

## Declaration of Interdependence

We acknowledge and declare this self evident fact: that all persons are born dependent, that they strive for independence, but that they must learn to be interdependent; that to ensure interdependence, institutions are created within society, and that chief among these is the institution of government. A democratic government must resolve the tension between the independence of the individual and the interdependence of the community while providing care for those forced into dependence as a result of incapacity or frailty. A democratic government can only be achieved through the secular ethic of citizenship, which inheres in the individual, but is expressed in the political community through the collective enterprise of governance. A democratic government derives its authority from its citizens through political representation. Political representation, properly understood, requires the recognition of rights, the acknowledgement of responsibility, and the use of reason in the exchange of political ideas through which citizens express their individual political identities while seeking common ground with their fellow citizens—*e pluribus unum*. The values of individualism—life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness—can only be secured by a government that actively promotes and protects the interdependence of all.

We now live in a time in which these values of democracy are in great peril. Our culture promotes a mindless individualism in which private want trumps any assertion of the public good. This rabid individualism has been usurped by the corporation under the fiction of legal personality, and the corporation has used this doctrine in combination with its economic power to appropriate the functions of government for its own ends. Rather than managing the endowments of nature for the benefit of all citizens, our government allocates them among competing corporate interests at little or no cost. Rather than using our military resources for the *common* defense, our government is squandering them in a war based on false pretenses, undeclared by the Congress as required by the Constitution, and unsupported by the majority of its citizens. Rather than using its power to raise revenue in an equitable manner for the benefit of all citizens, our government has placed the burden of taxation on those least represented while increasing the benefit to the already prosperous. Rather than securing religious liberty for all, our government is injecting religious ideology into public policy to silence the secular ethic of citizenship and limit representation to the chosen few. Rather than using the English language as a means to convey the truth, our government is bastardizing the spoken and written word with cheap Orwellianisms such as “the Patriot Act”, “Clear Skies”, and “No Child Left Behind”. Rather than using citizenship as a means to promote unity, our government is using economic self-interest and the fear of terrorism to create a Hobbesian war of all against all where life is nasty, brutish, and short.

Our political culture has degenerated into a state of incivility so low that governance has lost its purpose of promoting the common welfare and preserving common sense. The dubious ideology of political correctness has been used to create a false sense of unity while ignoring real differences that require political resolution. To reverse the current political impetus toward empire abroad and tyranny at home, and to secure the values of independence to ourselves and our posterity, we hereby declare our interdependence

through the affirmation of our citizenship in our respective states and the federal union. By this declaration, we resolve to participate in the restoration of our government as a servant of all its citizens and as a reservoir of those fundamental democratic values that provide and protect our independence through our mutual interdependence.