



American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

Cancer Votes House Party Toolkit

The stakes of the 2026 midterm elections couldn't be higher. All 435 Congresspeople, a third of the Senate, and 36 gubernatorial races, will have an outsized influence on cancer research funding and policy over the coming years.

Our job? Make sure cancer remains a top priority for candidates seeking our votes. This year, [Cancer Votes](#) volunteers like you will be holding **house parties** to engage our communities to make an impact this November – together.

The Cancer Promise

We are asking all candidates seeking federal office to sign the [Cancer Promise](#), a pledge to support evidence-based public policy solutions to end cancer as we know it, for everyone. The Cancer Promise asks candidates to commit to:

- **Support robust investments in cancer research and prevention**
- **Improve access to affordable, comprehensive health care**
- **Ensure access to cancer prevention services and early detection services**, including tobacco prevention and cessation programs

In 2024, Cancer Votes volunteers got 93 candidates to sign the Cancer Promise.

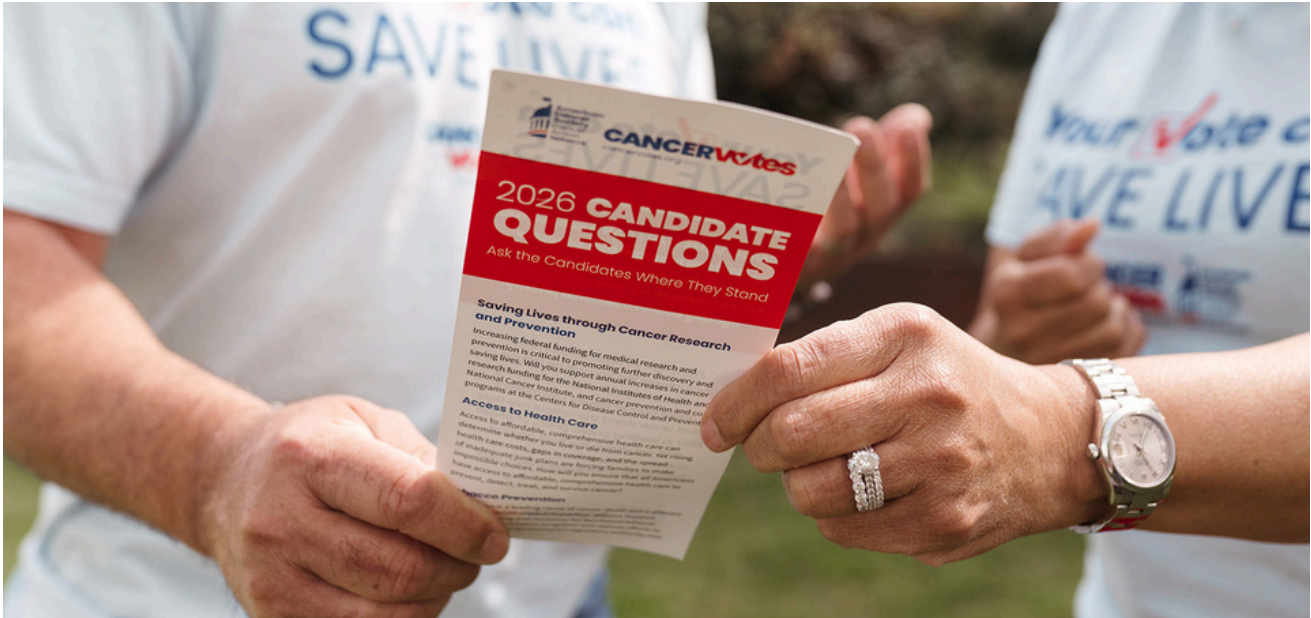
This year's goal: **Get 150 candidates to sign the Cancer Promise** and pledge to make cancer a top priority.

With hundreds of candidates hearing directly from Cancer Votes volunteers about the issues that affect cancer patients, survivors, caregivers, and families, we are confident we can reach this goal.

ACS CAN's strength comes from being fiercely nonpartisan. We are more powerful when we don't take the side of a political party: just the side of cancer patients. ACS CAN does not endorse or oppose candidates and does not contribute to campaigns. We will work with all elected officials on our cancer priorities.

ACS CAN is prohibited from advocating for the support or defeat of a candidate, contributing to a candidate or political party, or otherwise engaging in political partisanship.

What's Included In This Guide



What's Included In This Guide

Never hosted a house party? No problem! This toolkit will walk you through everything you need to know to be successful.

Step 1: Plan Your Party	03
Step 2: Candidate Research	05
Step 3: Host Your Party!	07
Step 4: Follow Up After Your Party	11
Appendix: House Party Template Materials	12
• Invitations and Reminders	
◦ Email Invitation	12
◦ Text Message Invitation	13
◦ Reminder Email	13
• Candidate Outreach	
◦ Email to Candidates	14
◦ Social Media Posts	15
• Follow-Up	
◦ Thank You Note	16

Step 1: Plan Your Party

Planning a house party can feel like a lot of steps, but don't lose sight of our shared goal: to bring new people into our movement to make cancer a top priority in this election year.

3 weeks out

- **Choose your activity.** House parties should be both fun and empowering! We suggest including a fun party activity for guests while also ensuring you hold space for folks to reach out to candidates to sign the Cancer Promise in real time. Here are a few ideas to get you started:
 - [Debate Watch Party Bingo](#): Gubernatorial, Senate, and House race debates provide an easy organizing moment for house parties. Use our special [Cancer Votes Bingo card](#) to keep your guests engaged. The winner gets a Cancer Votes water bottle!
 - [Other Fun Activity](#): You could host a cookie- or wine tasting, have a fire in your backyard, make bracelets or do a craft together, make flower bouquets, or so much more.
- **Develop a guest list.** Think about who in your life might be interested in joining the fight against cancer – friends, family, neighbors, etc.
- **Pick a date and time.** Keep your audience and activity in mind. Weekends may be easier for some who work, and late mornings and early afternoons may be easier for people with kids.
- **Pick a location.** If your home isn't an option, consider a park, a library, or any venue where you and your guests will feel comfortable.

2 weeks out

- **Send out invitations!** (sample below) And when people RSVP “Yes,” encourage them to bring a friend or family member.
- **Finalize your agenda.** (sample below) Adjust the agenda to fit your style, your audience, and the time you have.
- **Send in your request for a House Party Kit.** Reach out to your ACS CAN Grassroots Manager or Greta Johnson (greta.johnson@cancer.org) to request your Cancer Votes House Party kit at least 14 days in advance of your party. The kit will include:
 - Water bottle (can be used as a prize!)
 - Hat
 - Stickers
 - [Cancer Votes House Party Action Checklist](#)
 - [Debate Watch Party Bingo cards](#)

Step 1: Plan Your Party

2–3 days before

- **Send a reminder.** People are busy, so it's always helpful to send a reminder to friends who didn't respond to your initial invite.
- **Confirm your RSVPs.** (sample below) Send a text message to people who RSVPed "Yes" to confirm they're coming and answer any questions. This is also a good time to ask if they can bring a friend.
- **Pick up snacks and drinks.** You don't want to be running around day-of! You can also ask people to bring snacks, potluck style.

1–2 days before

- **Prepare your Story of Self.** What got you involved in this work? Be ready to share – it helps inspire others to take action with you.
- **Print your [Cancer Votes Candidate One-Pager](#).** Print however many copies you need (party attendees may be able to share).
- Prep friends as needed. Depending on your audience, it could be helpful to have someone on-hand to help with technology support – posting on social media, etc.

Step 2: Candidate Research

The first step is to determine the candidates you will ask to sign the [Cancer Promise](#). This should include candidates for the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate.

Before your party, fill out the [Cancer Votes Candidate One-Pager](#). Find all of the candidates' contact information to do outreach and learn about their background so you can tailor your ask to sign the Cancer Promise. You will use the time at your house party to reach out to candidates to ask them to sign the Cancer Promise. Candidates pay attention when the voters they are trying to win support from speak up or ask questions about an issue they care about.

1. **Identify Your Candidates:** Search for all the candidates running for the U.S. House and Senate where you live. *Note: Everyone will have a House race this year, but not everyone will have a Senate race.*
 - a. You may decide to reach out to candidates in more than one House district if you'd like.
 - b. In 2024, the Ohio volunteer team set a goal to get 50% of candidates running for federal office signed on to the Cancer Promise. They worked together to ask all of them even though they didn't have people in each district. Their goal was 12 and they got 15!
2. **Find Contact Info:** Using our [Candidate Lookup Tool](#), find your candidates' official channels where staff are listening and sharing information. Make sure to consider where your party attendees live and include their congressional districts and candidates as well.
 - a. Want to reach more than just your own candidates? Reach out to your Grassroots Manager to make a plan.
3. **Find the "Hidden" Contact Info:** Standard contact forms or general email inboxes may not be monitored frequently. Reaching out to these additional contacts can help you get a response:
 - a. Campaign Manager/Press Secretary: Look at the bottom of recent press releases on their campaign website. You will often find a direct email and phone number for a staff member (e.g. press@candidateforcongress.com).
 - b. Public Calendars: Sign up for their campaign email list to see if they have any upcoming public "Meet and Greets" where your house party guests could plan to show up together if initial outreach doesn't get you a response.

Step 2: Candidate Research

4. Key Research Questions to Consider

- a. Their Personal Connection: Has the candidate or their family been personally affected by cancer? Check their "About" page or past speeches.
- b. The Voting Record: If they are an incumbent (already in office), how have they voted on health care bills in the past?

5. Create your [Cancer Votes Candidate One-Pager](#)

- a. Put together a summary of the candidates and their contact information for your party guests. Include info like:
 - i. Candidate name and party affiliation
 - ii. Campaign website
 - iii. Contact information and social media handles
 - iv. Top campaign priorities (e.g., education, jobs, infrastructure)
 - v. Optional: Your hook (e.g., “Their sister is a survivor” or “They are family-focused”)

Important: We treat all candidates equally and with respect. That’s how we will make cancer a priority. And remember: Candidates could sign the Cancer Promise from just the outreach you do at your house party!

Step 3: Host Your Party!

The most important result is that your party attendees have a positive experience. They should be inspired to take action to get candidates to sign [the Cancer Promise](#) and to support solutions to end cancer as we know it, for everyone.

- **Final Party Prep**

- Get all the pieces ready to make sure your attendees will feel comfortable – something to drink, somewhere to sit, shade if you're outside and it's warm, etc.
- Set up your activity as needed.
- Feel free to assign close friends to help get guests a drink, take pictures, help make sure everyone signs the sign-in sheet, etc.
- Don't forget to wear your Cancer Votes swag!

- **Sample Agenda**

- *Note: There is a detailed agenda with talking points on the next page; adjust as needed to fit with your chosen activity!*
- 0:00-0:15: Guests arrive and get set up with activity
- 0:15-0:25: Share your personal story and info about the Cancer Promise
 - Hand out your updated [Cancer Votes Candidate One-Pager](#)
- 0:25-0:50: House party actions
 - Actions include:
 - Hand out the [Cancer Votes House Party Action Checklist](#)
 - Voter Registration
 - Get Candidates to Sign the Cancer Promise
 - Become an ACS CAN Member
- 0:50-1:00: Questions and next steps

- **Don't forget to take photos!**

- **Hard Stop**

- Even with friends, it's important to respect your guests' time and end the party on time, so they leave with a positive impression.
- If you have time, leave room for attendees to linger and chat to continue building relationships (This should be optional!).



Step 3: Host Your Party!

Detailed Agenda

Time	Details
0:00–0:15	Guests arrive and get set up with activity • <u>Welcome & Intros</u>: Briefly introduce yourself, lead group introductions (name/reason for attending)
0:15–0:25	Share your personal story and info about the Cancer Promise • <u>Story of Self</u>: Talk about your connection to the fight against cancer and how it led to your work with Cancer Votes (or prepare a guest to share their story to give others the chance to speak). • <u>Share more information</u> about the upcoming elections and opportunities to get candidates to support solutions to end cancer. Sample talking points: ◦ The stakes of the 2026 midterm elections couldn't be higher. Thousands of races at every level will have an outsized influence on cancer-funding and health care policy over the coming years. ◦ Our job is to make sure cancer remains a top priority for candidates seeking our votes. ◦ We're asking all candidates to sign the Cancer Promise pledge to support evidence-based public policy solutions that accelerate cures, improve access to care, and ensure the broad availability of cancer prevention and early detection services. • <u>Hand out the Cancer Votes Candidate One-Pager</u> ◦ Explain the goal: Urge candidates in your area to sign the Cancer Promise. ◦ Ask if anyone knows the candidate(s) or has connections to them.
0:25–0:50	House party actions <u>Hand out copies</u> of the Cancer Votes House Party Action Checklist: Get started! It may be helpful to have someone tech-savvy on-hand to support attendees who need help. 1. Voter Registration. <i>You're ready to vote, but are all your guests registered? Carve out time to make sure everyone registers, checks that their registration is up to date, or requests an absentee ballot if they need one (Our handy tool is a one-stop-shop for all of this).</i> <i>a. Important: don't try to influence how people vote or tell people to vote for or against any candidate or political party.</i>

Step 3: Host Your Party!

Time	Details
0:25–0:50	House party actions (continued) 2. Get Candidates to Sign the Cancer Promise: With your candidate research in hand, ask your guests to begin reaching out to all of the candidates in as many ways as possible to get them to sign on: With your candidate research in hand, ask your guests to begin reaching out to candidates in as many ways as possible to get them to sign on: a. <u>Email & Contact Forms</u>: Using the email addresses or contact forms you found in your candidate research, have attendees begin sending messages (scan the QR code on the checklist to get an email template or use the sample email below). b. <u>Social Media</u>: Social media is the digital front porch of a campaign. Public posts on social media often get faster responses than private emails due to their visibility to other voters, the media, and beyond. Ask attendees to: i. Post publicly from their account asking candidates to sign the Cancer Promise (scan the QR code on the checklist for a sample post). You can also use the examples below, like taking group pictures and videos, or creating a ‘Wall of Why’ if folks don’t want to be in photos. ii. Send direct messages (DMs) to candidates and follow them on social media so they can comment on posts on an ongoing basis. iii. <i>Note: Posts with photos perform better and are more likely to be seen by our targets.</i> iv. <i>Important: make sure your post is set to “Public”, otherwise the candidates you’re trying to reach won’t see your posts.</i> 3. Support ACS CAN: Every new supporter and every dollar raised fuels our fight to end cancer. a. <u>Follow ACS CAN on social media</u>: Receive updates on how to support the fight against cancer (scan the QR code on the checklist to follow ACS CAN). b. <u>Ask attendees to become an ACS CAN member with a \$25 donation</u>: Fundraising is one of the most impactful ways you can help ACS grow this movement, and people love giving to people they know (scan the QR code on the checklist to make a donation). i. <i>Tip: Use direct language: “Will you donate \$25 to power this work?”</i> ii. <i>Tip: Prep 1–2 people to jump in with a “yes” to help create momentum.</i> iii. You can also use the house party as a way to launch a fundraiser to honor a loved one or to support your Lights of Hope or a number of other events. Here’s a toolkit that will walk you through everything you need to know.

Step 3: Host Your Party!

Time	Details
0:50 – 1:00	Wrap-up and next steps • Tally your group’s total number of outreach attempts and recap what you accomplished together. • Spell out the group’s next steps: ◦ Ask attendees to report back on responses they get (set a reminder to follow up with attendees who don’t get a response from the candidates to follow up). ◦ If the group doesn’t get responses, consider future upcoming in-person opportunities to engage the candidate (events, community parade, etc.). • [Optional] Create a group chat (text message, Signal, or WhatsApp) to stay in touch.

Step 4: Follow Up After Your Party

After hosting your party, follow-up is critically important to ensure the engagement and motivation people felt during your party is carried forward as action.

Within 1–2 days

- **Send a thank you note.** (sample below) Include a photo to share your appreciation for people attending, detail your accomplishments (total messages sent, total raised, etc.), and follow-up on next steps (the next action, the next meeting, or even how everyone can keep in touch). You can include people that couldn't make it to fill them in and bring them along on next steps.
- **Post photos on social media.** Tag @ACSCAN ([Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#)) and use the hashtag #CancerVotes.

Within a week

- **Connect** with your ACS CAN Grassroots Manager or Greta Johnson (greta.johnson@cancer.org) to share attendee lists and strategize about what comes next.
- **Document candidate outreach** by [filling out this form](#).
- **Keep track of your next steps** to ensure candidate follow-up happens. If you don't hear back from your target candidates, think through what additional outreach tactics may be necessary to elicit a response.
 - Keep your party attendees in the loop on progress and next steps.

Appendix: House Party Template Materials

This section includes sample materials to support your house party, including:

Invitations and Reminders	10
• Email Invitation	10
• Text Message Invitation	11
• Reminder Email	11
Candidate Outreach	12
• Email to Candidates	12
• Social Media Posts	13
Follow-Up	14
• Thank You Note	14

Invitations and Reminders

Email Invitation

Subject line: Can you join? House party on [Date] @ [Time] to fight cancer

Hello!

As you probably know, I am involved in the fight to end cancer with the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN). We are on the cusp of incredible therapies and advancements in treatment that can mean lives saved, **but so much of that critical work is under threat.**

The upcoming midterm elections offer a critical opportunity to demand that candidates at all levels of government make cancer a top priority. [Insert any information about local races you're focusing on.]

I'm hosting a house party on [Date] to share more about the fight against cancer and how we can get candidates to sign the [Cancer Promise](#), a pledge to support evidence-based public policy solutions to end cancer as we know it, for everyone. **Can you join?**



When: [Date] @ [Time]



Where: My place [address if needed]



Food: I'm providing [Snack/Drink], but feel free to contribute

We can make a real impact, together. I hope you can make it!

See you soon!

[Sender's Name]

Appendix: House Party Template Materials



Text Message Invitation

Hi [Friend's Name]! I'm hosting a house party in support of Cancer Votes 2026 to make cancer a top priority in this Nov's elections. [Personalize with your own connection.]

 **When:** [Date] @ [Time]

 **Where:** My place

 **Food:** I'm providing [Snack/Drink], but feel free to contribute

You'll also get to meet other people whose lives have been impacted. Can you make it?

Reminder Email

Hi [First Name],

I just wanted to make sure you saw my email from the other day about our Cancer Votes House Party. I'm trying to confirm numbers as I prepare food and activities for the party this week. Can you make it? Hope to see you there!

[Sender's Name]

Candidate Outreach

Email to Candidates

Subject: Request from a voter: Will you sign the Cancer Promise?

Dear [Candidate Name],

I am currently gathered with my neighbors and fellow voters in [City/Town] discussing the issues that matter most to us this election cycle: **The fight against cancer is at the top of our list.**

[Optional: Mention a personal connection to the issue: “As someone who has been personally impacted by cancer...”]

I am looking for a leader who will make progress on this issue a core priority.

That’s why I’m asking you to sign [the Cancer Promise](#), which states:, which states:

I recognize the critical role that elected officials play in leading public policies that are vital to the fight against cancer. As such, I pledge to help advance policies and legislation that work to end cancer as we know it, for everyone, including:

- Support robust investments in cancer research and prevention;
- Improve access to affordable, comprehensive health care;
- Ensure access to cancer prevention services and early detection services, including tobacco prevention and cessation programs

Please sign on today at: www.fightcancer.org/2026-cancer-promise

I am eager to hear where you stand on this critical issue that means so much to so many families.

[Your Name]

Appendix: House Party Template Materials

Social Media Posts

The below social media concepts can be used as a stand alone social media post on your page (make sure to tag your candidates!) or could be used as a DM directly to candidates.

Hi [Candidate Name], I'm here with my neighbors in [City/Town] talking about the issues that matter most this election. Ending cancer as we know it is our #1 priority.

Will you join us by signing the 2026 Cancer Promise? It's a commitment to prioritize research funding and improve access to affordable health care.

Sign the promise here: www.fightcancer.org/2026-cancer-promise

We're looking for a leader who will make this a core priority. Can we count on you?

Option 1: Take a group photo of attendees holding signage or [print-outs](#) with the below caption.

The #CancerPromise is an opportunity for candidates to publicly affirm their commitment to the cancer priorities @acscan has outlined. [tag relevant candidates], will you pledge to support:

- ✓ Increases to federal funding for cancer research?
- ✓ Policies that improve access to affordable health care?
- ✓ Cancer prevention and early detection programs?

Please sign the Cancer Promise today, so voters know that if elected, you will prioritize cancer patients, survivors, and their families.

www.cancervotes.org/2026CancerPromise #CancerVotes

Option 2: Record a short video of the whole room shouting something like "Hey [Candidate Names], we want you to make cancer a top priority and sign the Cancer Promise!" Post and tag them on social media.

**Please list ALL viable candidates alphabetically by last name when tagging. If posts are too long from tagging multiple candidates, please make multiple posts, but make sure you're tagging all candidates in the race throughout your posts.*

Option 3: If people are averse to being photographed and posted on social media, create a "Wall of Why" using Post-its: Ask every guest to write a few reasons why they are a Cancer Voter on a Post-it note (e.g., "for my mom," "because screenings saved my life"). Take a photo of the wall and use it as a visual representation of the emotional stakes constituents are facing every day.

Appendix: House Party Template Materials



Follow-Up

Thank You Note

Subject: Thank you for coming! (And our next steps 🙌)

Hi [Name],

Thank you so much for joining us at the house party last night! It was so inspiring to see the room filled with people ready to take action to end cancer as we know it.

Because of everyone in the room, we were able to [Insert results: sign-ups, money raised, letters written].

Let's keep this momentum going. I'll be reaching out soon about what comes next for our group, and if you have friends and family who might come to our next event, please let them know how successful we were!

Best,

[Your Name]