



Laura Belin <laurarbelin@bleedingheartland.com>

Polk County Democrats GOTV is at Full Throttle!

Polk County Democrats <polkdems-gmail.com@shared1.ccsend.com>
Reply-To: polkdems@gmail.com
To: desmoinesdem@bleedingheartland.com

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Weekly News and Updates



September 10th, 2024

Polk County Democrats GOTV is at Full Throttle!

The scope of our get out the vote efforts this year is nothing short of staggering, and so many of you are a part of it! Under the leadership of our outstanding Executive Director, Kira Barker, we are ahead of pace in the first phase of our three part-plan. Each part of this plan is vital, and it all starts with getting resources into voters' hands!



Phase One: Absentee

Ballots! Voter Resources! As of September 1st there were approximately 130,000 registered Democrats in Polk County. As you are reading this our volunteers are out distributing voting materials to every house with a Democratic voter! Along with our Polk County Democratic Neighborhood Groups, we are hanging bags on the doors of every registered Democrat, and also on the doors of Democratic-leaning Independents. We and the neighborhood groups have stuffed approximately 95,000 bags and have made great headway getting them out. Every bag contains candidate information and a note from the Democratic Neighborhood Group promoting membership. Every bag also contains two absentee ballot request forms (and more if the household includes more than two Democratic voters).

We know that voting from home works! In the past we've seen as high of a return rate as 95% on absentee ballot requests. This means that 95 of 100 voters who submit a request for an absentee ballot actually vote via that absentee ballot. Sure, the Republicans have made it harder to vote absentee, but that just means we have to work harder to help our voters cast an absentee ballot. And that is exactly what we are doing! Recall those great school board election results last fall? They were due, in large part, to a robust early mail-in vote effort on behalf of our candidates. So, job one is promoting our candidates and getting as many voters as we possibly can to submit an application for an absentee ballot. Have you gotten your absentee ballot request in yet? (See below for important deadlines to ask for an absentee ballot and to get your votes in.) Finally, several of our neighborhood groups are making calls and sending post cards to voters who live in apartment complexes that are not accessible to our volunteers.

Phase Two: Satellite Voting! Absentee Ballot Chase! We will promote early voting at satellite locations and remind folks who applied for absentee ballots to get them in. Polk County Democrats began planning for satellite early voting locations earlier this year. Here's another area where Republicans made it harder to vote. Now, rather than the County Auditor simply naming sites, the Auditor can only staff a location if he receives a petition signed by at least 100 registered voters. Our neighborhood groups and candidates, along with Polk Dems' help, have filed a host of petitions. The requested sites are for locations that we've used successfully in the past, and also for locations in areas that have been historically underserved. Satellite voting locations are wonderful for voters who like to vote in person, but who like to get their votes in early either for convenience or because it is difficult for them to vote on election day. Plus, it's more convenient – you can vote at any satellite voting location in the county regardless of where you live in Polk County.

Phase two also includes our beginning work to ensure that folks who requested absentee ballots follow through and mail them by the date necessary for them to arrive at the Auditor's office by election day.

Phase Three: Complete Absentee Ballot Chase! Protect and Assist Voters on Election Day! In this final phase of GOTV we will work hard to remind our voters to get their absentee ballots cast in time. In addition, we will help voters who made an error in the process of submitting their absentee ballots to correct those errors. (The most common problem is voters who forget to sign the outside of the envelope containing their absentee ballots which renders their ballots invalid.) Finally, we will implement our election day plan to help voters get to the polls and will work with the congressional campaign and state party to staff polling sites with poll watchers on election day.

This effort will succeed because of the volunteer and monetary assistance we've received. Please look for recognition of those donors and volunteers in a future Polk County Democrats newsletter.