



## **Statement of Independence**

February, 2006

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### **Background**

The Keystone Center specializes in helping community, government, and business leaders acquire the scientific, social, economic, and political information they need to make sound decisions. More specifically, TKC helps the public, private, and civic sectors use scientific knowledge and state-of-the-art consensus-building in the areas of environmental, health, and energy policy. We accomplish this through independent facilitation and mediation services on a range of significant policy issues.

### **How We Maintain Our Trustworthiness and Independence**

We intentionally seek to sustain broad confidence by:

- Ensuring that a broad range of perspectives are brought to bear on the decision-making processes we facilitate, including the perspectives of those most affected by the decisions or policies at issue.
- Remaining impartial on the substance of issues being discussed while ensuring that participants decide the issues being discussed.
- Striving to maintain a balanced and diverse funding base institutionally, and wherever possible and appropriate, on a project basis.
- Considering the entire group as the "client;" recognizing that any participant, not just the funder, can decide that the facilitator is not acting as a neutral party and should be excused from his or her duties.

- Fully disclosing the sources of our funding.
- Reserving the right to withdraw from a process if the facilitator has just reason to believe participants are not participating in good faith.
- Ensuring that decision-makers within the organization and our projects understand that they cannot use the facilitator to influence the outcome of any of our projects.
- Encouraging decision-makers in our projects to use consensus wherever possible and appropriate.
- Encouraging the fullest disclosure and exchange of information that may be vital to finding solutions while respecting that participants may choose to place constraints on what is made public and what remains proprietary.

## **Commitment to Participants**

1. **Disclosure.** Participants in TKC activities have a right to know, in advance, any past and present relationships that could give rise to actual or perceived conflicts of interest.
2. **Goals, Purposes, and Objectives.** Participants in TKC activities have a right to understand what they are about to be involved in before they get involved. As facilitators and technical experts, we have a duty to the individuals and groups we serve to help clarify the reasons for undertaking a project, initiative, or series of meetings, and what can be expected from us.
3. **Role of TKC Facilitators.** Participants in TKC activities have a right to understand who is responsible for Keystone's presence in a particular policy issue, how we got involved, and what we will and will not be responsible for doing. We are obligated to explain our role, the auspices under which we have been asked to facilitate or provide technical assistance, and what our processes will entail.
4. **Political Diversity.** While it is physically impossible to get everyone who is affected by a decision (including future unborn generations) in the same room at the same time, participants who are potentially impacted by decisions or actions that emerge from TKC activities have a right to see someone representing their perspective or "voice" even if they themselves are not present. TKC staff are obligated to assure that the fullest diversity and the widest representation of views and voices possible are present in our process. This must also be balanced with the practicality of finding participants who are open to seeking common ground with those who hold different views.

5. **Uses of Information.** Participants in TKC activities have a right to know what will happen to the information and ideas that are discussed in a Keystone activity meeting or throughout a meeting process. Recognizing that convening or contracting entities may place constraints on what is made public and what is not, facilitators have a duty to clarify to the greatest extent possible how information generated by a group will be used, who owns it, how it will be represented, and by whom.
6. **Decision-making.** Participants in TKC activities have a right to know how decisions will be made before they are made. TKC Associates have a duty to explain, or help a group collectively decide, at the beginning of a process, how decisions in the group will be made.
7. **Personal Needs and Biases.** Participants in TKC activities have a right to expect a high level of objectivity, self-control, and self-awareness from anyone calling themselves a TKC employee. Associates and support staff are first and foremost, servants of the good processes and good science we believe is necessary to shape smart policy. We therefore have a duty to subordinate our own personal needs which includes examining, to the greatest extent possible, our own likes, dislikes, predispositions, and cultural biases and, if necessary, disqualifying ourselves from work or respectfully declining it.