

## **Stronger North Carolina Charter** (version 02/20/18)

Stronger North Carolina, Inc. (SNC) is a non-partisan, all-volunteer, grassroots organization comprised of North Carolinians promoting progressive values. SNC formed organically after the November 2016 presidential election as North Carolinians in online communities like Facebook and Twitter began to share information on improving and increasing effective citizen advocacy.

Democracy works when voters are informed, engaged, and empowered. SNC focuses on educating our members, providing local opportunities for them to meet, take civic action, communicate with their representatives, and hold their representatives accountable for legislative and policy choices. SNC encourages its members to speak with their elected representatives, attend non-violent rallies and protests, and to show up and respectfully advocate at public gatherings, town hall meetings, and within their own political parties. SNC is peaceful and respectful in our communications and advocacy efforts.

We also understand that community service and social welfare organizations may be negatively impacted by administrative and legislative policies. SNC helps our members identify local opportunities to support vulnerable communities by volunteering, donating, and otherwise partnering with organizations to support them during a time when the government may not or may be underfunding programs.

SNC hopes to foster a community of civic-minded, kind, and empathetic North Carolinians that support and encourage one another. Many of us have felt isolated or misunderstood at some point because of our political beliefs. SNC provides opportunities for its members to support one another, building friendships based on shared values of inclusion and respect for difference, by focusing on issues rather than party or other identifiers.

### **I. Values**

So, what exactly do we believe? Our members are diverse and hail from all political parties. We do, however, agree on four basic principles.

- **Freedom.**  
The most basic American value is freedom. This includes our rights to freedom of speech, association, and religion as well as the freedom to control our own bodies and personal lives. We believe all people should have the freedom to lead lives supported by the basic foundations of economic security and opportunity. This includes physical protections against bodily harm as well as adequate income, economic protections, health care, and education.
- **Opportunity.**  
Real freedom requires opportunity. We believe government must ensure that freedom is

balanced with justice so that all people—irrespective of their race, sex, national origin, disability status, sexual orientation, gender identity, color, or religion—have the security and opportunity to live with dignity, equality, and the space to pursue their dreams.

- **Responsibility.**

Along with freedom and opportunity, SNC values responsibility. Responsibility means working to achieve social and economic justice. It demands open and honest government, an engaged and participatory citizenry, and free press. Responsibility means “we’re all in this together,”--in fact, we’re “Stronger Together”--and we must each do our part to aid the disadvantaged, protect our environment, and protect our democracy for future generations.

- **Cooperation.**

Freedom without cooperation results in a divided society that cannot achieve common goals. Cooperation requires us to be empathetic and kind in listening as well as in our speech, and that we consider the well-being of all. If we blindly pursue our own needs and ignore those of others, our society will degenerate. We acknowledge human interdependence and the need to pursue global solutions to global problems.

## **II. Mission**

Based on these four core values, SNC is organized to help individuals more effectively participate in our representative democracy while supporting marginalized and vulnerable groups. This means that SNC is:

- **Focused on member education**

SNC believes that education is activism. Informed voters make choices that benefit all of us. In the era of so-called #FakeNews, SNC recognizes an opportunity to provide factual, critical analysis of public policy, legislation, court decisions, and government. We teach our members about how government works, how to recognize when it isn’t working, and how to effectively connect with both our elected representatives and the public at large about public policy.

- **Providing advocacy resources**

SNC builds useful advocacy toolkits that help members exercise their democratic rights and become effective advocates for positive change. We also issue targeted “calls to action” (CTAs) to alert our membership when they can do something to help impact an issue. Our SNC website, Facebook pages, and Facebook Live spots aim to teach responsible, non-violent citizen engagement.

- **Building a community**

People who do not feel alone are empowered. We look to the example of the signatories to the Declaration of Independence and the diverse constituencies of the Civil Rights

Movement as examples of what civic-minded individuals can do when they build a community focused on freedom, opportunity, responsibility, and cooperation. SNC is inclusive and aims to build a diverse community of North Carolinians of all races, creeds, religions, national origins, sexual orientations, and gender identities and viewpoints. All North Carolinians aligned with our core values are welcome at our events and in our online spaces!

- **Supporting community service**

Recent budgets introduced at both the North Carolina state level and the national level threaten to defund core community service organizations such as those devoted to reproductive health, legal services, the arts, domestic violence prevention, food banks, and refugee resettlement. SNC will partner with North Carolina organizations focused on serving women, children, and other vulnerable communities who may be adversely affected or left on the periphery.

- **Cooperating with other organizations**

SNC does not want to duplicate efforts or divert resources from existing North Carolina organizations working for progressive causes. Instead, we believe our social media and website platforms, voter education campaigns, events calendars, and advocacy resources can help aggregate and distribute resources to a diverse group of new activists. We work with other grassroots groups to coordinate efforts, communicate opportunities for action, and to provide support. An Indivisible Group, we also cooperate with other Indivisible Groups nationally to motivate, empower, and educate newly minted progressive activists. One of our primary goals is to make activism easy. We will also work with non-progressive identifying groups on common issues, thus doing our best to model bipartisan cooperation for the betterment of society.

We believe it is important to know what SNC is **not** so that we can focus our energies and resources on our mission. This means SNC is **not**:

- Affiliated with any political party
- A lobbying organization
- Affiliated with Pantsuit Nation
- A political action committee
- Affiliated with any particular candidate for public office

### **III. Leadership**

SNC leadership is intentionally informal and consensus-based. Due to the group's organic roots and desire to be reactive to our membership, committees and committee leadership may change as required.

- **Executive committee:** SNC's operation and day-to-day leadership is performed by an Executive Committee made up of four officers responsible for the legal entity and elected annually:
    - Chair: Cristel Orrand
    - Vice Chair: Shelby Reap
    - Secretary: Tricia Sauls
    - Treasurer: Jen Rudolph
- And an overall advisory leadership that also includes:
- Founder: Tricia Sauls
  - Lead: Julie Faenza
  - Lead: Joyce Wady

And volunteers from local chapters.

#### **IV. Meetings**

Committee meetings will be held at the discretion of the leadership. Executive Team meetings will be called by members of the Executive Team on an as-needed basis. Meetings may be held in person or via telephone or web platform.

#### **V. Costs and Fund-Raising**

SNC occasionally does fundraisers to cover event, operational, marketing, and administrative costs. We do not fundraise for political candidates, PACs, or any individual gain. Although SNC is nonprofit, donations to SNC are not tax deductible.

#### **VI. Adoption of and Amendments to the Charter**

This Charter was adopted on February 20, 2018 by the Executive Committee of SNC. Amendments to the Charter may be brought forward by any member of the Leadership Team for consideration and adoption/rejection by a majority vote of the Leadership Team.