



VotersForPeace

The power to end the war and prevent future wars of aggression

How to Host a “Cancelled Check” Campaign Party Diverting Hard Cash from Pro-War Candidates

Thank you for hosting a Cancelled Check party! The purpose of a Cancelled Check event is to divert votes and dollars from pro-war candidates to send a message to candidates and incumbents that peace voters will not be taken for granted.

Here's what to do: Invite friends, colleagues, and fellow activists to your home or community space. Each attendee writes a brief note to the pro-war candidate(s) or incumbent(s) in your district explaining that they are losing his/her vote and hard cash donation due to their position on the Iraq war. The attendee writes a check to the pro-war candidate or incumbent with VOID written clearly over the check. Then he/she writes a second check for the same amount to his/her favorite peace cause. (We've included a list of peace groups which are part of the VotersForPeace project for your reference.)

Parties can be as small as 3 people or as big as several hundred people. Perhaps you can provide coffee and tea, or wine and snacks. Also consider doubling this party as a film showing of “Why We Fight” or “Iraq For Sale”, two great films that talk about the power and might of the military-industrial complex. You can also use this tactic during your pledge-gathering tabling efforts at community events.

Things to organize beforehand:

1. Provide large envelopes to send the candidate letters/checks, small envelopes for peace donations, and some postage. Also be sure to have plenty of pens and writing paper.
2. Have a list on-hand of all candidates for Congress and Senate with their mailing addresses. You can go to the FEC website (<http://www.fec.gov/finance/disclosure/srssea.shtml>) and download the complete list. Ideally you've done research on candidates' positions on withdrawal from Iraq and a US war of aggression against Iran.
3. Print out the following materials from our website. If you sign up to host a party, we will also send these materials to you via post:
 - a) VotersForPeace Pledge form to use as a sign-in sheet
 - b) List of peace organizations for possible donations
 - c) Sample letter to pro-war candidate and 'cancelled check'
 - d) Sample letter to local paper
 - e) Sample invitation to your guests

Remember: The most important thing your guests should bring is their checkbook!

Important things to do after the event:

As the host, the best way to make sure the letters and checks get mailed is for you to collect them. This requires just a few steps from you...

1. Make copies of the 'peace donation' checks.
2. Put the letters, voided checks and copies of the peace donation checks together in one big envelope to the pro-war candidate. Either mail or hand deliver the packets to their local office.
3. Mail peace donation checks to the appropriate organizations.
4. Fill out our Evaluation Form so we can keep track of pro-war cash diverted to pro-peace efforts!
5. Publicize your success. Your local media may find the idea of diverting dollars from pro-war candidates interesting. If your event diverts \$50, \$500 or \$5,000 from a pro-war candidate, send a letter to your local news outlets. Be sure to tell them who received the voided checks and how much money was diverted. Include photos of the event!
6. Follow up with a thank you to the party attendees. Better yet, ask them to host their own cancelled check party!