



ADVOCATES FOR JUSTICE, INSPIRED BY CATHOLIC SISTERS

## Hosting a 2020 Debate Watch Party

### What is a NETWORK Debate Watch Party?

A NETWORK Debate Watch Party is a chance to connect with others to educate yourselves and participate in our political process around the 2020 Presidential race. This Debate Watch Party Toolkit also provides the tools to help you analyze the presidential candidates' policies through the lens of NETWORK's [Mend the Gaps Policy Platform](#) and engage both on social media and in person with your guests to encourage others to think about these issues as well.

At NETWORK, we know people have tremendous power when they organize and work together. As we work to mend the gaps in our nation, a debate watch party can help bring more people into this important movement to advance justice through federal policy. We look forward to engaging with you on this and future activities to mend the gaps in our nation!

**Download NETWORK's Mend the Gaps Policy Platform:** [www.networklobby.org/2020policyplatform](http://www.networklobby.org/2020policyplatform).

### Why host a Debate Watch Party?

*"The future of humanity does not lie solely in the hands of great leaders, the great powers and the elites. It is fundamentally in the hands of peoples and in their ability to organize. It is in their hands, which can guide with humility and conviction this process of change." –Pope Francis*

Hosting a NETWORK Debate Watch Party is a great way to:

- Educate others about NETWORK and our Mend the Gap Policy Platform
- Engage around candidates' positions and analyze them in relation to the principles of Catholic Social Justice
- Encourage others to engage with the election process and advocacy to influence federal policy
- Grow your Advocates Team
- Enjoy fellowship and community



## Planning and Preparations Prior to the Event

It doesn't take a lot of effort to host a Debate Watch Party, but a little planning will go a long way. Here are some details to consider as you plan your event:

- **Venue:** Who is going to host the event? Is this location convenient and accessible for your guests? How many people can fit comfortably into the designated space? Is the location accessible by public transportation? Is there parking available?
- **Guest List:** Who are you going to invite (friends, family, neighbors, colleagues, church members, contacts from other social justice organizations, etc.)? How many people are you going to invite (remembering that invitees don't always translate into attendees)? Are there other NETWORK members living in your region who might like to attend? (If you're unsure, NETWORK organizers can provide you with this information.) Would it be helpful to offer childcare?
- **Date/Time:** The September debate will be Thursday, September 12 from 8:00 -11:00 pm Eastern time on ABC and Univision. How much time do you want to have before/after the debate broadcast?
- **Invitations:** Will you send paper or email invitations? When will you send the invitations? Does your invitation provide a clear description of the event and its purpose? Who should people RSVP to? Who will complete follow-up/reminder calls? Would it be helpful to include driving directions?
- **Preparing Materials:** In this toolkit, we have included:
  - Mend the Gaps Bingo (with four different Bingo card layouts)
  - Our 2020 Mend the Gaps Policy Platform (with key issues and policies to look for)
  - Twitter tips and tools to engage the debate moderators and candidates via social media during the debate

\*NETWORK is hosting a "Twitter 101" webinar on September 4, 2019 to prepare you to use social media effectively during the debate. The webinar will also be available to watch after at [www.networkadvocates.org/webinarrecordings](http://www.networkadvocates.org/webinarrecordings).

 ADVOCATES FOR JUSTICE, INSPIRED BY CATHOLIC SISTERS				
Presidential Debate Bingo: Mend the Gaps Edition				
Democracy, Citizenship	Healthcare, Food	Tax Justice, Trade	Housing, Criminal Justice	Living Wages, Family-Friendly Workplaces
B	I	N	G	O
Names and denounces white nationalism	Missed opportunity to discuss SNAP benefits <i>See Tweet 3</i>	"Strengthen the Child Tax Credit"	Criticizes mixed-status family rule evicting immigrant families from public housing	"Living wages" or "Raise the wage"
"Pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants"	Calls to expand Medicare, Medicaid, or CHIP (Children's Health Insurance Program)	"Expand the Earned Income Tax Credit"	Question about funding housing programs. <i>If not covered in first 1.5 hour, see Tweet 6</i>	Missed opportunity to promote paid family leave. <i>See Tweet 8</i>

Some additional questions to consider: Will you use this event to recruit new members to NETWORK? Do you need any special materials (name tags, markers, pens, paper, NETWORK handouts, NETWORK "interest cards," etc.)? Will food and/or drinks be served? Who will bring these items?

## Sample Agenda

While the debate itself will take up most of the event, you may want to include some time for mingling before the event or for a brief wrap-up afterward.

- 8:00 - 8:55 PM Guests arrive, mingle, and enjoy snacks and/or beverages.
- 8:55 - 9:00 PM Host welcomes guests and provides a brief introduction of NETWORK and resources available for watching tonight's debate. Take a group picture and post it to social media using the hashtag #MendtheGaps and tagging @NETWORKLobby.
- 9:00 - 11:00 PM Watch the debate, playing Bingo and engaging with each other and the NETWORK materials in person and on social media.
- 11:00 - 11:05 PM Collect "interest cards" to gather contact information from guests and invite them to participate in future NETWORK events.
- 11:05 - 11:15 PM Guests depart at their leisure.

## Follow-Up

Following your NETWORK Debate Watch Party, it is important to:

- Thank your guests for attending.
- Share issue news updates and/or answers to any questions you may not have been able to answer.
- Provide NETWORK with an event recap and the contact information found on your guests' "interest cards," as appropriate.
- Invite guests to participate in future NETWORK events in-person and online.

