



## HOUSE PARTY KIT

### SUGGESTED AGENDA

House parties are most successful when scheduled for a two-hour time slot. Commonly chosen times include weekday or weekend nights from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. or from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m., or Sunday afternoons from 12 noon to 2 p.m., 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., or from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

*The first hour is for the arrival of guests and conversation.*

As guests arrive, they sign in. This way, we'll be sure to have their names and current addresses, so we can send everyone a prompt thank-you note or follow-up on questions or requests.

*At the beginning of the second hour, the program begins.*

The program is in 4 parts:

1. **Introduction of candidate** (3-5 minutes), usually done by the host
2. **Remarks by campaign representative** (10 minutes)
3. **Questions and Answers** (15-20 minutes)
4. **The Pitch:** (5 minutes), given by a guest or host.

The "pitch" asks people to get involved and tells them how they can help. Collecting checks is, of course, of great importance. After the pitch, you should distribute volunteer cards and donor cards, and your guests will write their checks. Please make sure that everyone is asked for a check before they leave.

*After the pitch, the formal program is over and guests return to mingling.*

**Sample Agenda:** (These house party hosts requested that their guests arrive at 6 p.m.)

6:00 p.m. Guests arrive & sign in, mingle & have refreshments, meet campaign representative

7:00 p.m. The host(s) introduces the candidate or campaign representative

7:05 p.m. Campaign representative gives a brief speech

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7:15 p.m. The "pitch" is made by the hosts' neighbor

7:20 p.m. Guests write checks, fill out volunteer & donor cards, and go back to mingling

8:00 p.m. Most guests begin to leave

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## **TIMETABLE & CHECKLIST**

### ***4 WEEKS BEFORE THE EVENT:***

- \_\_\_\_\_ Set the date for your house party with the campaign
- \_\_\_\_\_ Draw up your invitation list (see enclosed sample for ideas) -- The rule of thumb is you need to mail 120 invitations to have 40 attend.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Draft your invitation (see enclosed sample) and make 120 or more copies

### ***3 WEEKS BEFORE THE EVENT:***

- \_\_\_\_\_ Mail out invitations
- \_\_\_\_\_ Ask a friend to serve as a 'door person' -- they'll help buzz people in, answer the door, take coats, sign people in, collect checks, help with last-minute details

### ***2 WEEKS BEFORE:***

- \_\_\_\_\_ Call everyone who has not RSVP'D & ask if they're coming
- \_\_\_\_\_ Keep a list of who's coming

### ***1 WEEK BEFORE:***

- \_\_\_\_\_ Decide who will introduce the campaign representative;
- \_\_\_\_\_ Prepare and practice your introduction;
- \_\_\_\_\_ Choose a person to do the "pitch;" the "pitch" person should know the current needs of the campaign.



### **THE WEEK OF THE EVENT**

\_\_\_\_\_ Remind your door person of the time you need them;

\_\_\_\_\_ Purchase cups and paper goods;

\_\_\_\_\_ Ready your refreshments.

### **YOUR INVITATION LIST**

How can you make sure your house party will be well-attended? In our experience, it's not complicated -- all you have to do is: a) send out 120 invitations, and b) ten days later, follow up with phone calls.

*The first question, then, is who to invite?*

Here are some ideas that have helped other house party hosts pull their invitation lists together:

**FAMILY:** Consider inviting your parents, kids, aunts, uncles and cousins.

**FRIENDS:** And don't forget about your partner/spouse/lover/wife/girlfriend/boyfriend.

**SOCIAL ACQUAINTANCES:** Old friends you only see occasionally, friends from college/school, your old professors or teachers, friends from your old job or from the group where you used to volunteer.

**NEIGHBORS:** Next door, upstairs, downstairs, down the hall, or the whole building; people on the block who you always run into when you go jogging, or with whom you walk the dog or who you see at the grocery store; your co-op board, your tenants association; your landlord, your tenants, your super; your baby-sitter, your child care collective, your carpool, or the parents of your children's friends.

**FROM CHURCH, TEMPLE OR MOSQUE:** Your clergy person, minister, priest, rabbi, imam; church activists, regular attendees and friends who may be not-so-regular attendees; the people you always share holidays with.

**FROM YOUR LABOR UNION:** Union leaders or activists; your steward, your business agent, other union staff; your co-workers.

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FROM WORK OR COMMUNITY WORK: People who do the same work you do; other people in the office, your partner; your clients, your supervisor; old partners, old clients, your old supervisor; people who used to work in the office but recently left; colleagues from community work or from charity work.

MEMBERS OF: Your block association, your political club, your community group; your food co-op; your local peace or environmental group; the PTA, your local school board; your community board.

PEOPLE YOU'VE MET WHILE RECREATING: Members of your bowling league, volleyball team, cooking group, pick-up basketball; the bridge club, your poker buddies; night classes, Lamaze class, Aerobics class, the gym; your housemates from ski weekends, from beach trips, camping trips; people you sing with, choir, jamming, go caroling with; people you shop with or garden with.

PROFESSIONALS YOU KNOW PERSONALLY: Your lawyer, dentist, doctor, pharmacist, broker, butcher, dry cleaner, or baker.

PULL OUT LISTS YOU'VE MADE IN THE PAST: The invitation lists from your last party; your Christmas card list; the program from your last reunion; your rolodex, at work and at home; your personal phone book.

*Finally, think about interesting people you've met, but may not know well, who are active in their communities:*

**WHO DO YOU KNOW?:** In the African-American communities; the different Latino communities; the South American, European, Asian and various immigrant communities; teachers; the lesbian and gay community; retirees; or college and high school students.

*After all this, if you still don't have enough people to invite, what do you do?*

Ask a friend to co-host the party with you -- they invite half the people, you invite half the people, and together you'll have a good invitation list.



## FOLLOW UP CALLS- A PHONE SCRIPT TO CONFIRM ATTENDANCE

Two weeks before your house party, please call everyone on your invitation list who has not returned the RSVP card- either confirm their attendance or secure a contribution. Only a small number of the people you invite will RSVP before they get a phone call; many more will come if you give them a call.

We can guarantee from many years of experience: If you mail 120 invitations, and follow up with calls to everyone on your guest list, you will have 40 people in your living room who want to learn more about **Jim Piccillo**.

*The following is a suggested script for the call:*

"Hi, this is (your name). I mailed you an invitation to meet learn about **Jim Piccillo** at a small fundraiser I'm having at my home on (date of event). I hope you can join us -- will you be able to come?"

(IF THEY'RE COMING) Great, I'll see you then.

(IF THEY'RE NOT SURE) I hope you can come - (insert something about candidate, 1 or 2 things he has done as a current member of city council, and why we are asking for support). It would be great to have you there.

(IF THEY CAN'T COME) I'm sorry you can't come -- (again, insert text about candidate, mention 1 or 2 things he has done as a current member of city council, and why we are asking for their support). I hope you'll write a check to the "**Jim Piccillo Campaign**"-- if you send it to me in the reply envelope I sent you, I'll forward it to them.



## REFRESHMENTS

Refreshments at your house party can be as plain or as fancy as you wish.

### *Easy and inexpensive refreshments:*

There are many types of food and drink that are easy on you, easy on your budget, and just right for a house party. Remember, people don't come just for the food -- they come because they're interested in supporting **Jim Piccillo**, and they respect the fact that you support **Jim Piccillo** as well. Other hosts have had successful house parties and served one of the following menus:

1. Cheese and crackers, and wine and soda
2. Coffee and cake
3. Vegetables and dip, guacamole and chips, fresh fruit, and soda and beer
4. Sweet rolls, tea, milk and coffee
5. Tea and cookies

If you prepare the refreshments yourself, you can budget \$1 per person and offer any of the above menus. Coffee and cake can cost just fifty cents a person.

***The bottom line is: you don't have to spend a lot of money on refreshments to have a house party that will really help Jim Piccillo.***

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## Common Sense for Congress

### SAMPLE INVITATION

Dear Friend,

Please join us at our home on [March 28] to meet [Representative] from \_\_\_\_\_.

We think you will be as impressed as we are.

(brief statement about campaign, candidate).

Some of Jim Piccillo's successes include:

- Led effort to get more stimulus money to put more police on the street
- Save taxpayer money with energy efficiency programs
- Enforce panhandling ordinance

We look forward to seeing you!

DATE AND TIME: March 28, 1997; 7:00 - 9:00 pm

PLACE: 1024 Eagle St., Apt. 4-B;

RSVP: Use the enclosed card and envelope

The suggestion minimum contribution is \$25.

Sincerely,

Party Host

### SAMPLE PLEDGE CARD

\_\_\_ Yes, I am looking forward to attending the event for \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_ No, I cannot attend, but would like to contribute:

\_ \$25 \_ \$50 \_ \$100 \_ \$250 \_ \$500 \_ Other amount:

(Make checks payable to: Jim Piccillo Campaign)

Name (First & Last): \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you for your support!**

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