

The background of the slide is a photograph of a building with a portico supported by white columns. The words "WOOLFORDS CLUB" are visible above the entrance. An American flag flies on a pole to the left of the building. In the foreground, there is a sidewalk, a tree, and a white sign on a wooden stand that says "VOTE HERE" in red letters. The text "Friend to Friend" and "Relational Organizing Workshop" is overlaid in a large, yellow, sans-serif font.

# Friend to Friend

## Relational Organizing Workshop

# What is Relational Organizing?

- Simply put, it's a method for drawing on the strength of our personal networks to spread information and calls to action
- Messages from trusted messengers carry a lot of weight
- Creating a strategy for your organizing is key to setting yourself up for success
- It's not just "talk to your friends and family"

# Why Now?

- Voter suppression effort in Maine that parallels similar ones at the federal level, and that would make it much harder to vote here
- On the ballot in November
- This is a chaotic time - it might get lost in the noise
- Messaging from the Yes campaign is coming; we should get out ahead of it

# The Question

“Do you want to change Maine election laws to eliminate two days of absentee voting, prohibit requests for absentee ballots by phone or family members, end ongoing absentee voter status for seniors and people with disabilities, ban prepaid postage on absentee ballot return envelopes, limit the number of drop boxes, require voters to show certain photo ID before voting, and make other changes to our elections?”

# Our Goal: Everyone Votes No

- We need everyone to turn out to vote no
- Many people aren't tuned in to referendum elections and will need a reminder
- Others may be confused about the initiative, especially if they've heard about it as "voter ID"
- There are many reasons this is a bad initiative; we know what our effective messaging is, but if people look closer, they'll find more problems

# What Polling Tells Us About Messaging

- Mainers currently reject the voter ID ballot measure as written
- The YES campaign has the power to shift the race by focusing on a “common-sense voter ID” message
- Framing the measure as an attack on absentee voting is the most effective way to drive opposition - focusing on harms to rural voters, seniors, and voters with disabilities

*We also oppose the ID provisions, but right now, our most effective message is about the changes to absentee voting.*

# Friend Mapping – Generating Your List

- Start with a list of everyone you talk to regularly enough that you could easily reach out to them
- Add people you see often but who aren't exactly friends - acquaintances, your dog walker, people at church
- You are not committing to contacting all of these people! This generates a base list of possibilities
- You can use any method to contact people that is natural to you and that relationship - this isn't about using a specific app

# Friend Sorting – Strategic List Building

Sort into three different categories based on how much energy you'll need to expend for the conversation:

1. People who will agree but need to a reminder to vote no
2. People who connect you to another community (bridges)
3. People who will possibly step up as organizers themselves

You'll create different scripts for each category. This helps you build a plan that's achievable and effective.



# Script Building – Basic Outline

- Personal Connection
- Importance of Issue
- Call to Action (Pledge to Vote No)

*This is your starting point for every conversation. Talk about why it matters to you, and ask people to sign the pledge to vote no.*

# Script Building – Bridging Contacts

- More engaging conversation - ask what they think
- Be prepared to reframe the issue
- After your Call to Action, request follow-up

*People who connect us to other communities are worth spending extra time with, because they can spread our message much further.*

# Script Building – Potential Organizers

- More engaged conversation, like Bridges
- Also ask if they can help spread the word
- Connect with the campaign or Evan
- Make a concrete plan to follow up with them

*Finding more ambassadors is one of the strongest tools we have to reach everyone possible.*

# Set Yourself Goals

- Pick a timeframe for yourself
- Choose how many people to contact from each category, and when you'll do it
- Take notes and plan out your follow-up
- Debrief about how it's going!

*There's power in people - this is how we build it.*

# Questions?

Evan Murray, Civic Engagement Director  
[evan@democracymaine.org](mailto:evan@democracymaine.org)

Save Maine Absentee Voting  
<https://saveabsentee.me/>