



HOW TO BE AN ELECTIONS SLEUTH



WHY SHOULD YOU DO THIS?

- Information is harder to find in local elections, especially non-partisan races.
- Smaller races often get far less media coverage.
- These smaller elections are the proving grounds for candidates who want to move on to larger offices. It helps to ward off bad candidates early.
- It's fun – and effective!

WHO IS THIS FOR?

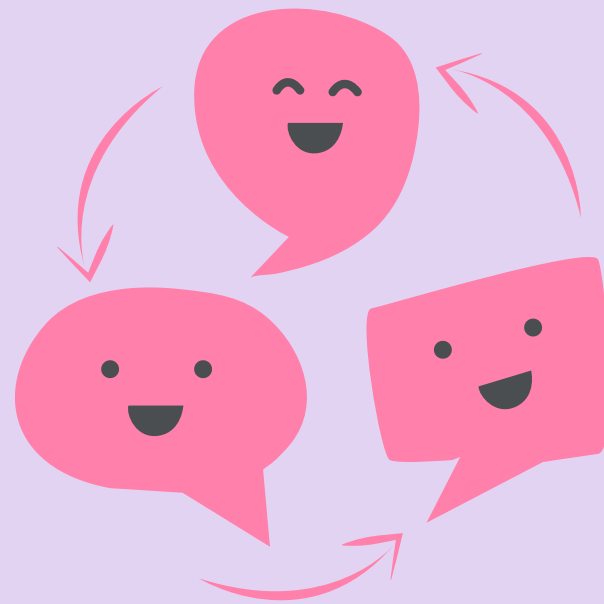
INTROVERTS

Wants to
contribute from
home



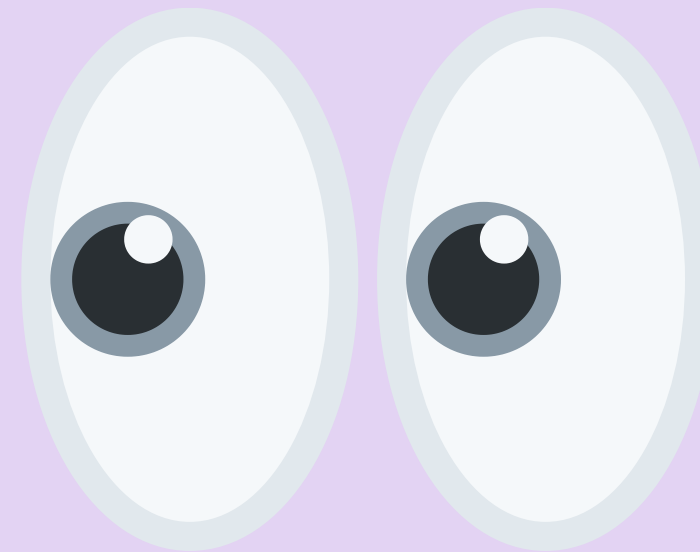
THE PLUGGED-IN

Knows who's who in town



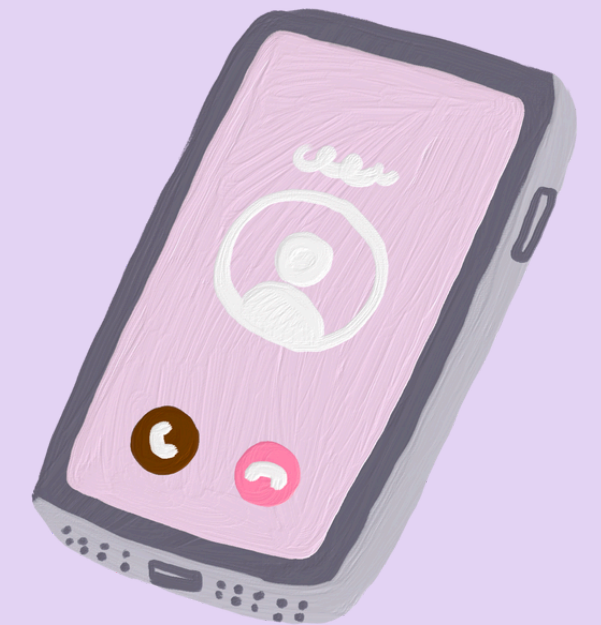
THE CURIOUS

Wants to know
everything



THE SOCIAL MEDIA SAVVY

Has the accounts and
isn't afraid to use them



STEP 0 - FIND YOUR CANDIDATES

We have a tool for that! Use Red Wine & Blue's voting guides to see who's on your ballot

Michigan: <https://redwine.blue/michigan/voting-guide/>

North Carolina: <https://redwine.blue/north-carolina/voting-guide/>

Ohio: <https://redwine.blue/ohio/voting-guide/>

Pennsylvania: <https://redwine.blue/pennsylvania/voting-guide/>

All other states: <https://redwine.blue/voting-guide/>



Be Ready to Vote in Every Election



See what's on your ballot



Find where and how to vote



View deadlines to register and vote

Enter street address or [Select your state](#)



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STEP 1 - CAMPAIGN WEBSITES

That belief led me to develop **The Wake Framework**—a practical approach to school governance built on a simple principle: every significant new discretionary investment should be connected to measurable improvements in student outcomes, transparent public reporting, and continuous improvement.

The Wake Framework is not about reducing support for public education. It is about strengthening public confidence by ensuring that every significant budget decision is guided by evidence, focused on students, and evaluated by results.

- These are of limited use, but you can learn some thing
- Look for buzzwords or phrases that signal their views
- Check their policy positions.
- Make sure they understand the office they're seeking.
- Whose endorsements do they tout?



STEP 2 - VOTER INFO

- Most states provide at least some information about voters
- Check if party registration matches their rhetoric
- See if they're actually a voter (this is particularly instructive in municipals)
- Beware drawing faulty conclusions about immigrants

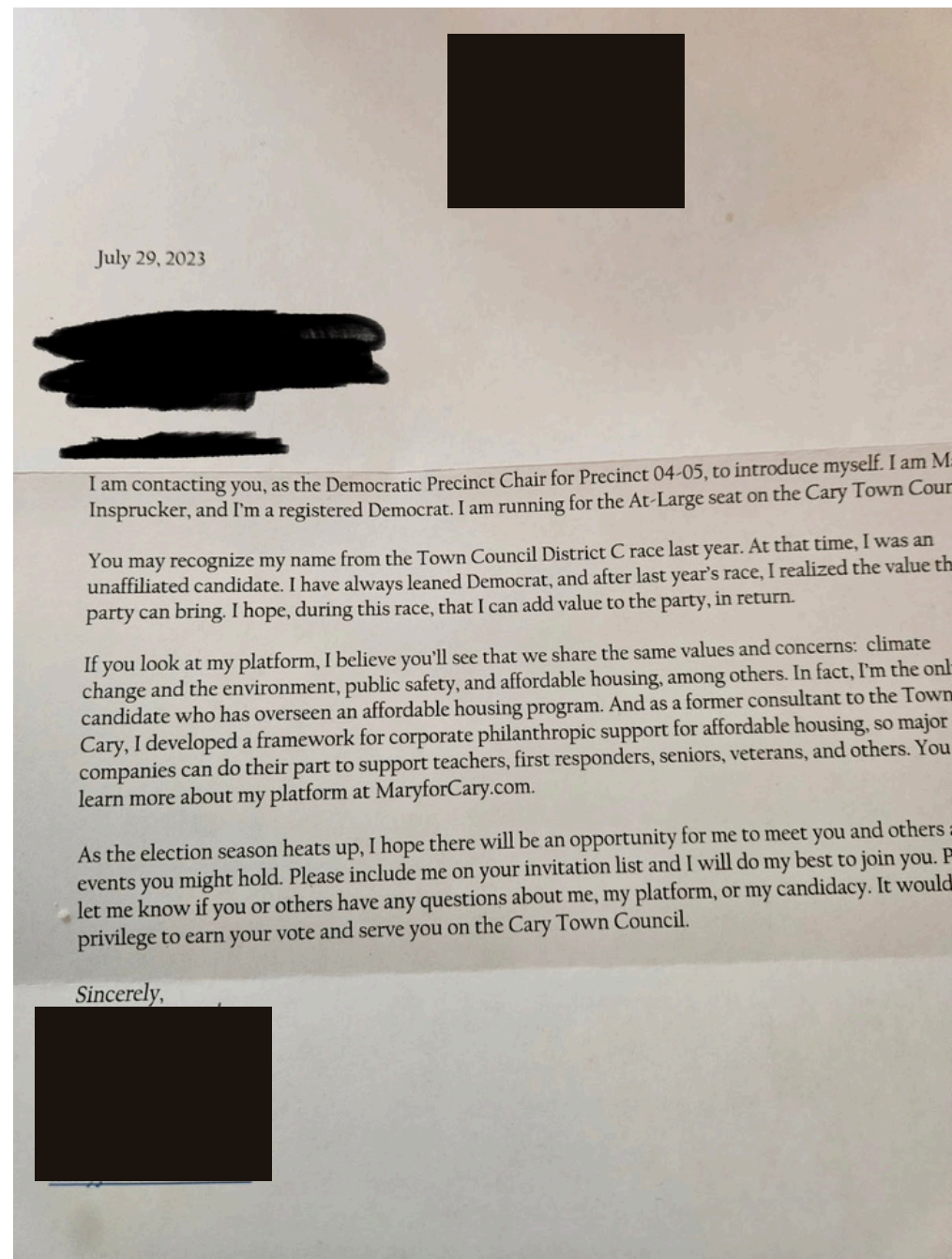


YOUR VOTER DETAILS	
County:	WAKE
Status:	ACTIVE
Voter Reg Num:	000010398469
NCID:	EH360840
Party:	REP
Race:	WHITE
Ethnicity:	NOT HISPANIC or NOT LATINO
Gender:	MALE
Registration Date:	10/11/1996
NCDMV Customer:	Yes

HOW DOES THIS HELP?

SOMETIMES CANDIDATES TRY TO PULL A FAST ONE

“You may recognize my name from the Town Council District C Race last year. At that time, I was an unaffiliated candidate. I have always leaned Democrat.”



Election	Voted Method	Voted County	Primary Election Ballot
03/03/2026 PRIMARY	ABSENTEE BY MAIL	WAKE	REPUBLICAN
11/04/2025 MUNICIPAL	ABSENTEE BY MAIL	WAKE	
11/05/2024 GENERAL	EARLY VOTING IN-PERSON	WAKE	
03/05/2024 PRIMARY	ABSENTEE BY MAIL	WAKE	REPUBLICAN
10/10/2023 MUNICIPAL	EARLY VOTING	WAKE	
11/08/2022 GENERAL	ABSENTEE BY MAIL	WAKE	
07/26/2022 SECOND PRIMARY	ABSENTEE BY MAIL	WAKE	REPUBLICAN
05/17/2022 PRIMARY	EARLY VOTING	WAKE	REPUBLICAN
11/03/2020 GENERAL	ABSENTEE BY MAIL	WAKE	
03/03/2020 PRIMARY	ABSENTEE BY MAIL	WAKE	REPUBLICAN
10/08/2019 MUNICIPAL	ABSENTEE BY MAIL	WAKE	
11/06/2018 GENERAL	ABSENTEE BY MAIL	WAKE	
11/05/2002 GENERAL	ABSENTEE	WAKE	
11/07/2000 GENERAL	ABSENTEE	WAKE	
11/02/1999 MUNICIPAL	ABSENTEE	WAKE	
11/03/1998 GENERAL	LEGACY	WAKE	
11/05/1996 GENERAL	LEGACY	WAKE	
11/08/1994 GENERAL	LEGACY	WAKE	

www.duc

STEP 3 - CAMPAIGN FINANCE

- Find out who contributes to your candidate, to whom they contribute money and if they're self-financing.
- All candidates need to file campaign finance reports periodically.
- Google “campaign finance reports [your state]

Reading a campaign finance report:

- Receipts = donations
- Expenditures = money spent
- This is where your plugged-in person is super helpful

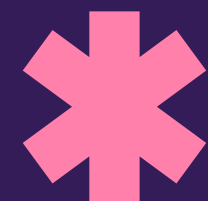
09/07/2022	TAMI FITZGERALD DIRECTOR NC VALUES COALITION 109 CARPATHIAN WAY RALEIGH, NC 27615				Individual Contribution	1A	Check	\$100.00	\$100.00
09/15/2022	JESSICA FUNK DENTIST SELF-EMPLOYED 10436 SWAIN CHAPEL HILL, NC 27517				Individual Contribution	1A	Credit Card	\$100.00	\$100.00
08/08/2022		CHRISTINE HALE REALTOR HALE FAMILY REAL ESTATE 202 NOTTINGHILL WALK APEX, NC 27502			Individual Contribution		Credit Card	\$100.00	\$100.00
09/25/2022	ELIZABETH LINEBERRY HOME MAKER SELF EMPLOYED 1409 WIGMORE CT RALEIGH, NC 27615				Individual Contribution	1A	Check	\$5,600.00	\$5,600.00
09/14/2022	JEFF LINEBERRY MARKETING DIRECTOR LINEBERRY MARKETING 1409 WIGMORE COURT RALEIGH, NC 27615				Individual Contribution	1A	Credit Card	\$600.00	\$2,600.00
08/16/2022	DARRYL MILLER SENIOR CONSULTANT HYLAINE 10600 HANARRY CT RALEIGH, NC 27614				Individual Contribution	1A	Credit Card	\$100.00	\$100.00
09/19/2022	MACON NEWBY RETIRED RETIRED 6108 CHOWNING CT RALEIGH, NC 27612				Individual Contribution	1A	Check	\$500.00	\$500.00
08/11/2022	RALEIGH REPUBLICAN CLUB 704 RADBURN PL RALEIGH, NC 27615				Outside Source	1A	Check	\$200.00	\$200.00
09/08/2022	REPUBLICAN WOMEN OF CARY PO BOX 1683				Outside Source	1A	Check	\$250.00	\$250.00

It’s also really hepful to see where a candidate spends their own money

Profession/Job Title		Employer's Name/Specific Field	Transaction Type	Committee Name	Committee SBoE ID	
NEY			REC	WAKE REC	STA-C4280N-C-001	14
OFFICE OF			REC	COMMITTEE TO ELECT FRED VON CANON	STA-P9969I-C-001	PC
NEY			REC	COMMITTEE TO ELECT STEVE BERGSTROM	WAK-5ZCKO5-C-001	21
OFFICE OF			REC	COMMITTEE TO ELECT FRED VON CANON	STA-P9969I-C-001	PC
NEY			REC	WAKE REC	STA-C4280N-C-001	14
NEY			REC	ELECT MICHELE MORROW COMMITTEE	STA-8J6CC8-C-002	PC
NEY			REC	WAKE REC	STA-C4280N-C-001	14
NEY			REC	02ND CONG DIST REC	STA-C4174N-C-001	PC
NEY			REC	02ND CONG DIST REC	STA-C4174N-C-001	PC
NEY			REC	COMMITTEE TO ELECT JACOB ARTHUR	WAK-1S8UG7-C-001	14
NEY			REC	LUKE FARLEY FOR NC LABOR COMMISSIONER	STA-9612Z4-C-001	PC

STEP 4 - SOCIAL MEDIA

- Twitter/X, Facebook, TikTok or Instagram
- Look for the candidate's own accounts, but also associated accounts (parties, other candidates)
- You may have to create an account
- Settle in, screen shot anything you find interesting
 - I keep my screenshots in Google Photo
- Don't forget to check reposts, likes and follows

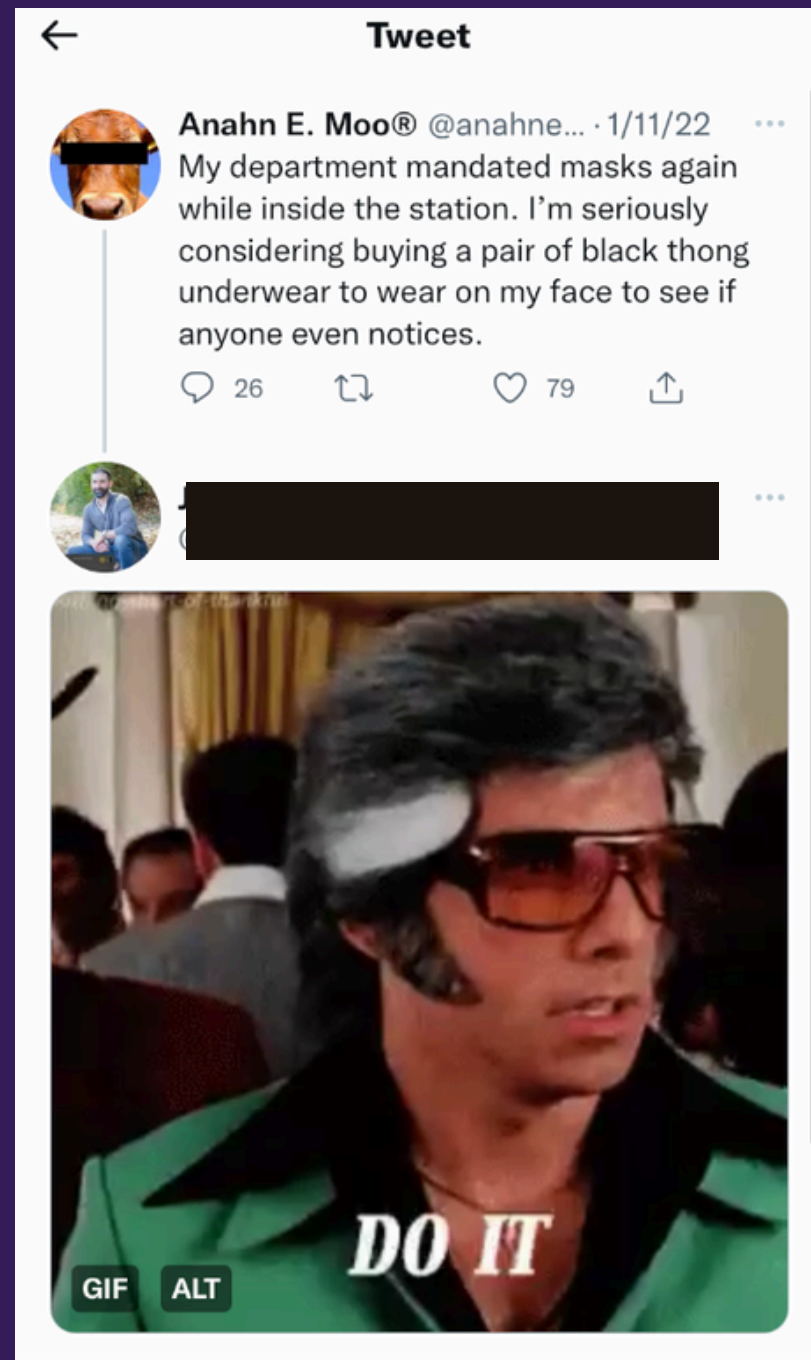


WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?

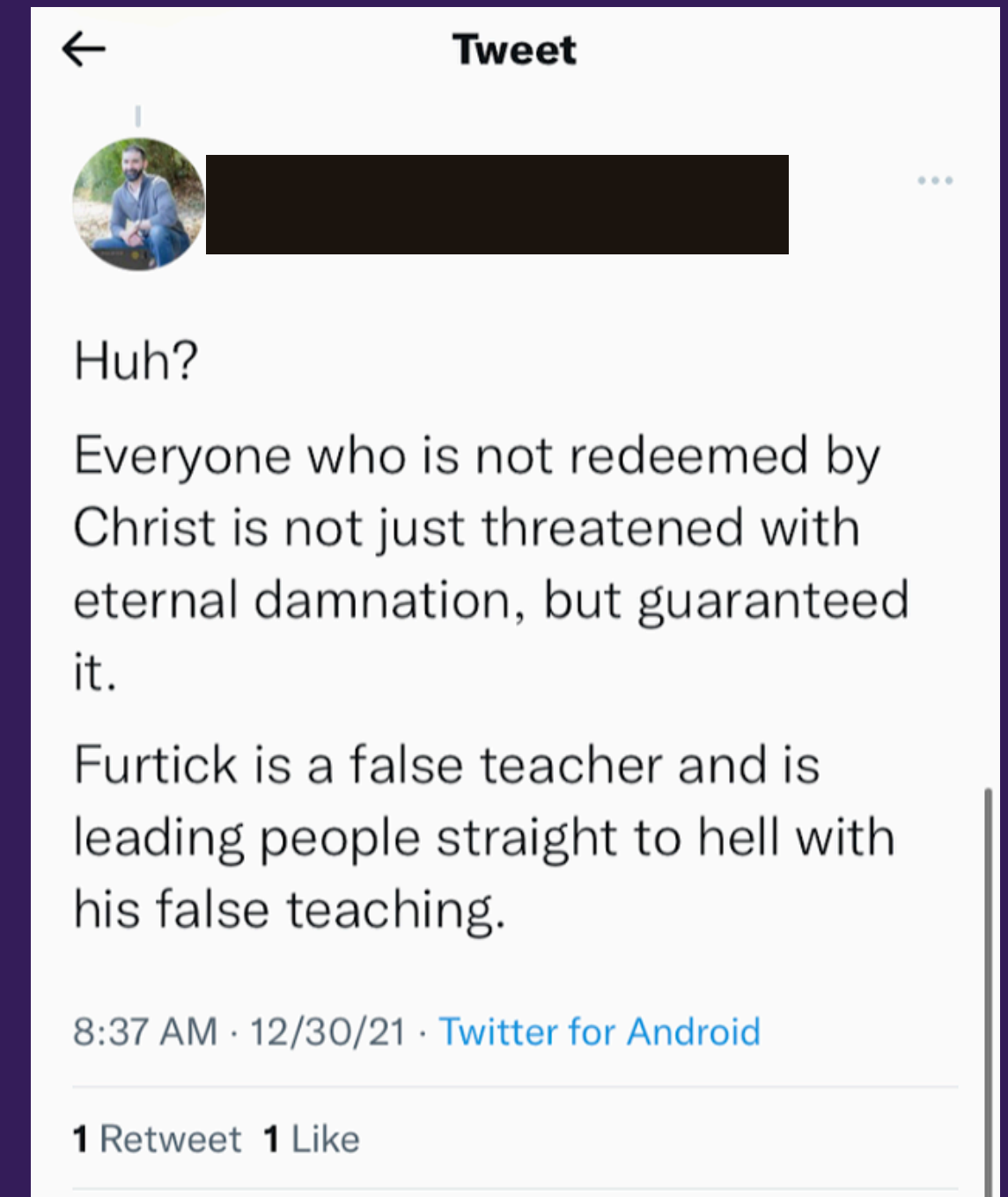
- Statements that seem extreme, unkind, or that might otherwise give “regular” people pause.
- Photos or posts with other local candidates
- Statements of policy positions that differ from or don’t appear on their official website
- Some candidates have multiple accounts – keep an eye out for when they retweet, share or comment on posts from those accounts, then check out those accounts too.



THIS IS WHERE YOU MAY MEET THE REAL CANDIDATE



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Wine & Blue



NOW WHAT?

- Share your findings with friends & family
- Set up a social media page to share your screenshots
- Create a flyer, send it to your friends and/or post on social media
- Don't editorialize on social media - let the candidate's words speak for themselves.



ONE MORE THING YOU CAN DO

- Use your research to build a **Ballot Companion** to distribute
- Divide the candidates and races among your members, gather information
- Think about what YOU would want to know
- Assemble your Ballot Companion
- Be the **voting influencer** that you are!



WHAT YOU CAN COMPILE

- Offices at different levels of government
- Your candidate recommendations
- Why you like them (or don't)
- Recommendations on ballot amendments
- Other info

		☐ Yes ☐ No	
		☐ Yes ☐ No	

Ballot Amendments		Position	Why?
Amendment		☐ Support ☐ Decline	
		☐ Support ☐ Decline	
		☐ Support ☐ Decline	

Additional Thoughts

YOUR BALLOT COMPANION

Courtesy of: [GROUP NAME]

Check to see which of these races and candidates are on your ballot at <https://turbovote.org/>.

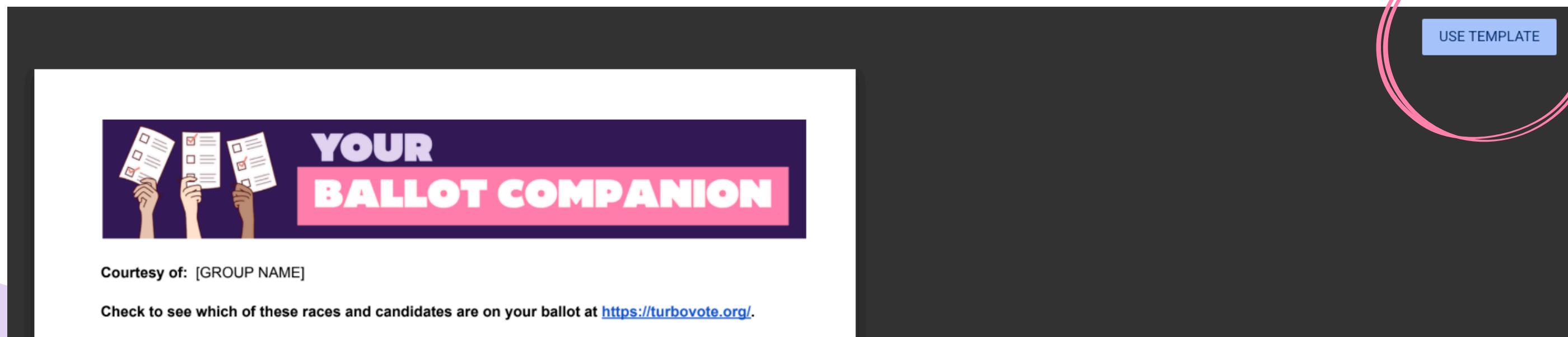
Federal Races			
Office	Candidate	Do we like them?	Why?
		☐ Yes ☐ No	
		☐ Yes ☐ No	
		☐ Yes ☐ No	

State Races			
Office	Candidate	Do we like them?	Why?
		☐ Yes ☐ No	
		☐ Yes ☐ No	
		☐ Yes ☐ No	

Judicial Races			
Office	Candidate	Do we like them?	Why?
		☐ Yes ☐ No	
		☐ Yes ☐ No	
		☐ Yes ☐ No	

HOW IT WORKS

- Access the **Ballot Companion** template on our Google Drive
- Click on Use Template to make a copy of the template
- Edit the new copy with your group's recommendations
- Share the link (change settings to anyone with a link, viewer) or download as PDF



PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

- Be a sleuth...use your new skills to do the research!
- Share what you learned with others
- Compile your Ballot Companion
- Use Rally to create lists of folks to share voting information with
- Share all the things – mark in Rally that you did
 - Ballot Companion
 - TurboVote (coming soon)
 - Our RWB Voter Guides (coming soon)



RESOURCES

- Election Sleuth Explainer

go.redwine.blue/sleuthing

- Your Ballot Companion template

go.redwine.blue/ballot-companion

- Rally

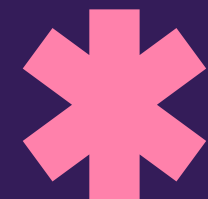
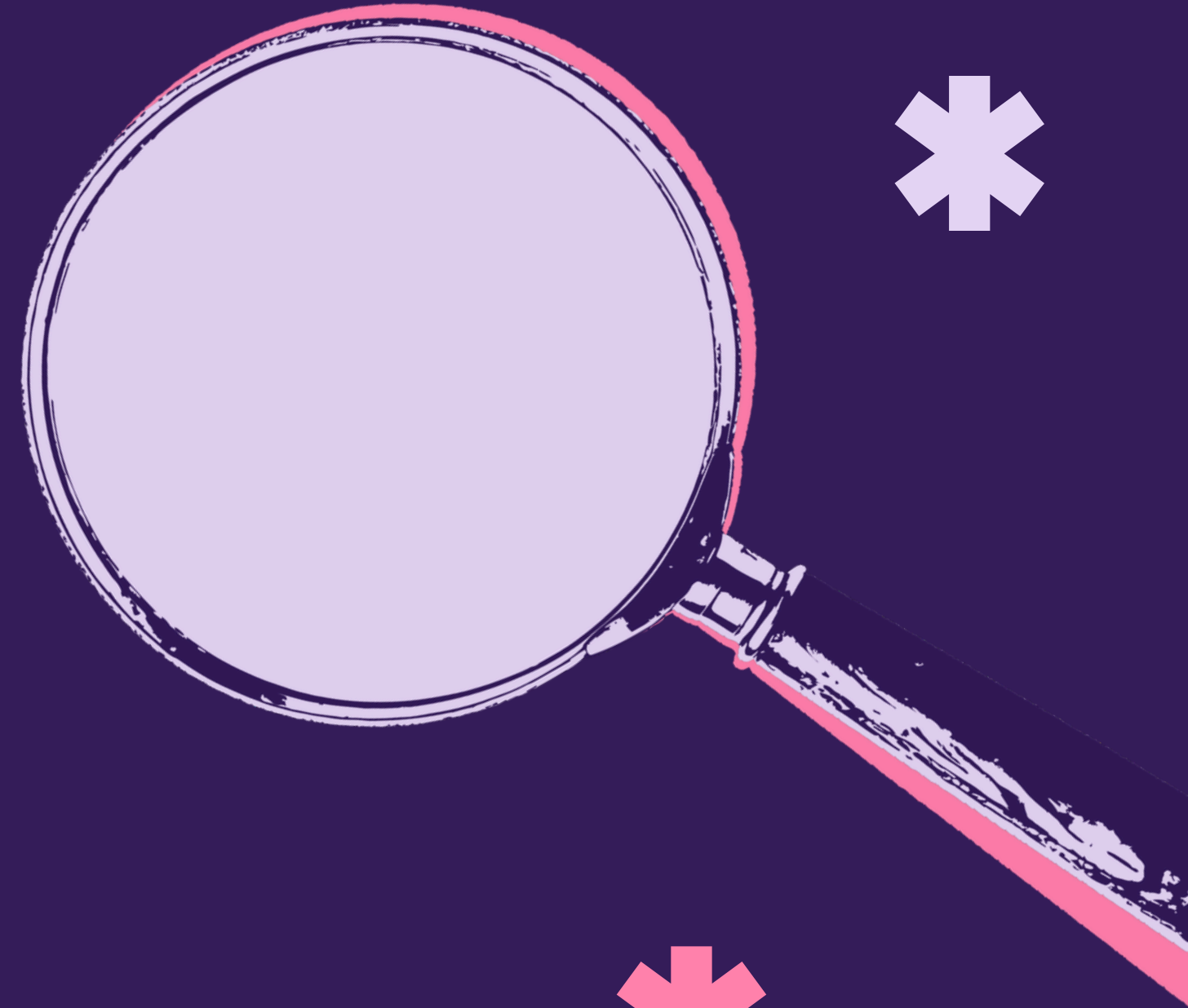
go.rally.win/pm/rwb-nc-vote/go

go.rally.win/pm/rwb-mi-vote/go

go.rally.win/pm/rwb-oh-vote/go

go.rally.win/pm/rwb-pa-vote/go

go.rally.win/pm/rwb-national-vote/go



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