

Red2Blue/IndigoMD
Minutes September 25, 2017
6:30 – 8:00 pm
Watermark Place Club Room

Please send comments and questions to red2blue@gmail.com

Next Meetings:

Agenda:

- Review of last meeting/updates from all subgroups
- Draft Red2Blue Action Plan/Volunteer Opportunities
- Upcoming session on Democratic Party progressive VISION

Discussion:

- A training session on Canvassing was conducted at the August 27th meeting of IndivisibleHoCoMD
- Data showing how control of state legislatures and Governorships has shifted from mostly Democratic to mostly Republican was shared. In 2008 there were 9 states controlled by Republicans but this shifted to 22 in 2010 with the rise of the Tea Party movement. Control of state legislatures has many impacts, including redistricting from the 2020 Census.
- Pravin Ponnuri from the HoCo Democratic Central Committee discussed his effort to convene representatives from all progressive groups to develop a set of themes that all can support. From this, the next step will be to craft a campaign message that unifies the candidates that win the June primary into a single slate of candidates. Campaigning for a single slate will be better organized and optimize the use of scarce resources.
- Pravin also commented on engaging with people/groups who disagree and truly listen to what they have to say. There is recognition that western HoCo voters think differently on the issues than voters in Columbia and Ellicott City.
- There was discussion about supporting Democratic Party candidates exclusively versus any candidate that supports progressive goals.
- The Maryland Democratic Party launched a campaign, 10,000 Doors, as an effort to reach out to party members, especially those who do not vote in mid-term elections. The listening campaign was not well supported in HoCo. Abby Hendrix is organizing an effort starting in October.
- Sue Hughen described the work of Swing Left in rural VA where people in “forgotten” neighborhoods responded very positively to their outreach and assistance in registering voters. Many people do not have internet, do not read newspapers, and have limited means to learn about political topics.
- Progressive candidates must deliver positive messages and not just rely on “resist Trump” as their campaign message in order to attract supporters and voters.

- Canvassing is difficult to recruit volunteers to do. People don't like having their front doors invaded by strangers and engagement rates are very low. Perhaps canvassing at high traffic areas is more productive?
- House parties that bring candidates together with small numbers of people where there is an opportunity for true engagement/discussion of concerns are effective in winning support. Perhaps we should try to organize more of these?
- we have multiple tools in the toolbox and each can be effective in their own way. Canvassing, Living Room Conversations (livingroomconversations.org), house parties, etc.
- Voter turnout is a big concern. The 2018 elections are mid-terms and historically turnout drops substantially from Presidential election years. Improving turnout by progressive voters will be key in 2018.
- Developing Precinct Captains was also discussed. There are 180 precincts in HoCo with about 3,000 voters per precinct. The Democratic Party is trying to recruit 2 – 3 people per precinct to be Captains, who would in turn recruit others to take on the task of getting in touch with each voter in the precinct and serving as a communications channel.
- R2B has 100+ members on mailing list. Need to call members to ask for volunteers for specific tasks/activities.

The following draft Action Plan for Red2Blue was distributed but not extensively discussed during the meeting:

HoCo Indivisible R2B Team Action Plan September 25, 2018

The R2B Team is striving to turn as many elected officials from Red to Blue. Our main focus will be the Howard County elected positions. To achieve these goals we have identified the following Objectives:

We will provide information, organize events and increase the number of volunteers to work on candidates' campaigns in neighboring states where statistics indicate opportunities to flip from Red to Blue. This work will be coordinated with Swing Left and Sister Districts. Currently we are working on the campaigns of Virginia state legislature candidates Danica Roem, Casey Turkend and David Reed.

We will work with the HoCo Indivisible Voting Rights Team to increase the number of registered voters in our county.

- Currently there are 94,000+ registered Democrats and 56,000+ Republicans.

We will develop and implement a strategy to get Democrat voters out for the 2018 Howard County-wide elections.

-In 2014 less than 50% of Democrats voted. Courtney Watson lost to Alan Kittleman by just 2.5% or 2,660 votes.

We will focus on local and state campaigns where there is a Republican incumbent: County Executive (Kittleman), Howard County Council District 5 (Fox), State Senate District 9A (Bates), State Delegate District 9B (Flanagan).

We will sustain a network of organizations committed to R2B for the future.