

Letter from Barbara Katz to Blue State Friends:

Dear

You are a good friend, and I know you are as anxious as I am to defeat Trump in November. I also believe that this is a time -- when you and I are "sheltering in place" because of the coronavirus and may have some extra time on our hands -- when we can make an important contribution toward that end. I am writing to ask you to do this by making telephone calls to Florida Democratic voters to urge them to sign up to vote by mail.

Why is this important?

Florida is the single most important competitive state in this year's election. It has 29 electoral votes, more than any other swing state. As we have seen in the past, what happens in Florida frequently determines the outcome nationally. And encouraging Democrats to vote by mail is critical because of the systematic efforts by Republicans to suppress in-person voter turnout. The pandemic may further depress the vote. Democrats and Republicans are split almost 50-50 in Florida, and past elections have turned on one percent of the vote or less. So turn-out is key. Every single vote we are able to turn out in Florida this fall has the potential to change the outcome of the presidential election: We can defeat Trump if every Democrat in Florida votes.

What would this involve?

1. You would need both a telephone and a computer.
2. I would send you a link that would ask you to sign up to help. When you did so, a live person from the Sarasota County Democratic Party would call you to give you instructions on how to proceed.
3. The caller would explain how to make the calls to Florida Democratic voters and would give you access to a database of voters with their telephone numbers. You will also be given a script that you can choose to follow when you are getting started.
4. You would make calls whenever and for as long as you chose to do so. if you try doing this and don't like it, you can stop at any time.

Why is your help critical even though you do not live in Florida?

Like me, you are isolated at home, and your life has been totally disrupted by the virus. Phone banking is one of the few ways to reach out to voters that doesn't require you to live in-state. (Writing postcards in this environment may not be as effective because people may be reluctant to handle the mail.) Volunteers making such calls -- and the *New York Times*, which only yesterday published a story to this effect -- tell us that, in these high-stress times, many voters are happy to take these calls to relieve their feelings of isolation. They may also feel empowered by making a firm plan to vote -- by mail -- during a time when it's important to believe that what we do can make a difference.

So, please, help with this effort if you can. Reply that you are ready to make some calls, and I'll send you the link. Let's turn social isolation into a powerhouse for turning out the Democratic vote in November!

All the best,