## All Politics Is Local: The Unseen Forces **Shaping Our Communities**

In his groundbreaking book, All Politics Is Local, acclaimed political scientist Robert Putnam argues that the decline of civic engagement is a major threat to American democracy. Putnam draws on extensive research to show how the decline of social capital—the networks of trust and reciprocity that bind communities together—has led to a decrease in political participation, a rise in social inequality, and a decline in community well-being.



#### All Politics is Local: The Economic and Political Guide to Local Policy Issues (All Politics Is Local - The

**Collection**) by Tom Means



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Putnam's research shows that communities with high levels of social capital are more likely to have active and engaged citizens, higher levels of trust, and lower levels of crime. They are also more likely to have

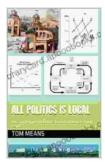
successful schools, healthy businesses, and vibrant civic organizations. In contrast, communities with low levels of social capital are more likely to be plagued by apathy, distrust, and social problems.

Putnam argues that the decline of social capital is due to a number of factors, including the increasing mobility of the population, the rise of individualism, and the decline of traditional institutions such as churches and unions. He also points to the role of technology, which has made it easier for people to connect with others online but has also led to a decline in face-to-face interactions.

The decline of social capital is a serious problem for American democracy. It makes it more difficult for citizens to participate in the political process, and it undermines the trust that is essential for a healthy society. Putnam argues that we need to take steps to rebuild social capital in our communities. He suggests a number of ways to do this, including:

- Encouraging civic engagement
- Strengthening social networks
- Investing in public spaces
- Promoting diversity and inclusion

All Politics Is Local is a must-read for anyone who is concerned about the future of American democracy. Putnam's research provides a clear and compelling case for the importance of social capital, and he offers a number of practical suggestions for how we can rebuild it in our communities.



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