

## THE REAL WEALTH OF NATIONS PUBLIC POLICY INITIATIVE

### A Strategy to Advance Healthy Economic Priorities

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New thinking and strategies are essential at this critical time. In collaboration with the Urban Institute in Washington DC, the Center for Partnership Studies is working on inclusive economic measures that more accurately assess economic resiliency and quality of life than GDP and other conventional metrics. Now is the time for a new framework for sound social and economic policies, not just a piecemeal approach.

*The United States already has requirements for economic and environmental impact statements. The Real Wealth of Nations Initiative proposes addition of statements measuring the effect of new programs or legislation on our real wealth: our people and our natural environment. It helps policy makers shift public funding priorities in healthier and more realistic directions and to inform the public and media of changing needs and opportunities.*

The Real Wealth of Nations Public Policy Initiative recognizes:

- *The urgent need to invest in human capacity development, starting in early childhood, for our nation's health, our families, our communities, our democracy, and our economic success in the post-industrial knowledge/service economy*
- *The need to give greater visibility and value to the work of caregiving in both the market and non-market economies if seemingly intractable problems such as chronic poverty and hunger are to be effectively addressed*
- *The opportunity for change offered by current economic dislocations.*

**Sample components of Real Wealth Impact Statements (RWIS) – in comparison with other nations' indicators – would include the following:**

1. Health
  - pre-natal and childhood health
  - infant and maternal mortality
  - mental stress and drug and alcohol dependence levels
  - workforce stress levels
  - unwanted pregnancies and reproductive health care availability
  - food and drug safety and national nutritional standards
  - availability and quality of elder care
2. Families
  - availability of parenting education in schools
  - family violence levels and types of discipline in families
  - teenage pregnancy rates and family planning programs
  - equality between women and men
  - nontraditional families recognized in law
  - tax credits, benefits, and retirement security for family caregivers

### 3. Education

- early childhood education: funding and participation in quality pre-school and kindergarten
- after-school and other youth programs
- level of access, resources, & opportunities based on race, gender, class, ability, age, geography, etc.
- school teacher pay and benefits, retention, job training, and continuing education
- comprehensive sex education, as well as education for mutually respectful relations

### 4. Workplaces

- paid vacation time, sick days, and parental leave
- childcare availability at worksites
- paycheck fairness and equal pay for comparable worth
- workplace recycling programs and environmental hazard protections
- right of workers to organize

### 5. Elderly

- programs to support community engagement of elders and continuing education
- local facilities, agencies, and other resources for aging with dignity
- adequate Social Security benefits that are equal and fair between women and men
- support for home care, chronic care management, and coordination of care programs

### 6. Democracy and Equality

- education for democracy in schools
- free media, including internet
- representation of women in national legislatures
- levels of voter registration, voter participation, and reliable vote counting
- entertainment and news media that do not perpetuate stereotypes and inequality
- fair credit and lending practices for equality of opportunity

### 7. Other Measures of Quality of Life

- poverty and hunger levels, broken out for women and families
- crime levels, broken out for violent and non-violent crimes
- quality of environment including toxicity levels, water quality, etc.
- enforcement of antidiscrimination laws on gender, race, ability, age, etc.
- equal valuing of "feminine" and "masculine" activities
- comparison of military spending with funding for human needs and opportunities

The Real Wealth of Nations Public Policy Initiative will bring awareness to policy makers and grassroots communities of the enormous "back-end" costs of failing to invest in our human infrastructure and the huge benefits of investing in human capacity building. It will show that our nation must quickly catch up with other nations (see <http://www.rianeeisler.com/documents/912RWNUSFactsheet.pdf> for sobering comparisons). Based on Riane Eisler's *The Real Wealth of Nations: Creating a Caring Economics*, this initiative will support a more caring and healthy economy through new measures of economic health.

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