

# AMERICA *SPEAKS*

Engaging Citizens in Governance



## **Public Participation in Nanotechnology & Nanoscale Science**

**Dr. Carolyn J. Lukensmeyer**

**Arlington, VA**

**May 30-31, 2006**



# Fundamental Premise

---

**The best public policy is an integration of:**

- **Expert knowledge**
- **The collective wisdom of ordinary people**



# Contemporary Challenges

---

**In our current political, cultural, media environment --**

**What is an AUTHENTIC  
'VOICE OF THE PEOPLE'**

**--and--**

**How do you mobilize it?**



## Why Engage the Public?

- **Reduces conflict and identifies common ground positions**
- **Creates constituency and momentum for political action**
- **Improves outcomes by taking into account public wisdom and perspectives of those most directly impacted**
- **Increases trust in decision makers and educates the public**



# What Does Good Public Engagement Look Like?

---

- **Diversity and Inclusion**
- **Informed Participation**
- **Neutral Facilitation**
- **Values-Based Deliberation**
- **Transparent Link to Decision Making**



# Critical Factors for Selection of Methods

---

- **Where are we in the policy development process?**
- **Where are we in the political process?**
- **What is the state of the science?**
- **What is the state of the public's knowledge?**



## Sample of US Deliberation Methods

Name	Developer	Unique Features
21st Century Town Meeting	AmericaSpeaks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representative group of several thousand</li> <li>• Technology enhanced</li> <li>• Decision-makers present</li> </ul>
Citizens Jury	Jefferson Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 18 representative citizens</li> <li>• Experts testify on issues</li> <li>• Presents findings to the public</li> </ul>
Deliberative Polling	Center for Deliberative Democracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Random group of several hundred</li> <li>• Pre- and post-testing</li> <li>• Partner with television station</li> </ul>
Study Circles	Study Circles Resource Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8-12 citizens per circle</li> <li>• Multiple sessions over 4-6 weeks</li> </ul>





## Hopeful Signs

- **Congressionally sponsored engagement; e.g. health care and nano-technology**
- **Federal agency experimentation w/ engagement; e.g. EPA and CDC**
- **Technology break throughs; e.g. Internet, video teleconferencing and groupware**
- **Global innovation; e.g. British Columbia and Porto Alegre**
- **Large-scale engagement; e.g. NE Ohio**





[www.americaspeaks.org](http://www.americaspeaks.org)

[www.deliberative-democracy.net](http://www.deliberative-democracy.net)