



NATIONAL CAMPAIGN TO **RESTORE CIVIL RIGHTS**

HOUSE-PARTY PLANNING KIT

Thank you for your leadership and for taking the first steps to organize a house party.

Your commitment to fairness and justice are critical right now. Let the National Campaign to Restore Civil Rights help you host of a night of education, activism, and fun in your community. Bring together your family, friends, co-workers, and neighbors, and party for the right to fight for justice in our highest courts.

We know that *talking* about the issues is the first step to *doing* something about them. Many Americans don't fully realize or know the impact that judges on the Supreme Court and other federal courts have on our daily lives. You can help us educate people on this critical issue. You take the first step to initiate the conversation, and through your actions help mobilize yourself, your friends, your community, and our nation. Thank you for being the person to help start a chain reaction of action.

A house party can be fun. It could be an afternoon gathering over tea and cookies, a potluck with a film screening, or a late-night party with cocktails and raucous discussions.

In this packet, you can find:

- Party goals
- Success tips
- A sample timetable
- A sample schedule

Come together not only to celebrate our right to fairness and justice, but our right to mobilize and build communities. And please let us know if you need any assistance and, then, how it goes!

**SPECIAL THANKS TO NARAL-PRO-CHOICE CALIFORNIA (WWW.PROCHOICECA.ORG)
FOR TEXT AND INSPIRATION FOR THIS PARTY-PLANNING KIT**

National Campaign to Restore Civil Rights

<http://www.rollbackcampaign.org> | rollback@nylpi.org | (212) 244-4664



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PARTY GOALS

- Bring people together to celebrate our right to fairness and justice, and our right to mobilize and build communities.
- Learn about current issues facing civil rights laws.
- Educate people about how what happens in the federal courts does affect our everyday lives.
- Provide partygoers with ways to get involved and take action.

PARTY SUCCESS TIPS

- Plan the party for a convenient time. Remember that the time and day affect what kind of party you will have (a weekend morning event will be mellow; a weekday night event shorter; and a weekend night event more raucous).
- Try to invite an honored guest of VIP (local journalist or elected official, or a speaker). We can help you with this. This can be used to draw more people to the event.
- Plan on having party favors. These can be bumper stickers, postcards, t-shirt, etc. We can help you with this.
- The National Campaign to Restore Civil Rights can give you printed materials for your event. Please discuss this with us a few weeks in advance.
- We also have a 22-minute DVD (or video) you can show to stimulate discussion. It was made by award-winning filmmaker Stanley Nelson and Firelight Media, and we will provide it to you for free in English, Spanish, or with subtitles.
- Don't overburden yourself with more guests than you can handle; consider co-hosting with a friend.
- Invite at least three times the number of people you want to show up.
- Remember when you invite guests
 - Get a commitment about whether he or she will come
 - Encourage them to invite friends and family
 - If they can't come, get them to register on the National Campaign's website
 - If you have a guest speaker or theme, don't forget to tell them
 - If the event is potluck, sign the guest up for something to bring
- Try to have fun; strike a balance between being structured and spontaneous.

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SAMPLE PARTY TIMELINE

Six weeks before:

- Finalize date and time for your party.
- Prepare a guest list, with contact information. Remember to invite more people than the number you want there.
- Decide if you would like your party to have a theme. If you wish to invite a special guest to create a draw, do so now so that you can put her/his name on the invitations.

Four weeks before:

- Send invitations by mail or e-mail (a basic, free online resource is evite.com).
- Contact us to see if you need any print materials or resources for your guests. We would at least like to send you fact sheets, a copy of our film, and sign-up sheets.

Two weeks before:

- Follow-up with each guest in person or over the phone.
- Begin to plan for refreshments and any other materials you'll need (such as party favors).

One week before:

- Work on last-minute invitations and RSVP's. Finalize guest list.
- Create a loose schedule for your party.
- Purchase party supplies (paper plates, napkins, drinks, snacks, etc.)

Day of event:

- Call to remind core guests and the VIP, if you have one.
- Create and tidy up a space for the party where guests will have enough room. Set up refreshments with any printed materials nearby.

After the event:

- Send thank-you notes to each guest.
- Send the National Campaign any sign-ups. Let's discuss what we can learn from your house party, and any feedback you might have.

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SAMPLE SCHEDULE FOR HOUSE PARTIES

This is not a schedule to be managed with an iron fist! Have fun, and let the event go on as long as you're having a good time.

- 7:00 Guests arrive, mingle, and have refreshments
- 7:20 Host welcomes guests and talks about the goals of the event
- 7:30 Screen of *Take Back the Courts*, introduce a guest speaker, or start the discussion about the issue of the evening
- 8:00 Facilitate questions and answers for the speaker, discussion about the video, etc.
- 8:30 Give information to the guests about taking action, and makes sure people pick up printed materials
- 8:45 Host wraps up the formal program
- 9:00 Party ends

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