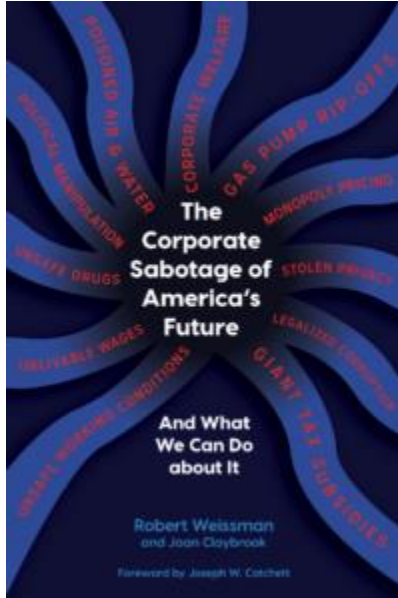


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# The Corporate Sabotage of America's Future

## And What We Can Do About It

By Robert Weissman,  
president of Public Citizen  
& Joan Claybrook, Public Citizen  
president emeritus

On Sale: September 21, 2023

Long-time corporate accountability crusaders Robert Weissman, Public Citizen president, and Joan Claybrook, Public Citizen president emeritus, investigate how giant corporations corrupt the policy-making process to block reforms favored by overwhelming majorities of the American people, and to enrich themselves through far-reaching corporate welfare schemes.

*The Corporate Sabotage of America's Future And What We Can Do About It* pulls back the curtain on the hidden tactics that big corporations employ to have their way in Washington, D.C. and state capitols and city halls across the nation. Americans intuitively know the system is rigged, but it's worse than they realize, Weissman and Claybrook reveal. The Supreme Court's 2010 *Citizens United* decision supercharged corporate power and empowered a very tiny class of individuals and corporations to dominate our elections and helped usher in a New Gilded Age. By way of example, just 25 people are responsible for roughly half of all Super PAC contributions.

But the problem goes far beyond campaign contributions, Weissman and Claybrook reveal. They detail the power and influence of corporate lobbyists, corporate-funded think tanks and front groups and massive PR campaigns, and the massive political power that corporations derive from their economic power and influence over culture.

*The Corporate Sabotage of America's Future And What We Can Do About It* also probes how corporations leverage their political power to obtain hundreds of billions annually in corporate welfare – tax breaks, giveaways, insurance programs, sweetheart contracts, privatizations and

more – siphoning public funds at the expense of the priority needs of the nation. Just four corporate welfare schemes – the Trump tax cuts, the restrictions on Medicare drug price negotiation, partial Medicare privatization and wasteful Pentagon contracts – conservatively will cost Americans \$2 trillion over the next decade.

The book examines how three industries' abuses have a devastating effect on real people and cause avoidable suffering:

- **Big Pharma.** From sky-high prices that force rationing, selling dangerous drugs, pushing opioids and more, Big Pharma has inflicted great harms on the nation. Big Pharma is the largest lobby in Washington, D.C. and succeeded in generating hundreds of billions in revenue through what may be the most corrupt scheme in modern American history, the political deal that barred Medicare from negotiating the price of the drugs it is required to cover.
- **Big Oil.** Oil giants are profiteering at our expense, polluting the air we breathe and endangering low-income communities, Indigenous communities and communities of color that live near pipelines, refineries and petrochemical plants. *The Corporate Sabotage of America* recounts Big Oil's decades-long campaign of deceit to deny the reality of climate change and block measures to transition us to a clean energy future. In so doing, the industry is imperiling humanity's very existence. Meanwhile, the industry scores tens of billions in tax and other subsidies.
- **Big Tech.** Big Tech is surveilling us, undermining our privacy, degrading our culture and endangering democratic society. *The Corporate Sabotage of America* examines how Big Tech has converted its money power into political power to forestall popular anti-monopoly legislation, and exposes how these companies use the complexity of the federal tax code to escape billions and billions of federal, state and local taxes.

The book concludes by identifying cross-cutting solutions to the problem of excessive corporate power, reminding us that “We the People have, throughout our history, imposed controls on corporations – and thereby made the nation safer, healthier, fairer, more sustainable and more just.” Weissman and Claybrook write that while corporations have far too much power in this country, “We the People have more – if we choose to organize, mobilize and demand the transformative changes that we support by overwhelming majorities.”

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### **Praise for *The Corporate Sabotage of America's Future And What We Can Do About It***

“Americans understand in their gut how much our politics is under the thumb of big special interests. *Citizens United* and dark money put special interest power into overdrive. That's the bad news; the good news is that reclaiming our politics ‘for the people’ can repair the harm. This book shows how.”

- U.S. Senator Sheldon Whitehouse

“Fighting back against the corporate powers that pollute our environment, our bodies, and our democracy is an economic, political, and moral responsibility. The odds may be stacked against us, but we have two aces in the hole: the people and the truth. For 50 years Public Citizen has tenaciously championed these two interests, and with *Corporate Sabotage of America's Future* it provides a powerful new textbook for how we ensure the American people can have the final word. For anyone looking to organize instead of agonize in the age of big business and dark money, this book is required reading.”

- *U.S. Senator Edward Markey*

“As this book elaborates, workers, consumers, taxpayers and our children are paying dearly for unregulated corporate crime waves with their loss of life, livelihood and citizen power. The reason: the financial influence of big business over corrupt politicians. Yet overwhelmingly, Americans detest the corporate overlords with their gouging prices, dangerous toxins, government bailouts, tax escapes, worker exploitation, and Earth endangering ultimatums. With such left/right majorities, citizens should reign. *The Corporate Sabotage of America's Future* explains how to give corporate outlaws a steady diet of citizen law and order. You should take it personally, to be read, used and diffused all the way to the U.S. Congress.”

- *Ralph Nader*

“Public Citizen is a champion for consumers across America, making sure government works for the people and fighting back against corporate overreach and power. Building on Public Citizen's experience, this book shows you how corporations are turning the government against the public interest and how we can make it work for We the People.”

- *U.S. Representative Pramila Jayapal*

“Accountability is not required of Corporate America by our public officials. This is a crime. And too few people in power are standing up for the hard-working middle class. This book empowers average Americans to strip corporations of their stranglehold on the country.”

- *U.S. Representative Jackie Speier (ret.)*

“You don't have to be in “Who's Who” to know “What's what.” And people of all stripes are learning the hard way that corporate profiteers have seized too much of America's money and power, using both to take evermore at our expense. Yet, there's good news: You! Weissman and Claybrook, two premier democracy champions, not only detail how moneyed elites rig the system, but more importantly how we ordinary Americans can battle the bastards – and win.”

- *Jim Hightower, national radio commentator, writer, public speaker, and New York Times best-selling author*

"When the vast majority of people want a clean environment, equitable economy, affordable health care and inclusive democracy, but every one of these is moving in the wrong direction, something is wrong. *The Corporate Sabotage of America's Future* shines a spotlight on the core problem – corporate power – and offers 10 clear steps we can take to start moving in the right direction."

- Annie Leonard, former executive director of Greenpeace US and author of *Story of Stuff*.

## About the Authors

**Robert Weissman** is president of Public Citizen and an expert on corporate and government accountability. At Public Citizen, he has helped lead the charge for a constitutional amendment to overturn the Supreme Court's *Citizens United* decision, lower the price of prescription drugs and advance corporate accountability. In his previous work, he helped lower the price of HIV/AIDS drugs in developing countries, enabling the treatment of more than 25 million people for what is otherwise a deadly disease. With Russell Mokhiber, Weissman is co-author of *Corporate Predators: The Hunt for Mega-Profits and the Attack on Democracy* and *On the Rampage: Corporations Plundering the Global Village* (both Common Courage Press).

**Joan Claybrook** was president of Public Citizen from 1982 until she retired in 2009. During that time, she played a key role in many successful advocacy campaigns, including enactment of the McCain-Feingold campaign finance law and a mandate for airbags in all consumer vehicles, which have saved over 60,000 lives in the U.S. From 1977-1981, she headed the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, where she issued the airbag rule and the first ever federal fuel economy standards.

**Public Citizen** is among the nation's leading consumer advocacy and progressive policy organizations. Founded by Ralph Nader, the organization has helped pass countless laws, won dozens of cases at the U.S. Supreme Court, and forced the removal of dangerous drugs from the market. Altogether, these efforts have helped save millions of lives, saved consumers and taxpayers billions of dollars, and made our nation more fair and just. Public Citizen has published numerous books and hundreds of reports on corporate, consumer and advocacy issues since it was founded over 50 years ago.

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