

GOTV: IT MAKES A DIFFERENCE

I drove to the hometown of Blue America-endorsed Mark Schauer today to make sure Mark beats crazy wingnut Tim Walberg. I wanted to knock doors in Battle Creek rather than Ann Arbor because it doubles my power—every person voting for Schauer will help put Obama over the top in MI, and every Obama voter should vote to ensure Obama has another ally in the House with Mark Schauer. Plus, Ann Arbor can be a big bubble of happy Democrats (as can the lefty blogosphere), and I wanted to get out of that bubble to see how more swing areas of the state are responding to this election.

And the drive and the canvass were worth it.

My canvass partner and I were working in a neighborhood that was almost exactly 50-50 African-American and white (with a few mixed race couples as well). There were some beautiful old houses, but a lot of houses that needed some work, too. A number of young families. We spoke to a lot of first time or sporadic voters. And our conversations are going to make a difference.

There was the African-American guy out raking his lawn. He said he was supporting Obama, but didn't really engage at first. But then when I asked him if he knew where he voted, he got more animated. I explained which Church he votes at. I explained how he could vote a straight ticket or mark off all the Democrats he wanted to support. I reminded him to flip the ballot over to vote separately for Diane Hathaway to replace the odious Cliff Taylor in the State Supreme Court. I warned him to bring a photo ID to fulfill MI's new photo ID requirement. And I explained the hours.

I can't guarantee he'll vote. But I can guarantee that having someone come to his house to explain how to vote will make it much more

likely he will.

There were a bunch of people like this—people who were really enthusiastic for Barack Obama but were really happy to have someone explain where to go, what to do. Twice, when people called out from behind still-locked doors, "what do you want?" they immediately opened the door with a smile when I said I was an Obama volunteer). And then there was the mother and son who had registered to vote this year, but had not yet received their registration card—the campaign will follow-up to make sure they get out to vote. The campaign office had a sign in it that said for every 12 people you talk to, one will come out to vote who otherwise wouldn't have. Between my canvass partner and I, there are at least three more votes for Obama and Schauer (and hopefully Hathaway), though I suspect the number is closer to 5 or 6. Repeat that hundreds and thousands of times, and it'll make the difference in another state or two.

This is not a normal election. There are thousands, millions of people out there excited to vote for Barack Obama. But they might not vote unless you get out there and hold their hand.

Help get out the vote.