
The Joe Birkett Campaign: An Analysis Study

Volunteering for the Joe Birkett Campaign

Our volunteering lead us to the Joe Birkett campaign for Attorney General. Our volunteering all took place on being pollwatchers for the Birkett campaign. This volunteering started the night before when we meet up with the Birkett staff at Hawkeyes Bar and Grill for his rally at night. We received all the documents about being a pollwatcher and filled out all the paperwork for the upcoming day. We learned the rules as to what to do and what not to do and along with being at the rally were able to get our picture taken with Mr. Birkett. So the following day we were at a Birkett office on 111th street where we received our tasks for the day. It seemed that there were a lot of problems with voter fraud in the 3rd, 15th and 21st precincts and we were to go to the polling places and observe the election judges. Being a largely Democratic region we were told just to call the cops if we had any problems whereas a pollwatcher was threatened earlier. This brought about the most valuable lesson from the whole campaigning assignment, in that individuals are very serious about voting. We never realized it in that we have been voting since we were given the right, and you don't see it when you go in to vote. But when you show up supporting a Republican campaign in a largely Democratic region, you realize how serious the election really is. So going to the 15th precinct first on 59th and Pulaski, we came across problems in we thought were propaganda being closer than the 100 linear feet from the door. But as one of the election judges pointed out to us, they measured it from the furthest inside door and showed that it was within the legal limits.

At all the polling places we were to visit we were supposed to take a count with number voting, spoiled ballots, and absentee ballots. So we placed a Joe Birkett sign next to the Lisa Madigan sign and were off after a while of watching several dozen individuals come through to vote and we were able to watch the process of signing in and going to vote through the pollwatcher perspective. Next we were off to the 3rd precinct where we meet the most pleasant individual through our day. He was the pollwatcher for the Madigan campaign but we proceeded to have a conversation with him about the campaign and our whereabouts in the City for over an hour.

Through these he helped us out some on being a pollwatcher, told us "he doesn't hate us because we are representing Joe Birkett", and told us where he likes to eat on Taylor Street where we live. We then had a problem with a Blagovich sign being right next to the door where we had it removed and checked the voting booths for other propaganda.

After taking the results thus far and greeting prospective voter for a while longer we were off to the 21st precinct. At these site we came across similar results in propaganda but here we had a problem with spoiled ballots. It seems that the other precincts had but one thus far in the day but this precinct had 6 so far. We asked where there were so many and it turned out that the same woman had 5 spoiled ballots and on the 6th time voting she got it right. So the problem was resolved where we again watched over the judges and talked with them about the day. It seemed they had a much lower turnout than expected which could be accounted for the rain on the day. This was good for the Birkett campaign in a mainly Democratic area, but it turns out it wasn't enough. So after returning to all the precincts for one last visit and being at the polling places until after the polls closed our day of volunteering was done.

We reported back to the Birkett office to turn in our supplies and came home to wait for the results. The results were not as kind to Birkett as we thought but we feel we did our best in helping the campaign.

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