



# BlackBallotPower

## HOLD A HOUSE PARTY

### **1. What is the purpose of a house party?**

To educate your friends and acquaintances about your work, and to ask them to make a contribution.

### **2. Will I make a good host?**

If you have supported the organization and are excited about the issue, you will.

### **3. Is my house big enough?**

The best size for a house party is between 12 and 40 people. So your place is probably big enough.

### **4. As a host what are my responsibilities?**

To provide the house and food. (This can be very simple.)

To invite everyone you think might be interested.

To make a pitch at the party.

### **5. Can I get a friend to help me host this?**

Yes. The friend must have the same qualifications you do.

### **6. How will the organization help?**

- ◆ By attending the party.
- ◆ By preparing the presentation for the party.
- ◆ By adding names to your invitation lists from our own lists (people who once supported the Institute and live in your area).
- ◆ By developing an invitation.
- ◆ By helping you practice and discuss how to make the pitch.
- ◆ By helping you set up and clean up, if you need help.

## **7. What is the process?**

- a. Prepare a list of people to be invited. Staff will work with you. Invite 3x as many your house can accommodate. Make sure you include 1 board member for each 5 - 8 guests. Invite your friends, neighbors. Think about the churches & clubs you attend, your relatives, your co-workers.
- b. Work with the organization to develop a simple invitation that will state "this will be a chance to learn about XYZ and to contribute to their important work - bring your checkbook." Write personal notes on the invitations if you can. Send them first class. Give directions, if helpful.
- c. Choreograph the event carefully to avoid traffic jams. Where will people park? put their coats? eat and drink? listen to the program? sign in?
- d. Make the pitch. After the staff and special guest have talked about the Institute and the problems we respond to and our needs, you can say "I hope you will join me in funding this important group. (My favorite group?) Please take a few minutes to think about your gift. You can give your check to me or to one of the XYZ people who are wearing the white carnations."
- e. After the party evaluate with staff who gave, who didn't, who did not come and should be asked. The organization will send out thank-you notes. The host can too.

## **8. What if I really cannot make the pitch?**

Although the best results are when the host or hostess makes the pitch, we may have a board member who would be willing to help you out, or the executive director. Talk to us about it.

## **9. When is the best time to hold the house party?**

This depends on the people you are planning to invite. Neighbors and friends are more likely to respond to a Friday or Saturday evening or Saturday afternoon party. Business acquaintances are more likely to come after work during the week. Dates near or on holiday weekends are not good times to plan.