House to House (#H2H)

*An informal guide for House Parties (and community gatherings)
to support challengers for State House in North Carolina*

Thank you for being a part of Now or Never NC's commitment to Support top Challengers, Break the State Legislative Supermajority, Sustain Gubernatorial Vetoes, and Restore our State.

House parties and locally-organized community gatherings are a simple, proven and relatively easy way to bring together friends and colleagues for meaningful action: raising awareness, friends, and funds for and providing meaningful feedback to challengers for the State House and Senate.

Attendees generally come for 3 reasons: (i) they're interested in the cause, (ii) they care about and want to support you, and (iii) they want to get out of the house and see just what kind of party you throw.

This is only a guide, so please use what suits you best. We break the process down into 5 steps.

1. Planning

Sign up to host or co-host.
- *Host*: The host's job is to be the primary coordinator. You'll arrange the venue (your house or elsewhere) and invite guests.
- *Co-host*: A co-host's job is to bring more guests to the event and to assist in preparations.
- *Host Committee*: If there are several co-hosts, you may decide to call yourself a Host Committee.

Date, time, venue, target number of guests.
- Date & Time: Select a date and time that works for you, and check against community calendars. Venue: Host at home, or at a convenient location such as a local restaurant, bar, or coffee house.
- Guests: How many guests you want? Whether a handful or 20+. How many can your venue hold?

Guest speaker:
- Do you want a speaker? If so, and you do not have anyone in mind, Now or Never NC can help. For example, we could ask one of our 8 "alumni" in the NC House to attend.

2. Getting the Word Out

Let Now or Never NC know:
- Let us know of the date, time, and location of your event and - unless you decide otherwise - we will also spread the word.

2-3 weeks before party:
- Send invitation (see sample email invitation here (see **Appendix 1**); a more formal postcard or letter invitation can also be used). Follow up email or call after a few days, ASK for specific RSVP.

1 week before party:

- Send out reminders to YES responses, and make separate personal asks to NON-RESPONSES (sample reminders are on **Appendix 1**).

<u>1 day before party</u>:
- Send reminders to all, along with instructions for donating or volunteering if invitees cannot attend (sample day-prior message is on **Appendix 1**).

<u>Keep in mind</u>:
- RSVPs are not exact, so be prepared for people to attend who have not RSVP'd, and vice versa.
- Always ask people who can't attend to: Contribute without attending (click here), sign up for the Now or Never NC mailing or email list (click here), and/or follow us on Facebook (click here) and Twitter (click here).

<u>Invitation tools, Promoting your event</u>:
- The following are great methods or tools for invitations, and using multiple methods will likely provide the best way to get the attention of invitees and increase attendance:
  - Email, mail, phone calls, in-person meetings.
  - Social Media, such as a Facebook post or event page, and on Twitter. You can post in/share to the Now or Never NC Facebook Group (click here) and Twitter feed (click here).
  - Electronic invitations: evite, and/or Eventbrite invitations.
- If you would like for Now or Never NC to promote the event (via its website, social media, and/or email list), just ask by emailing NowOrNeverNC@gmail.com.
- Remember to track your RSVPs. And do anything else you can think of!

3. What You Need

<u>Materials</u>:   (See the **Materials Pack** for all Now or Never NC materials listed here.
- Sign-In Sheet. **Please have each guest sign up on this sheet!** It only takes a second, and it's how we'll build our donor and volunteer list. Physical addresses are appreciated.
- One page overview, fact sheet of Now or Never NC.
- Donation & Volunteers Forms.
- Pens for sign-in and some pens and paper for guests to take notes.

<u>Refreshments</u>:
- Do what you would like! Non-alcoholic and light alcoholic beverages only. If alcohol is served, it is up to you to know the age of those you serve, and snacks/food and water must be provided.

4. House Party Agenda and Script

You can do a House Party or community gathering <u>AT ANY TIME</u>. Here is a SAMPLE SCHEDULE for evening event running from approximately 7 to 8:30pm:

7:00 - 7:25 Allow people to arrive and mingle. Ask them to write their names on the sign-up sheet. Introduce attendees to one another. Let them know the time the program will start.

7:25 Introduce yourself, co-hosts, how you got involved, why you have asked everyone to attend, and what you will be asking of them. **This is not a pitch**!

7:30 Icebreaker to introduce everyone in the room. Tie into the house party theme (e.g. say your name, which neighborhood you live in and any connections you have to one another).

7:35 Describe the problem we're trying to help solve by electing new leadership to the State Legislature, and the steps that need to be taken.

7:40 PRE-PITCH: Explain Now or Never NC's work to: Support top *challengers* in the most competitive State Legislative races to break the State Legislative Supermajority, sustain Gubernatorial vetoes, and begin to Restore our State. Over two difficult election cycles, Now or Never NC has helped flip 7 State House seats, and 4 more seats are needed in 2018 to break the Supermajority in that body. *While you are speaking, someone should hand out volunteer and donation forms, and/or slips with links.*

7:45 Open for thoughts and questions, which can take some time. People may have questions and naturally like to talk about why they are attending, and what they hope to do or accomplish via their involvement.

7:55 PITCH: This is the scary part but it's really easy: 1) Make your asks for donations, volunteers, and hosts for similar gatherings. 2) Remind people how to complete the asks you're making. 3) Say thank you and wait. Of course, asking others to donate and volunteer can feel weird, though use your passion to engage others. It's up to all of us to change and rebuild the State we know and love, and for the future.

You can practice your comments before the event in the mirror if it helps!

8:00 - 8:10 Let people fill out forms, circulate and share snacks while you're waiting, stay stationary so people can come to you to ask questions or wave you over. Let people know you have a hard stop at 8:30 ("It's a school night") if you'd like your home back in a timely manner.

5. After the Event (Follow Up and Next Steps)

Let us know how it went:
- Make sure to let Now or Never NC know how your party went!
- Send the sign-sheet sheet to Now or Never NC by email (to NowOrNeverNC@gmail.com) or mail (514 Daniels Street, #271, Raleigh, NC 27605).

Thank you to all who attended with an update on evening's accomplishments:
- *Write*: Make your parents proud - send a thank you note or email! Thank attendees for coming, provide them helpful links, and address any follow-up items contemplated at the gathering.
- *One-on-one*. Follow up with anyone who pledged more activity (e.g. planning next event) even if they didn't attend. Chase everyone until you get an answer.

Thank you!

APPENDIX 1: SAMPLE INVITATIONS

INITIAL INVITATION

SUBJECT: [DATE] Please join me for house party to benefit at Now or Never NC house

Friends,

Feeling a little ill about our State Legislature and what's going on in the world? Want to do something useful to roll back the tide of attacks on our political norms?

If so, I wanted to invite you to my house party on [DAY], [DATE], to benefit an organization doing remarkable work to bring sanity and balance to a place in dire need of it: Our State Legislature in Raleigh.

[INFO ABOUT NOW OR NEVER NC]

We'll have food and drinks and discuss some effective ways to support this critical work in our community and others across North Carolina.

Details:
[DAY] [DATE]
[TIME]
Now or Never NC House Party at [MY/MY FRIEND'S] place
[HOST NAMES]
[ADDRESS]
[SPECIFIC DIRECTIONS / Google Maps link]
 [My cell:]

It will be a great conversation about ways to move forward. And food and drinks!

Please let me know if you can join us or if you want more information on how to get involved.

Best,
[YOU]

YES RESPONSES

SUBJECT: Reminder: My House Party for Now or Never NC on [DATE]

Friends,

We are looking forward to seeing you on [DATE] at my house party for Now or Never NC!

We'll have food and drinks and discuss some effective ways to support this critical work in our community and others across NC to bring sanity and balance to a place in dire need of it: Our State Legislature in Raleigh.

Details again:
[DAY] [DATE]
[TIME]

Now or Never NC House Party at [MY/MY FRIEND'S] place
[HOST NAMES]
[ADDRESS]
[SPECIFIC DIRECTIONS / Google Maps link]
 [My cell:]

It will be a great conversation about tactical ways to move forward. And food and drinks!

Please let me know if your plans change, otherwise, looking forward to seeing you on [DATE].

Best,
[YOU]

NON-RESPONSES

SUBJECT: Please RSVP: My House Party for Now or Never NC on [DATE]

Friends,

Hope you can join me next [DAY], [DATE] at my house party for Now or Never NC.

We'll have food and drinks and discuss some effective ways to support this critical work in our community and others across NC to bring sanity and balance to a place in dire need of it: Our State Legislature in Raleigh.

If you haven't specifically YES/NO responded, please let me know if you can make it!

Details again:
[DAY] [DATE]
[TIME]
Now or Never NC House Party at [MY/MY FRIEND'S] place
[HOST NAMES]
[ADDRESS]
[SPECIFIC DIRECTIONS / Google Maps link]
[My cell:]

It will be a great conversation about tactical ways to move forward. And food and drinks!

Please let me know if you can join us or if you want more information on how to get involved.

Best,
[YOU]

DAY BEFORE

SUBJECT: Reminder: Now or Never NC event at my house tomorrow!
Friends,
Will you be joining me tomorrow for our house party tomorrow, [DAY], [DATE] from [TIME] in [NEIGHBORHOOD]?