

Workshop Outline:

Communities at Risk



American Independent Business Alliance

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For those who wish to introduce an audience to the importance of local ownership and community-based business toward a sustainable and self-determined community, we offer more generally-focused presentations that deal less with how an Independent Business Alliance_{SM} (IBA) actually works and more with why one might be needed.

We explore the role of independent businesses, communities, and citizens in:

- world economics and local impacts -- the growth imperative of transnational corporations and their support structures (governments, the WTO, international trade agreements, etc.);
- the link between economic democracy and political democracy--there's strength in numbers;
- keeping decision-making power within the community -- how conscious, personal decision-making puts citizens in charge of overall community well-being;
- strengthening local economic vitality and stability -- the multiplier effect;
- maintaining community character-defying the homogenization of your hometown;
- supporting community non-profits and civic institutions -- community-based businesses give more back to their communities;
- maintaining a diversity of choices for our goods and services -- local providers, local products, and meeting the unique needs of the community;
- perpetuating opportunities for entrepreneurship -- keeping the American Dream alive . . . and more.

We recommend 1 ½ to 2 hours for these presentations. The format can vary -- for a large audience; a speech followed by Q&A typically works best. For more intimate gatherings, a short introduction may be followed by an interactive, guided discussion for the bulk of the time.

We aim for audience interaction, and often audience members interact with *each other* as well--the forums encourage true community dialogue on these important issues. We are happy to adjust our format to suit the host's wishes.

Keep in mind that we can weave in much of the IBA "how to" in abbreviated form while still detailing the above issues in a single presentation -- it's a matter of varying emphasis.