The Community Wealth Charter

A simple charter: Prosperity must not be hoarded by elites or extracted from neighborhoods. Wealth must circulate where people live — building stronger families, local businesses, and shared futures. This charter declares that economic justice begins not on Wall Street, but on Main Street.

Why It Matters

Wealth inequality has widened to historic levels, leaving millions of families with no savings and crushing debt.
Predatory lending drains low-income neighborhoods while big banks close local branches.
Children born into poverty rarely have access to financial tools that build generational stability.
Without local wealth-building, communities remain trapped in cycles of dependence and exploitation.

Our belief: True prosperity is shared prosperity. Communities thrive when wealth is built from the ground up — co-owned, co-invested, and co-governed.

What We're Saying

This is not charity, nor trickle-down illusion. It is a charter: that every community will have the tools to build wealth that lasts across generations — independent, equitable, and secure.

What It Guarantees

- **Child Savings Accounts:** Every child born in America receives a starter savings account, growing with age and opportunity.
- **Neighborhood Credit Unions:** Community-owned financial institutions that provide fair credit and reinvest locally.
- **Worker & Consumer Co-ops:** Shared ownership models for small businesses, housing, and essential services.
- **Anti-Predatory Lending Protections:** Strong guardrails against payday loans, exploitative mortgages, and financial fraud.

- **Community Investment Trusts:** Pathways for residents to co-own local real estate, enterprises, and development projects.

Programs You'll See

- **American Baby Bonds Program:** Seed accounts for every newborn, building assets for education, housing, or entrepreneurship.
- **Neighborhood Credit Union Act:** Expands community-owned banking in underserved regions.
- **Worker & Consumer Co-op Accelerator:** Grants and technical support for co-op startups and conversions.
- **Fair Lending & Anti-Predation Act:** Strict federal enforcement against predatory lending and financial exploitation.
- **Community Investment Trust Fund:** Enables residents to buy shares in local developments and businesses.
- **Wealth Equity Grants:** Federal support for families in historically excluded communities to grow savings and assets.

How We'll Make It Real

0–100 Days

- Establish a National Community Wealth Council with local leaders, co-op organizers, and credit union advocates.
- Launch pilot Baby Bonds programs in diverse states.

Year 1

- Pass the Neighborhood Credit Union Act and Fair Lending & Anti-Predation Act.
- Fund the first wave of co-op accelerators.

Years 2–3

- Expand Baby Bonds nationally.
- Launch Community Investment Trust pilots in 50 cities.

Years 4–5

- Ensure every community has access to a credit union, co-op support, and local investment tools.
- Embed wealth equity metrics in federal economic planning.

Accountability & Measures

- **Savings Equity:** % of children with active accounts and asset growth over time.
- **Access to Credit:** # of new credit unions serving underserved areas.
- **Co-op Growth:** # of co-op businesses formed and sustained.
- **Predatory Lending Decline:** Reduction in payday loans and exploitative credit usage.
- **Community Ownership:** % of local developments co-owned by residents.

Guardrails & Values

- **Equity First:** Prioritize low-income, rural, and historically excluded communities.
- **Democratic Ownership:** Wealth tools governed by members, not corporate shareholders.
- **Transparency:** Public dashboards on savings growth, co-op expansion, and lending practices.
- **Accountability:** Strict enforcement against predatory actors.
- **Generational Focus:** Policies designed to break cycles of poverty and build lasting stability.

Who This Helps (Snapshots)

- **Aiden (6):** Has a Baby Bond account that will help pay for college or a first home.
- **Jasmine (27):** Opens a small business as part of a worker co-op with her neighbors.

- **Elder Thomas (64):** Gains fair credit from a neighborhood credit union after decades locked out by banks.
- **The Rivera Family (multiple generations):** Co-owns a share in a local housing development through a Community Investment Trust.
- **Shanice (42):** Escapes the debt trap of payday loans with new anti-predatory protections.

What Success Looks Like

In 24 Months

- Baby Bonds pilot programs active.
- First new credit unions established in underserved regions.

In 5 Years

- Baby Bonds scaled nationwide.
- Community Investment Trusts operating in every major region.
- Measurable decline in predatory lending.

In 10 Years

- Shared prosperity becomes the national norm: every child starts with savings, every community has access to fair credit, and local wealth stays where it belongs.

The Commitment

The Community Wealth Charter is a vow: that America's prosperity will no longer be built by extracting from its people, but by investing in them. Wealth will circulate where people live, grow, and dream — a foundation of justice, equity, and shared security.

Historical Reference & Value

American history has swung between concentration of wealth and experiments in shared prosperity. The Homestead Act of 1862 offered land but excluded many, including Black families who later faced redlining and dispossession. The New Deal built wealth for millions, yet often left out communities of color. The Civil Rights era fought to end discriminatory banking and housing, leading to the Community Reinvestment Act of 1977. More recently, the idea of "Baby Bonds," co-op development, and community land/wealth trusts has emerged as a way to break cycles of poverty. The Community Wealth Charter builds on these legacies, declaring that shared prosperity — not wealth hoarding — is the true foundation of national strength.

Referenced Acts & Initiatives (Guiding Frameworks)

- **American Baby Bonds Act:** Provides savings accounts for every child at birth.
- **Neighborhood Credit Union Act:** Expands fair, community-owned financial institutions.
- **Worker & Consumer Co-op Accelerator Act:** Supports cooperative business creation and sustainability.
- **Fair Lending & Anti-Predation Act:** Enforces protections against predatory financial practices.
- **Community Investment Trust Fund Act:** Creates local co-ownership pathways for real estate and businesses.
- **Wealth Equity Grants Program:** Provides targeted support for families in historically excluded communities.

Sealing Line

So it is chartered: that wealth will no longer flow only upward, but outward — into the hands of families and communities, where prosperity is shared and secured for generations.