

MoveOn PAC Supreme Court House Party

Host Agenda

Important note: You might have planned your party before we knew about the Supreme Court vacancy, when we were still calling this "progressive movie night." If so, we strongly encourage you to follow this agenda and plan a response to this current crisis. Many of your guests will be expecting to come and talk about the Court before they watch a movie, and may well be disappointed if you skip this bit. Thanks for being flexible!

Try to stick to the time limits so that guests who can't stay as long still get to participate.

I. Guests arrive

Greet guests and ask everyone to sign in on the Supreme Court House Party Sign-In and leave the team box blank for now.

II. Meet and greet (5 minutes)

Welcome everyone & review this agenda for the group so they know what to expect. Ask everyone to introduce themselves to someone they haven't met previously.

III. Supreme Court Campaign overview (5 minutes)

You can read this to the group or just hit the highlights:

- Everyone here tonight is part of something huge. MoveOn members are getting together at over 1,000 parties across the country this weekend to fight to protect our rights.
- This is the first open Supreme Court seat in 10 years and the conservative extremists are gearing up to try to take over the Court. James Dobson, President of the right-wing Focus on the Family, said on Friday, "Today marks a watershed moment in American history: the resignation of a swing-vote justice on the Supreme Court and the opportunity to change the Court's direction."
- The only clear indication from Bush about who he might nominate is that he intends to follow the example of his two "model" judges—Clarence Thomas and Antonin Scalia, who have weighed in from the far-right fringe for decades.
- Since we don't know who the nominee is yet, we're going to start by demanding someone who will protect our rights. To do that, MoveOn is organizing a call-in week this coming week to generate 25,000 calls to all 50 Senators urging them to be ready to block an extreme nominee. We'll talk about the details later, but I'll be asking you all to take some flyers home so we can call in and ask our friends and family to call too.
- Once a nominee is announced we'll have to spring into action. If the nominee is an extremist, which is very likely, we'll need to act immediately to set the terms of the debate and let Congress and the President know that the American people won't stand for a Justice who will threaten our rights.
- So tonight we'll also be planning a rapid response petition drive that we can do the day a nominee is announced. MoveOn members will be ready to leap into action with local events in towns across the country. And we'll be inviting the media to help make this a national story.

IV. Create neighborhood Action Plan (50 minutes)

A. Call-in week (3 minutes)

Hand out the Supreme Court Emergency flyers and point out that they include talking points and

the contact information for your Senators.

Ask attendees to raise their hands if they can each call in themselves and get 10 other people to call in. MoveOn will be emailing everyone a website address to report back on their calls.

B. Form a rapid response team (10 minutes)

You can read this to the group or just hit the highlights:

- As soon as a nominee is announced we're going to spring into action in our neighborhood.
- MoveOn has already created a network of neighborhood action teams called Operation Democracy for moments like this. There are 2,500 of these teams across the country, working to defeat Bush's agenda and elect a progressive majority.
- MoveOn calls on Operation Democracy teams to take action at critical opportunities like this and to participate in monthly actions around key issues. You've got a fact sheet about it entitled MoveOn Pac's Operation Democracy and there's more information at the MoveOn PAC website.

If someone at your party is already an Operation Democracy team leader:

Ask them to quickly describe what their team is like.

Ask if anyone at the party is interested in joining the team, and pass back around the Supreme Court House Party Sign In so they can check "yes" in the team box.

Move on to Agenda Item D: Plan rapid response petition drive.

If there isn't an Operation Democracy team leader at your party, you can read this to the group or just hit the highlights:

- To coordinate our action MoveOn is asking us to form a team. It'll make it easy for us to coordinate working together on this event and keep working together in the future on other key issues. This is just the beginning of what will certainly be a huge battle and we'll be stronger if we work together.
- If some of us decide to form a team, the next step will be to pick a team leader tonight who will be in touch with us when there's a Supreme Court nomination, and who'll update us on other MoveOn actions so we can get involved if we have time.
- But the first step is deciding about forming a team: who wants to join a team and participate in our rapid response?

Pass the Supreme Court House Party Sign around for people to mark yes or no in the team box.

C. Select a team leader (5 minutes)

You can read this to the group or just hit the highlights:

- Our team needs at least one team leader to help make things happen and to be a contact person.
- But if we have more than one leader then they can share the load.
- Team leaders play two roles: first, as facilitators, bringing team members together and keeping people in touch, and second, as coordinators, helping the team come up with a plan for each action, and making sure all the pieces get done. This will take about 5-10 hours a month.
- Our team leader's first responsibility will be coordinating our rapid response action. This will involve contacting everyone who has signed up on the day that a Supreme Court nominee is announced so they know to meet up that day. It will also involve calling the local media to let them know about our petition event.

- The leaders we choose tonight should also be willing to play this role in the future, on other issues, or at least to find someone else on the team to hand it off to.
- Who wants to do this? In MoveOn's experience, more leaders are better...

Pass around the Team Leader Roster so all the team leaders can sign up.

D. Plan rapid response local petition drives (30 minutes)

Give one of your team leaders the Supreme Court House Party Sign In to record your team's decisions.

You can read this to the group or just hit the highlights:

- Everybody has the Rapid Response Plan Worksheet. MoveOn will be getting an email out to our team leader(s) and to all of us on the day that the nominee is announced. If Bush nominates an extreme right-winger who represents a real threat to our rights, we'll all meet up at the time and location that we decide tonight to gather petition signatures, as part of a massive national emergency petition response. And we'll invite the media, who will be looking for local angles on what is sure to be a huge story. All we need to do now is pick a location and time.
- We need to pick a time that works for the most people. No time will be perfect for everyone. The petition event should last at least an hour.
- The middle of the day is the best time for getting media coverage, which we need to make this a national story. How many people could do a lunchtime petition event?

If you've got a critical mass for lunchtime, then ask the team leader to record the time on the Supreme Court House Party Sign In. If not, suggest a time after work, see how many people can make that time, and ask the team leader to record the final time you agree on.

- Next we need to pick a location. We want a location on public property that is easily accessible and that has a lot of foot traffic at the time that we've picked to be there. Let's brainstorm some ideas and then vote on the best.

The easiest way to facilitate a brainstorm like this is to ask a helper to write down the suggestions that people make. Write down all the ideas to start without discussing whether they work or not. Then ask everyone to listen to the list one more time picking their favorite two locations. Then after your helper has read the list once, have her/him read it again and record the number of votes for each choice. Remind everyone they only get two votes. The top vote getter is your location.

E. Wrap-up (2 minutes)

You can read this to the group or just hit the highlights:

- To summarize, between now and the nomination, we are going to be working to generate thousands of phone calls by handing out these fliers with our Senators numbers. We each have a goal of getting 10 other people to make calls. When there's a nomination, if Bush nominates an extremist, we'll all meet at _____ (place) at _____ (time) that same day to gather petition signatures.
- Thanks to our new team leaders X & Y. Tonight I'll be passing on your information to MoveOn so they can contact you directly.
- We should all expect to see some emails from MoveOn about the call-in week and the petition drive. This is a pivotal moment, but if we all work together and generate a grassroots outcry, we can definitely stop the Right from completely hijacking the Supreme Court.
- Now, it's movie time.

Give the Supreme Court House Party Sign-Ins to one of your team leaders and ask them to follow the instructions at the bottom and add your team or new team members to the online team roster as soon as possible.

Some guests will need to go now. Say good bye to them, but get the movie going soon, or everyone will leave.

IV. Watch & discuss movie

Final Reminders:

Please fill out the survey with the team leader information from your Team Leader Roster right after your party. The link is on the team leader worksheet and here:

<http://www.moveonpac.org/team/movienight/aftersurvey.html>

If you have a good digital photo from your party remember to upload that so we can share it with other members. Upload your photo at:

http://action.moveonpac.org/movienight_photos/

Be sure your team leader takes all the Supreme Court House Party Sign Ins home.