

# INDIVISIBLE BOCA RATON - CANVASSING GUIDE

2026 Midterm Election Cycle

## Program Overview

Indivisible Boca Raton's canvassing program is built on one core insight: most voter contact starts too late, talks to too few people, and stops the moment an election ends. We are doing it differently.

We model our approach on Ground Truth, a people-powered canvassing program that treats every voter as worth a real conversation. That means knocking on every door in a neighborhood, not just registered Democrats, not just likely voters, and returning more than once to build an actual relationship over time.

The emotional landscape across the electorate is dominated by disillusionment. Voters of every registration are tired of feeling ignored. Studies show two-thirds of voters who answer the door are willing to have a genuine 10 to 15 minute conversation, and a significant share of voters registered or modeled as Republican express concern about the current political direction when given the chance to speak freely. That is our opening.

This guide gives you the tools to walk into any conversation, friendly, skeptical, or outright hostile, and come out having planted something worth coming back to.

## Ground Rules Before You Knock

- Always canvass in pairs. One person leads the conversation; the other takes notes and stays aware of the surroundings.
- Log every contact using the canvassing form immediately after leaving the door. Notes are as important as ratings. You can access it at [indivisiblebocaraton.org/canvassinglog](https://indivisiblebocaraton.org/canvassinglog).
- You are not here to win an argument. You are here to open a door, literally and figuratively.
- Listen more than you talk. The ratio should be 70/30 in their favor.
- Never debate, never condescend, never roll your eyes. Even if you are appalled.
- Lead with curiosity. Ask open-ended questions. "Tell me more about that" goes further than any talking point.
- Find shared values before you share your own. Family, community, safety, fairness, most voters agree on more than they realize.
- Your goal at the first visit is connection, not conversion. Leave them with a positive impression of you as a neighbor.
- If a conversation turns hostile, thank them for their time and leave. Do not escalate.

## The Conversation Framework

Every door follows the same basic arc, regardless of who answers:

|                              |                                                                                                         |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1. CONNECT</b>            | Introduce yourself as a neighbor and non-partisan volunteer. Be warm, not rehearsed.                    |
| <b>2. LISTEN</b>             | Ask an open-ended question about what matters to them right now. Then stop talking.                     |
| <b>3. PROBE</b>              | Follow up with "tell me more about that" or "how has that affected your family?" Let them go deeper.    |
| <b>4. FIND COMMON GROUND</b> | Identify the value underneath their concern. Safety, fairness, stability, opportunity. Reflect it back. |
| <b>5. BRIDGE</b>             | Share briefly why you care, connecting your values to theirs. One or two sentences maximum.             |
| <b>6. ASK</b>                | Make your action item requests. Scale them to how open the conversation was.                            |

# Standard Introduction

Use this at every door before you read the room and adapt:

"Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_ and I'm a volunteer with Indivisible Boca Raton. We're out in the neighborhood today just talking with people about what's on their minds so we can better represent our community."

What's one issue that's been weighing on you lately?"

Then stop. Wait. Let them answer. Whatever they say, your next move is to reflect and probe, not to respond with a talking point.

## Get Out The Vote - Your First Priority

Before any conversation about issues, candidates, or community organizing, the most important thing you can do at any door is make sure the person standing in front of you can vote. Voter contact that does not end with a clear, actionable voting path is an incomplete conversation. Use the resources below at every door.

| 2026 FLORIDA ELECTION DATES - PALM BEACH COUNTY |                                                                                                                  |
|-------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Primary Election Day                            | Tuesday, August 18, 2026                                                                                         |
| Voter Registration Deadline - Primary           | Monday, July 20, 2026                                                                                            |
| VBM Ballot Request Deadline - Primary           | Thursday, August 6, 2026 by 5:00 p.m.                                                                            |
| Early Voting - Primary (mandatory)              | August 8-15, 2026 (check <a href="https://www.vote-palmbeach.com">votepalmbeach.gov</a> for hours and locations) |
| General Election Day                            | Tuesday, November 3, 2026                                                                                        |
| Voter Registration Deadline - General           | Monday, October 5, 2026                                                                                          |
| Early Voting - General (mandatory)              | October 24-31, 2026                                                                                              |

| PALM BEACH COUNTY VOTING RESOURCES |                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                   |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Check / update registration        | <a href="https://www.votepalmbeach.com">votepalmbeach.gov</a>                        | Confirm registration and current address. Party must also be current to vote in the closed primary.                               |
| Register to vote online            | <a href="https://www.register-to-vote-florida.com">registertovoteflorida.gov</a>     | Florida state portal. Requires FL driver license / ID number or last 4 of SSN. Takes about 5 minutes.                             |
| Request a VBM ballot               | <a href="https://www.votepalmbeach.com">votepalmbeach.gov</a> or call (561) 656-6200 | No excuse required. Any registered FL voter can request one. Voters who vote by mail are 32% more likely to cast a ballot.        |
| Find your polling place            | <a href="https://www.votepalmbeach.com">votepalmbeach.gov</a>                        | Voters must vote at their assigned precinct on Election Day. Early voting sites are open to any PBC voter regardless of precinct. |
| Track your VBM ballot              | <a href="https://www.votepalmbeach.com">votepalmbeach.gov</a>                        | Ballot tracking is available county-wide. A rejected ballot can be cured by 5 p.m. two days after Election Day.                   |

**IMPORTANT: Florida is a closed primary state.**  
Only voters registered with a party can vote in that party's primary. NPAs and unaffiliated voters cannot vote in partisan primary races - but they CAN vote on school board races, judicial races, and ballot amendments. Party affiliation changes must be submitted by July 20, 2026 to count for the August 18 primary.

School board races in Palm Beach County are nonpartisan and open to all registered voters in the primary. These are among the most consequential local races on the ballot.

### AT THE DOOR - GOTV CHECK-IN

"Before I ask you about anything else - are you registered to vote here in Palm Beach County? And do you have a plan to vote in August?"

#### If they say no or they're not sure:

"You can check and register at [registertovoteflorida.gov](https://registertovoteflorida.gov) - it takes about five minutes. The deadline for the August primary is July 20. If you want to vote by mail, you have until August 6 to request your ballot. Voters who vote by mail are significantly more likely to actually cast their ballot. Request it at [votepalmbeach.gov](https://votepalmbeach.gov) or call (561) 656-6200."

#### If they are NPA or unaffiliated:

"Even without a party registration, you can still vote in August - school board races and ballot amendments are open to all registered voters. School board races directly affect your community and your property taxes. Those are on the primary ballot."

## Handling Different Voter Types

Read the conversation quickly and place the voter in one of the five categories below. Your script and your action item asks shift accordingly. The warmer the voter, the more you ask.

| ● HOT - Enthusiastic Supporter |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| THEY MIGHT SAY                 | "I already donate. I voted straight Democrat. I can't stand what's happening to this country. What can I do?"                                                                                                                                                                 |
| YOU SAY                        | "That's exactly the energy we need right now. The single most powerful thing any of us can do is make sure our neighbors show up. We're building a real ground operation here in Boca, people who are informed, connected, and ready to act. I'd love to get you plugged in." |

| ACTION ITEMS TO REQUEST |                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.                      | Sign up for our newsletter, stay current on every local race and action. <a href="https://indivisiblebocaraton.com/newsletter">indivisiblebocaraton.com/newsletter</a>                               |
| 2.                      | Subscribe to our Media Team Substack for in-depth reporting on what's happening in Palm Beach County and abroad. <a href="https://indivisiblebocaraton.org/media">indivisiblebocaraton.org/media</a> |
| 3.                      | Follow us on social media and share our posts to extend our reach <a href="https://indivisiblebocaraton.org/social">indivisiblebocaraton.org/social</a>                                              |
| 4.                      | Visit <a href="https://indivisiblebocaraton.org/volunteer">indivisiblebocaraton.org/volunteer</a> to fill out our volunteer form and let us know to what degree you're willing to help.              |
| 5.                      | Attend an upcoming candidate forum. Meet the people running for office. <a href="https://indivisiblebocaraton.org/events">indivisiblebocaraton.org/events</a>                                        |
| 6.                      | Join us at an upcoming protest or action. <a href="https://indivisiblebocaraton.org/events">indivisiblebocaraton.org/events</a>                                                                      |
| 7.                      | If you're not yet registered or your mail ballot registration has lapsed, let's get that fixed right now, and we'll follow up with you before the August 18 primary to make sure you're set          |

 **WARM - Sympathetic but Disengaged**

|                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>THEY MIGHT SAY</b> | "Yeah, I agree things are a mess. I just don't really follow politics that closely. I voted last time, I think."                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>YOU SAY</b>        | "That's completely understandable. It's exhausting to keep up with everything. That's actually why we're out here. We're trying to make it easier for people to stay connected without having to watch the news every night. We put out a newsletter and videos that cut through the noise and focuses on what's happening right here in our community." |

**ACTION ITEMS TO REQUEST**

|    |                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. | Sign up for our newsletter, you can always unsubscribe if you find it's not for you. <a href="https://indivisiblebocaraton.com/newsletter">indivisiblebocaraton.com/newsletter</a> |
| 2. | Follow us on social media for quick updates <a href="https://indivisiblebocaraton.org/social">indivisiblebocaraton.org/social</a>                                                  |
| 3. | Visit <a href="https://indivisiblebocaraton.org">indivisiblebocaraton.org</a> - bookmark it for when you want more                                                                 |
| 4. | Attend a candidate forum. It's a low-commitment, high-value way to get informed <a href="https://indivisiblebocaraton.org/events">indivisiblebocaraton.org/events</a>              |
| 5. | If your mail ballot registration has lapsed, let's get that sorted. We'll remind you before August 18                                                                              |

 **COLD - Skeptical or Checked Out**

|                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>THEY MIGHT SAY</b> | "I don't really vote. Politicians are all the same. Nothing ever changes anyway."                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>YOU SAY</b>        | "I hear that a lot, and honestly, that frustration is completely legitimate. The system has let a lot of people down. The reason I'm out here talking to neighbors instead of sending you a mailer is because I think the only thing that actually changes anything is people in a community deciding to show up together. Not for a party - for each other. I'm not going to try to talk you into anything today. But if you ever want to see what we're actually doing out here, our website is a good place to start." |

**ACTION ITEMS TO REQUEST**

|    |                                                                                                                                                                    |
|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. | Visit <a href="https://indivisiblebocaraton.org">indivisiblebocaraton.org</a> for our events and videos. No sign-up required, just take a look                     |
| 2. | Follow us on social media, low stakes, easy to unfollow if it's not for you. <a href="https://indivisiblebocaraton.org/social">indivisiblebocaraton.org/social</a> |
| 3. | Sign up for our newsletter, you can always unsubscribe <a href="https://indivisiblebocaraton.com/newsletter">indivisiblebocaraton.com/newsletter</a>               |

 **MAGA REPUBLICAN - Committed Opposition**

**THEY MIGHT SAY**

"I'm a Trump supporter. I'm not interested. You're wasting your time." / "The Democrats destroyed this country."

**YOU SAY**

"I respect that, and I'm not here to change your mind. I just wanted to introduce myself as a neighbor. Honestly, what I hear from people across the board, Republicans, Democrats, independents, is that most folks feel like the system isn't working for ordinary people anymore. I think most of us agree on more than cable news would have us believe. I won't take up more of your time. I appreciate you answering the door."

**ACTION ITEMS TO REQUEST**

1. Leave a card or flyer with [indivisiblebocaraton.org](https://indivisiblebocaraton.org). No ask, no pressure
2. If they express any ambivalence at all: invite them to visit the website at their own pace

**TRADITIONAL REPUBLICAN - Persuadable Conservative**

**THEY MIGHT SAY**

"I've always voted Republican but I'm not happy with the direction things are going. I don't know anymore." / "I believe in fiscal responsibility and less government, but this all feels chaotic."

**YOU SAY**

"That's something I'm hearing from a lot of people who have voted Republican their whole lives. The values haven't changed. Stability, accountability, institutions that work, but the party has. We're not asking you to become a Democrat. We're asking you to stay informed and think carefully about who is actually delivering on those values right now. Local races especially school board, county commission those are places where your vote has direct impact on your daily life, regardless of party."

**ACTION ITEMS TO REQUEST**

1. Sign up for our newsletter. Specifically mention local race coverage. [indivisiblebocaraton.com/newsletter](https://indivisiblebocaraton.com/newsletter)
2. Subscribe to our Media Team Substack. Frame it as accountability journalism, not partisan content [indivisiblebocaraton.org/media](https://indivisiblebocaraton.org/media)
3. Visit [indivisiblebocaraton.org](https://indivisiblebocaraton.org) and look at the candidate forum videos
4. Attend a candidate forum. Meet candidates directly and draw your own conclusions [indivisiblebocaraton.org/events](https://indivisiblebocaraton.org/events)
5. Follow us on social media - [indivisiblebocaraton.org/social](https://indivisiblebocaraton.org/social)
6. If they express openness to reconsidering their vote: make sure their mail ballot registration is current and offer a follow-up contact closer to August 18

## Quick Reference: Phrases That Work

| INSTEAD OF                        | SAY                                                           |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Progressive values                | <b>Shared values</b>                                          |
| Activism                          | <b>Community involvement</b>                                  |
| Mobilizing voters                 | <b>Encouraging participation</b>                              |
| Fighting back                     | <b>Holding people accountable</b>                             |
| Systemic injustice / Civil Rights | <b>Fairness and accountability</b>                            |
| Our base/members/supporters       | <b>Our neighbors</b>                                          |
| Why did you vote for that?        | <b>Tell me more about what you were hoping for</b>            |
| That's not true                   | <b>I've heard it differently. What's your source on that?</b> |

## Logging Your Contact

Every door answered, or not, gets logged using the canvassing log immediately after you leave. You can access it at [indivisiblebocaraton.org/canvassinglog](https://indivisiblebocaraton.org/canvassinglog). Do not rely on memory.

Qualitative notes are as valuable as the rating. A voter coded COLD who mentioned they used to volunteer for their local fire department is a future conversation waiting to happen. Write it down.

## The One Thing to Remember

**You are not here to win today.**

You are here to make someone feel heard - possibly for the first time in a long time. If you do that, you will be back. And the second conversation is where things actually change.

# Canvassing Supplement: The Issues

Talking Points for a Disillusioned Electorate

This supplement works alongside the Field Guide. Its purpose is to give you grounded, honest language for two specific moments in a conversation: when a voter tells you the system is broken, and when you want to leave them with a reason to stay engaged. Both moments require you to be credible. That means acknowledging real failures before you offer any hope.

## Part 1 - What's Wrong With the System

When a voter tells you the system is broken, the worst thing you can do is defend it. The second-worst thing is to pivot immediately to a campaign pitch. The right move is to agree with the parts that are true, be specific about it, and let them feel heard before you move forward.

These are some honest acknowledgments to help bridge the gap with skeptical voters.

### 1. Both parties have let people down.

This is the single most consistent thing voters say across registration, income, and geography. It's not just frustration, it's an accurate description of the last two decades. Trade deals shipped jobs. Bailouts went to banks. Neither party has made housing affordable, controlled drug prices, or fixed infrastructure at the scale people needed. Acknowledging this is not weakness. It's the price of admission to a real conversation.

#### AT THE DOOR

"I hear that a lot, and honestly, I agree with you. Our representatives haven't always delivered what they promised. That's actually why I'm out here instead of waiting for a TV ad to do the work because what's happening in Washington is real, but so is what's happening right here in Boca, and those two things are not the same fight."

### 2. Trust in our institutions has been eroded

The Supreme Court reversed *Roe v. Wade*, a 50-year precedent, by six votes. The FBI and DOJ have been subject to political influence. Congress has passed budgets that exploded the deficit while cutting services. Local governments have rezoned neighborhoods without community input and handed public land to private developers. When voters say they don't trust institutions, they are not being paranoid. They are paying attention.

#### AT THE DOOR

"The distrust makes complete sense to me. When you watch a court flip a constitutional right that existed for half a century, or watch your local commissioners vote to put a developer's name on a public street without asking anyone, you are right to be skeptical. That scrutiny is exactly what democracy is supposed to run on."

### 3. Government overreach happens at the local level too - and it happened right here.

In Lauderdale-by-the-Sea, just 15-20 minutes down the coast, town commissioners voted 3-2 in September 2025 to co-designate Sea Grape Drive as "President Donald J. Trump Drive", with no advance public notice to residents or local businesses. The community organized immediately. A local group called "No Politics in Paradise" held protests, circulated petitions, and kept pressure on the commission with a simple argument: the streets belong to the people, not to politicians or political parties.

It worked. In March 2026, the same commission voted to back a state-level designation that moves the Trump name to a stretch of Commercial Boulevard instead. Once that state designation takes effect, the Trump Drive sign comes off Sea Grape Drive and the original name is restored. The street is going back.

Meanwhile, Palm Beach County commissioners unanimously renamed a 4-mile stretch of Southern Boulevard "President Donald J. Trump Boulevard" in July 2025 a designation pushed through the state legislature and signed by the governor before locals had a meaningful say. Not every fight ends the same way. Which is exactly why who sits on these commissions matters.

#### AT THE DOOR

"You know what happened just down the road in Lauderdale-by-the-Sea? Commissioners renamed Sea Grape Drive after Trump with no notice to residents or businesses. So the community organized protests, petitions. And the name is coming back off the street. That's not a Washington story. That's what happens when neighbors decide they're not going to let it go."

#### 4. Mainstream media is founded in shock value, and maximizing viewership

Cable news, social media, and political fundraising emails are all built on the same business model: outrage keeps people watching and clicking and donating. The result is that most people have no idea what their local school board, county commission, or state representative actually does, but they have very strong feelings about people they have never met in states they have never visited. That distance from real information is not an accident. It serves the people who benefit from disengagement.

#### AT THE DOOR

"The loudest voices in politics have a financial interest in keeping you angry and checked out. An engaged neighbor who knows who their county commissioner is, and shows up to vote in August, is a threat to that model. That's not an exaggeration. It's just how the money works."

## Part 2 - Why Community Engagement Can Fix It

Here is where you earn the right to be hopeful. Not because things are fine, but because the evidence that communities can push back is real and recent, and some of it happened within miles of the doors you are knocking on. Use specifics. Generalities do not build trust. Examples do.

#### Boca Raton, Florida - March 2026

##### WHAT HAPPENED

Andy Thomson won the Boca Raton mayoral race by five votes after two recounts, becoming the first Democrat to lead the city in over 30 years and the first in at least 45 years by some accounts. He ran on tax restraint, responsible development, and keeping public land out of private developer hands. He won in a city that Republicans had controlled since 1981.

##### WHY IT MATTERS

This race was decided by five votes. Five. In a city half an hour from Mar-a-Lago. If ten people who stayed home had shown up instead, the result flips. This isn't an abstract metaphor for why every vote counts. It's a literal, documented, local example that happened earlier this year.

##### AT THE DOOR, YOU CAN SAY

*"Our own mayor, right here in Boca, won by five votes. Five. When we hosted Andy, we had close to 300 attendees, and we're proud to say we helped him get across the finish line. The people who showed up for this race changed the outcome of an election in what everyone assumed was a safe Republican city. That's not hopeful thinking. That's what actually happened."*

| The National Pattern - 2025 and 2026 Special Elections                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| WHAT HAPPENED                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Across 2025 and into 2026, Democrats flipped 30 state legislative seats in special elections while Republicans flipped zero. In 2025 alone, Democrats won 21 percent of all Republican-held seats that were on the ballot. The median swing toward Democrats in 2026 state legislative specials is running about 10 points above the 2024 presidential baseline. In Texas, a Democrat flipped a state Senate seat Trump had carried by 17 points, a 31-point swing. Democrats also won two Florida state House special elections, including one whose district overlaps with Trump's Mar-a-Lago residence. |
| WHY IT MATTERS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Special elections are the most direct read on how the electorate is actually feeling between major cycles, because there is no presidential race driving turnout. The people showing up in these races are showing up specifically because of what is happening right now. And they are consistently breaking toward Democrats at argins that have not been seen since the lead-up to the 2018 blue wave.                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| AT THE DOOR, YOU CAN SAY                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| "Since Trump came back to office, Democrats have won 30 state legislative seats in special elections. Republicans have flipped zero. That is not a trend from 2018, that is what is happening right now, in 2026. The wind is at our back. But only if people show up."                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

Part 3 - Bridging Language

The goal of this supplement is not to turn you into a policy briefer. It's to give you enough grounding that when a voter says "nothing ever changes," you can look them in the eye, agree with the honest part of that, and then offer them something real. Here is condensed language:

| THEY SAY                                  | YOU SAY                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| "Nothing ever changes."                   | "Our own mayor in Boca won by five votes. Five votes. Things change when people show up."                                                                                                                             |
| "Both parties are the same."              | "On some things, I'd agree with you. On local races, school board, county commission, the differences are real and you feel them in your daily life."                                                                 |
| "My vote doesn't matter."                 | "In March, Boca Raton elected its first Democratic mayor in 30 years by five votes. 'Every vote counts' isn't just a metaphor in local races."                                                                        |
| "Politicians only care about themselves." | "That's why we focus on local races. Your county commissioner and your school board member live in this community. They go to the same grocery store. That accountability is real in a way that Congress just isn't." |
| "I don't follow politics."                | "You don't have to. What I'm asking is whether you care about your kids' schools, your property taxes, traffic in our city. Those are decided by people your neighbors elect twice a year."                           |
| "The Democrats had their chance."         | "Fair point. They didn't always deliver. What I can tell you is what's happening right here right now, and in Boca Raton, the community showed up and changed something real."                                        |

## A Note on Credibility

The talking points in this supplement are a starting point, not a script. Their job is to open a door, to establish that you are an informed neighbor having an honest conversation, not a canvasser reading from a clipboard. Once that credibility is established, put the points down and ask.

Ask what they think about what happened on Sea Grape Drive. Ask whether they followed the Boca mayoral race. Ask what they would have done differently. The goal of every conversation is not just to leave a good impression, it is to understand how this specific voter thinks, what moves them, what they trust, and what they are afraid of. That intelligence is what allows Indivisible Boca Raton to run smarter campaigns, target the right messages, and ultimately influence races that matter.

We are not just building goodwill. We are building a map of the electorate, one conversation at a time. The data you log after every door, the issues they raised, and the language they used is as valuable as any poll. It is how a community organization punches above its weight in a political environment that is otherwise dominated by money.

Every example in this supplement is real, local, and recent, but don't feel the need to embellish. The Andy Thomson race was decided by five votes in a city that had not elected a Democrat in over 30 years, that fact is powerful precisely because it is exact. The moment you exaggerate, you hand a skeptical voter a reason to dismiss everything else you said.

The same principle applies to acknowledging what's wrong. You are not conceding the argument when you say Democrats have also let people down. You are demonstrating that you are a neighbor having an honest conversation, not a canvasser reciting a script. That difference is the whole game.