

Canvassing Testimonial Michael Chaskes

I love canvassing in CA27, which I've been doing regularly since 2017. For one thing, it's great exercise, I always get my steps, and I'm out walking around in the sun and the fresh air -- what could be better? But of course there's a lot more to it than that.

Canvassing is empowering, and it's empowering in a double sense.

As canvassers, we empower voters by providing them with information they need, and may not yet have, about the candidates in an election and the stakes of that election. And we empower them by letting them know that their individual vote matters - - a message they might not have ever heard before.

But it's also empowering for us, the canvassers. In scary times such as these, nothing is a better balm for fear, stress, and worry than making a positive difference in an election. And as canvassers, that's exactly what we're doing. We make personal connections with voters in ways that are rarely possible through other means, and it's both exhilarating AND effective. I've had a young woman just back home from major surgery take information so she could volunteer too. I've spoken to a man with a felony on his record and let him know that he COULD still vote and that his voice was important. And I've talked to people who don't typically vote, helped them realize that the issues at stake directly affect them and their families, and gotten their commitment to vote this year for George.

By the way, another good line that I like to use at voters' doors, after telling them that Mike Garcia cosponsored a bill to totally ban abortion, is to let them know that he also voted against a bill to codify Americans' right to access birth control, which is currently protected only by the Supreme Court's Griswold decision. I just mentioned this yesterday to a young woman I was speaking with at her door, and she looked at me like this: [shocked face]

The wins we have at voters' doors may feel small, but they add up quickly, and they can make the difference between a successful race and a losing one. And given all the stakes that George reminded us about so vividly a few minutes ago, that's not small potatoes. Canvassing is the literal embodiment of what we all do as activists for life: we put one foot in front of the other, and we just keep going.