

OUR NEW CHALLENGE

A quarter century ago, the DLC's founding challenge was to lead Democrats out of the political wilderness by winning back the nation's forgotten middle class. Last fall, Barack Obama's victory proved that Democrats have taken our message to heart.

Now, the new DLC must take up a new challenge: to help President Obama and new leaders around the country, at a moment of profound crisis, succeed in delivering a bold, fresh agenda of responsibility and reform. With a new president in the White House, broad new majorities in Congress, and a clear mandate for change from the American people, Democrats have an opportunity and obligation to chart a new course for the country.

OUR NEW MISSION

The DLC has long been at the forefront of the reform movement, from welfare reform and fiscal responsibility to national service and charter schools. Today, our nation faces new challenges to turn the economy around and pave the way for future economic growth: creating jobs, expanding trade, and restoring economic confidence; holding down health care costs and making our people and our business climate healthier; generating the energy jobs and innovations of tomorrow; reforming our education system to compete in the global economy; and reforming government to restore fiscal responsibility and deliver results.

While other organizations continue to focus on political messaging, the central mission of the new DLC will be to develop and fight for ideas that can happen and reforms that will work. We will develop practical, far-reaching ideas that address the tough challenges and hard choices that others prefer to ignore. We will work closely with our allies in Congress and the administration to make sure the president's agenda succeeds. We're in business to push the envelope and get the job done.

MAKING IDEAS WORK

For the first time, our entire efforts in Washington will be devoted not to politics but to making ideas and reforms happen.

That means we will have more time to bring new leaders and entrepreneurial thinkers from across the country together to find practical solutions to overcome the obstacles to reform. Ideas and results matter now more than ever—so we will dedicate ourselves to our specialty: making ideas happen. We will enlist the next generation of innovators in the public and private sectors and identify the next generation of reforms from the worlds of politics and ideas:

- ***A Reform Agenda that Works:*** On the central challenges of our time—from health care to education, energy to trade, the economic crisis to long-term fiscal responsibility—we will publish high-impact reports, offer cutting-edge solutions, and host working sessions and high-profile forums to advance the reforms we support.
- ***Pragmatism, Not Ideology:*** To put America on the road to recovery, we need to put politics and ideology aside in favor of practical solutions. As President Obama has said, Americans want us to work together to change Washington by living up to the promise of post-partisan pragmatism.

- *A New Movement for Responsibility and Reform:* To move beyond the inertia of today's politics, we will engage in aggressive outreach to promote our ideas and the cause of reform. We will work closely with our many allies in the White House, the Cabinet, and the Congress.

THE NEXT GENERATION OF LEADERS

From statehouses to Congress to the Obama Cabinet, the DLC has an unparalleled track record in identifying and promoting tomorrow's leaders. Rahm Emanuel, Hillary Clinton, Janet Napolitano, Ken Salazar, Kathleen Sebelius, Tom Vilsack, Evan Bayh, Tom Carper, Mark Warner, Ron Kirk, Larry Summers, Christine Gregoire, Martin O'Malley, and Harold Ford, Jr., are just a few of the leaders who have worked closely with us over the years on their way to becoming influential Democratic voices.

That effort will continue through an expanded **DLC Fellows Program**, which each year will identify 25 rising stars in the reform movement around the country and bring them together to exchange ideas. These emerging Democratic leaders not only will learn much from one another, but will bring a burst of new ideas and energy to the debate in Washington.

DLC Fellows will help steer our national network's state-by-state leadership training workshops, which we have already held in 22 states. Each year, in conjunction with the Fellows program, we will invite a broad group of up-and-coming elected officials, reformers, and social entrepreneurs to the DLC's **National Conversation** policy retreat.

OUR NEW IDEAS

Washington has more than enough organizations to echo existing orthodoxies or churn out talking points on every issue. Our goal is different—to be a reform think tank that can make ideas happen. With a community of policymakers and experts around the country, we will focus on the areas where reform-minded Democrats can have the most impact. Here are some of the reform issues we will tackle in the months ahead:

- *Education Reform:* Meeting President Obama's challenge to end the high school and college dropout crisis. Designing a new approach to vocational education and workforce training. Rewarding performance and reinventing accountability after No Child Left Behind.
- *A New Agenda on Trade:* Preventing protectionism, expanding markets, arming American workers to compete, and launching a new debate on trade in the post-boom era.
- *Health Care Reform:* Finding common ground on the pivotal issues that will be central to enacting a health care reform plan that works.
- *The Hybrid Economy:* Making a cap-and-trade bill a reality. Fulfilling the potential of high-speed rail.
- *Fiscal Responsibility and Spending Reform:* Reforming government all over again. Designing new tools to restore fiscal discipline.
- *Economic Reform:* Designing the new financial architecture to revitalize the private sector and restore conditions for economic growth. Reinventing 401(k)'s to make retirement secure.
- *Tax Reform:* Developing a post-partisan plan to lower rates and close loopholes.
- *Civic Responsibility:* Charting the path to universal national service. Enacting a nationwide plan to prevent partisan redistricting.