

EPA United States Environmental Protection Agency
2011 Community Involvement Training Conference
Community Involvement in the 21st Century: Embracing Diversity,
Expanding Engagement, Utilizing Technology

Welcome to the online broadcast!

Bringing Citizen Voices into Government
July 21 8:00am
Carolyn Lukensmeyer



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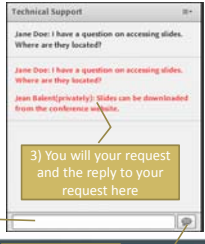
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Thank you!

Let's begin today's session!



Bringing Citizen Voices into Governance

U.S. EPA 2011 Community Involvement Training Conference



Carolyn J. Lukenmeyer, Ph.D.
President and Founder
AmericaSpeaks

July 21, 2011 Arlington, VA




Crisis of Democracy

- Political paralysis and hyper-partisanship
- Little or no progress on the big systemic issues
- High public distrust and disengagement
- 21st century problems can't be solved by government alone; and often don't align with government jurisdictions

Promising Opportunities

- "Profound brokenness" of the system leads to willingness to try new approaches
- New powerful technologies and large-scale change methodologies
- Untapped common ground that crosses traditional divides
- All of these can lead to building public constituency





So, Why Engage the Public?

- Create a stronger public constituency and mandate for change
- Educate the electorate about the challenges facing government officials
- Involve the public in being part of the solution and taking action
- Gain unique insight and new options




AmericaSpeaks' Purpose

AmericaSpeaks' mission is to reinvigorate American democracy by engaging citizens in the public decisions that most impact their lives



Finding Common Ground on Our Fiscal Future


Diverse Group of 3,500 Americans Across 57 Cities Weigh In on Nation's Fiscal Challenges



19 Town Meeting Sites

- Albuquerque
- Augusta
- Casper
- Chicago
- Columbia
- Dallas
- Des Moines
- Detroit
- Grand Forks
- Jackson
- Los Angeles County
- Louisville
- Missoula
- Overland Park
- Philadelphia
- Portland
- Portsmouth
- Richmond
- Silicon Valley

3,500 People Across 57 Cities




Video: America Speaks: Our Budget, Our Economy



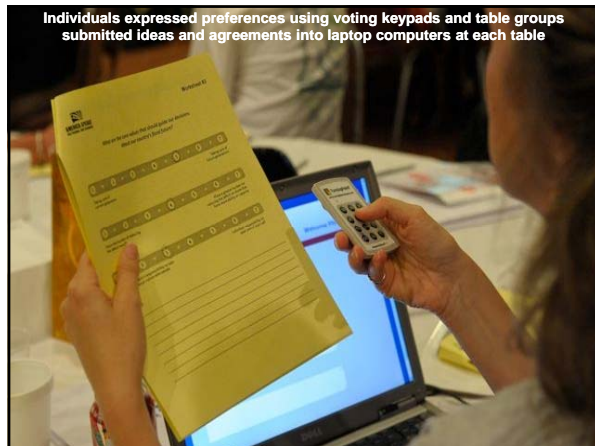
www.usabudgetdiscussion.org



Participants spent the day working in randomly assigned small groups with volunteer table facilitators.



Sites were linked by video, allowing participants to share ideas with others across the nation during periodic national reports.



Federal Budget 101
An Introduction to the Federal Budget and Our Fiscal Challenges

Options Workbook
June 26, 2010
What Are Our Options?

Participants received two guides that provided an overview of the issues and reviewed the pros and cons of 42 spending and revenue options. Experts were also available on site to answer questions that came up during the discussions.

7 Hour Agenda

- Hopes and Ground Rules for Civil Discussion
- Economic Recovery
- Shared Values
- Making Tough Choices: Parts 1, 2 and 3
- Individual Voting on Tough Choices
- Messages to Our Leaders
- Taking Action

Participating in person or via video:

Senator Kent Conrad (D-ND)
 Senator John Cornyn (R-TX)
 Senator Jim DeMint (R-SC)
 Former Senator Pete Domenici (R-NM)
 Senator Lindsey Graham (R-SC)
 Senator Judd Gregg (R-NH)

Rep. Chaka Fattah (D-PA)
 Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX)
 Rep. Bobby Scott (D-VA)
 Rep. John Spratt (D-SC)
 Dr. Alice Rivlin (Member of the National Fiscal Commission & Co-Chair of the Debt Reduction Task Force)

Quality and Tone of Politics

How satisfied are you with the tone and quality of political discussion in our country today?	6/26
Very Satisfied	1%
Satisfied	3%
Neutral	8%
Dissatisfied	31%
Very Dissatisfied	58%

How satisfied are you with the tone and quality of our discussions here today (at Town Meeting)?	6/26
Very Satisfied	62%
Satisfied	29%
Neutral	6%
Dissatisfied	2%
Very Dissatisfied	1%

Learning & Influencing Each Other

To what extent did the people at your table influence your views about the options?	6/26
A Great Deal	11%
Somewhat	39%
A Little Bit	34%
Not At All	15%

To what extent did you learn something today about the budget challenges our country faces?	6/26
I learned a great deal	51%
I learned a few things	39%
I learned very little	8%
I didn't learn anything at all	3%



Top Messages to Leaders

"Please find the political will to use this input as if it were coming from a powerful lobbying group – because we are!"

**"Abandon the failed politics of partisanship."
"You can't demonize each other and expect us to trust you."**

"The most important thing I learned from this process is that ordinary citizens could tackle a complex issue, filter it civilly through their own perspective, and come up with consensus. I literally did not think this was possible."

- Fran G., Portland, OR

"We had a very diverse group that ranged from recent high school grads to retired and from inner city Chicago to high end suburbs. I learned that while our perspectives may be different our problems are the same ... I also learned that we are all in this together."

-Don B., Chicago, IL

"It was so refreshing to have civil discourse among people of different ages, persuasions, and backgrounds. Congress could learn a lot from our experience. The tone of our discussions was polite, respectful, and everyone contributed."

- MaryEllen S., Albuquerque, NM

"It was a life changing event. I would do it again tomorrow."

-Ray M., Overland Park, KS



Virtual Summit

Allow participants to engage in real deliberation no matter where they live through:

- State-wide program via webcast
- Facilitated, small-group discussion via conference call and chat room
- Submission of group ideas to theme team
- Online voting



Millions of Voices

•Invitation by Senators Hatch and Wyden

•Create a blueprint for more than 1 million people to take part in policy making

•Convened 20 leaders in the field of citizen engagement



Asynchronous vs. Synchronous





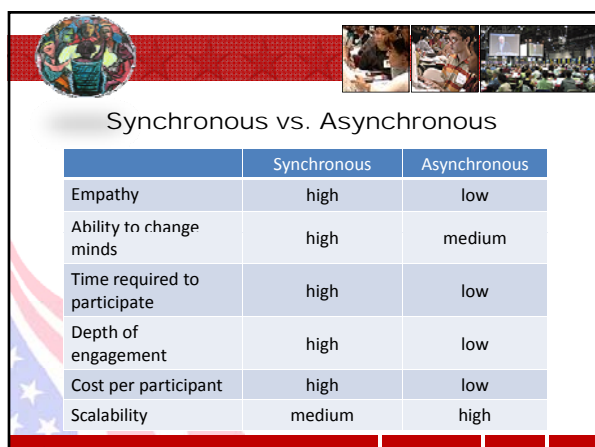
Synchronous, Event-Oriented Tools

- 21st Century Town Meetings
- Virtual Summits
- Networked Local Forums
- Community Conversation Kits
- Community Forums




Asynchronous Tools

- Blogs
- Crowdsourcing Ideas
- Choicebooks
- Collaborative Writing
- Q&A via Live Chat
- Text Messaging
- Working Groups
- Social Networking
- Policy & Budget Simulations


Synchronous vs. Asynchronous

	Synchronous	Asynchronous
Empathy	high	low
Ability to change minds	high	medium
Time required to participate	high	low
Depth of engagement	high	low
Cost per participant	high	low
Scalability	medium	high



Principles for Effective Citizen Engagement

- Linked to Decision Makers
- Demographic Diversity
- Informed Participation
- Facilitated Deliberation
- Discover Shared Priorities
- Clear Recommendations for Action
- Sustaining Citizen Engagement





Outreach

How to get the right people in the room




Keys To Success

- Organizational Partners
- Community Organizers
- Focused strategies for the hard to reach
- Media & Communications
- Monitoring progress and updating strategies

Importance of Outreach

- If outreach fails, so does everything else
- It's essential to have the "right people" in the room







Who do you want in the room?




- Visualize the room on the day of the meeting
- What kind of diversity do you need?
- Who needs to be in the room and in what proportion to ensure this process will be credible?

What resources do you have?

- Funding
- Staff you can assign to outreach
- Volunteers
- Existing programs
- Community contacts
- Personal Networks
- What else?






Developing a Strategy for Hard-to-Reach Groups



- Extra resources and extra efforts
- Key leaders are extremely important
- Create event that is easy to attend
- Explore use of incentives





Things That Are Always Good


- Issuing personal invitations
- Working through networks of trust
- Getting group leaders to recruit
- Making lots of follow up calls
- Having good media coverage
- There is no one key—it depends on the type of meeting


Other Tips To Keep in Mind



- It's a different type of meeting—use that as a selling point
- Emphasize the link to action
- Empower people and organizations
- Be skeptical of commitments
- Count like an organizer






"The only way to make democracy real is to begin a process of constant questioning, permanent provocation, and continuous public conversation between citizens and the state. That conversation is **QUITE** different from the conversation between political parties (representing the views of rival political parties is what the media thinks of as "balanced" reporting)."

~Arundhati Roy, *An Ordinary Person's Guide to Empire*

To meet the challenges of the 21st century, we have to learn new ways of meaningfully linking public will and political will to take action on the major challenges facing us.




Thank You!

www.americaspeaks.org

