

Emergency Effort to Protect Our Courts

The Republican leadership is pushing a radical plan to stack the courts—all the way up to the Supreme Court. To stop them folks all over the country are going door to door—handing out window signs and call-in flyers, as part of a massive effort to generate opposition and raise the visibility of the issue. Our goal is to talk to over 50,000 people this weekend, and you can get us there by talking to 12 yourself.

Intro: Hi. I live over on _____ street and I'm talking to folks in our neighborhood about the judges George Bush wants to appoint to the Supreme Court. Is that something you're concerned about?

If no: Thank you. Have a nice day.

If yes or unsure: Nominees to be judges have always had to have broad support in the Senate. But now President Bush and Republican leaders are trying to change the rules so they have absolute power to force through their extreme judges.

The Senate is going to vote on this in a few days. Will you call our Senators and ask them to fight plans to push through right-wing judges?

If yes: Great! [*hand over flyer and point out the phone number, and the "what to say" blurb at the bottom*]. It's really easy - just call this number and leave a message. You can just say this right here...

Also, we're asking folks in the neighborhood to put up these window signs to show their opposition to Bush's scheme. Would you be willing to hang one of these signs in your window?

If no: See if you can address their concern quickly, but if you can't, just thank them and move on.

Tips:

- **If a caller gets voice mail, be sure they say where they live.** Senators are much more responsive to constituents who live in their state, so be sure that everyone leaves their full name and address when they leave a message.
- **Smile and make eye contact.**
- **Don't get in philosophical or ideological arguments.** Many people won't agree with us. To protect the courts, we need to get tons of calls this week, and the best way to do this is to keep looking for people who are on our side, and not trying to convert people who don't agree.
- **Don't take rejection personally.** Just thank people and move on. Remember your goal - it presumes that *most people will say no*. In 2 hours you can knock on 40 doors and talk to about 12 people, with 5-7 agreeing to help—and with thousands of people helping, it all adds up!
- **You want to be able to confirm that this call gets made.** One way to do this is to carry a cell phone and ask people to call right away (or ask them to use their own phone). You can also ask them to call while you wait, and report back to you what happens.
- **Recruit!** If people sound enthusiastic, ask them to join your team!

Frequently Asked Questions:

Why are we calling on a weekend, won't everyone be out of the office?

It's true that most callers will reach voice mail instead of a staffer. But thousands of voice mails have the same impact as thousands of messages with staffers. Tell people that if a voicemail box is full, try calling a different office, or call on Monday.

What do we do when someone isn't home?

If no one is home, you should just leave a flyer in the doorway—don't put them in mail boxes, it's illegal. You should also try to knock on these people's door again on your way back to your meeting point.

What exactly is the Republicans' plan?

It's called the "nuclear option" and it's a parliamentary trick that would eliminate the right to use a "filibuster" to block judicial nominations. The filibuster is a long-standing Senate rule that requires 60 Senators to agree on something—a way of making sure issues and judges have broad support in Congress.