wealth. The bottom 50 percent own about 2.5 percent. This isn't because half the country doesn't work hard. It's because the system is structured to direct returns toward those who already own assets, not toward those whose labor makes those assets productive.



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A System Designed

Our Roles are Interconnected

The Pillars Don't Stand Alone

These four roles aren't separate issues with separate solutions. They are interconnected dimensions of a single relationship between you and the systems that govern your life. Consider healthcare. It's a Votership issue: the pharmaceutical and insurance industries spend billions lobbying the officials who write healthcare policy. It's a Consumership issue: Americans pay more for healthcare than citizens of any other developed nation, often for worse outcomes. It's a Workership issue: millions of healthcare workers provide essential care under difficult conditions, and millions more stay in jobs they'd otherwise leave because their health insurance is tied to their employer. It's an Ownership issue: the profits generated by the healthcare system flow to shareholders and executives, not to the patients or the workers. One issue. Four pillars. Each reinforcing the others.

The lobbying money that shapes healthcare policy (Votership) enables the pricing structures that exploit patients (Consumership). Those systems are staffed by workers who can't negotiate better terms (Workership). And the profits concentrate in the hands of the few (Ownership). This interconnection is why partial solutions keep failing. You can regulate drug prices (Consumership) without changing the lobbying that will work to undo those regulations (Votership). You can raise healthcare workers' wages (Workership) without changing who captures the profits (Ownership). Every partial fix gets undermined by the dimensions left unaddressed.

What Happens When the Pillars Weaken

When government lacks accountability and transparency, interests other than yours fill the vacuum. Corporate donors fund campaigns, and the officials those campaigns elect write rules that serve the donors. Regulations meant to protect consumers get weakened or go unenforced. Workers lose bargaining power as the legal framework shifts in favor of employers. Ownership concentrates further as tax policy and corporate governance reward those who already hold the most. The pattern is consistent. The same forces that weaken your power as a voter also weaken your power as a consumer, a worker, and an owner. Power concentrates across all four dimensions at once because the mechanisms are connected. Wealth buys political influence. Political influence rewrites economic rules. Economic rules concentrate more wealth. The cycle accelerates. This is not a partisan observation. It is a structural one. It happens regardless of which party holds power because the incentives that drive it are built into the system's design. The question is not which politicians to blame. The question is whether the system itself is designed to protect you in all four of your roles as a citizen.



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Join the Movement

Demand the Change that You Deserve

A Constitution That Protects All Four Roles

The American Constitution was written to protect citizens from government overreach. But even the protections it does promise, including the right to vote, are under active assault through gerrymandering, voter suppression, and the influence of unlimited money in elections. And the Constitution offers no protection at all from corporate overreach. There is no constitutional guarantee that your power as a consumer, a worker, or an owner will be defended at all, let alone with the force that a functioning democracy requires. The Four Pillars framework starts from a simple premise: a constitution for the 21st century must protect citizens in all four of the roles they actually play. Not just as voters whose rights exist on paper, but as consumers who deserve fair markets, workers who deserve fair compensation, and the opportunity for everyone to become owners to generate wealth. Every reform proposed by Quest Coalition is built on this framework. The Constitution of the New Founding establishes structural protections for all four pillars. The New Founding Act implements those protections with specific mechanisms, from tax brackets to enforcement agencies to transition timelines. The Visual Guide demonstrates that every reform is fully funded. The Clear Pathway to Citizenship extends these protections to every person who lives and works in the United States. And the Partnership Standards Framework applies the same principle internationally: democratic governance, the protection of citizens in all their roles, and respect for the sovereignty of other nations are the gateway to economic partnership with the United States. Six documents. One framework. The Four Pillars of American Citizenship.

The Four Pillars of Citizenship

The framework. How Votership, Consumership, Workership, and Ownership shape your life.

The Constitution of the New Founding

The supreme law. Rights, structures, and principles for a government that serves the people.

The New Founding Act

Implementing legislation. Tax brackets, timelines, enforcement, and every detail to make it real.

The Visual Guide

A brief overview of what changes, who benefits, why the math works.

Pathway to Citizenship

Immigration reform. Clear rules, defined timelines, structural accountability.

The Partnership Standards Framework

Foreign policy with independent enforcement. Democracy and sovereignty as the gateway to trade.

Read everything at questcoalition.com



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What To Do Now!

- 1. Share.** Send these documents to friends, family, and your representatives. The ideas speak for themselves when people see the numbers.
- 2. Read, Engage, Discuss.** Read the Constitution. Understand the frameworks so you can explain it to others.
- 3. Join Single-Day Peaceful Protests.** Show up. Be counted. Peaceful mass demonstration is one of the most powerful tools citizens have.
- 4. Plan Single-Day General Strikes.** When millions of workers stop for one day, the economy notices. Make the cost of inaction visible.
- 5. Boycott Companies That Support Fascism.** Your consumer power is real. Stop funding the forces that work against your interests.
- 6. Sustain the Pressure.** Plan for a sustained weeks-long protest and strike. The Civil Rights Act took a decade. Transformation requires persistence.
- 7. Demand These Reforms.** When the pressure is applied, it is important to vocalize what we want. A stronger democracy and a just economy. These frameworks can achieve that.

We created these documents to start a discussion about building “A More Perfect Union” that we believe is just within reach.

Did we get everything right? Probably not. And that’s okay.

The important part is we shared a vision that will start a conversation and lead to all of us, We The People, to collectively build the future we want.

Every System is Designed. We can build it better and make changes now.



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