



## Move the Money — Move the Economy

### BIRD DOGGING 101

Help influence the 2012 election cycle

#### What is Bird Dogging Anyway?

*Just as a bird dog flushes a bird out and pins it down, political bird-dogging involves forcing a candidate to address a particular issue and answer it with specificity. “If you simply go in there and say, ‘What do you think about health care? What do you think about Iraq?’ the candidate can pretty much say anything and have it sound like it’s a good answer,” said Arnie Alpert, the program coordinator in New Hampshire for the American Friends Service Committee... Basically, it takes planning, precision and a little bit of courage.*

— New York Times writer Sarah Wheaton

Bird dogging can help shift the message on federal budget priorities during the 2012 election cycle, and help us understand and publicize the candidate’s views.

#### Tips for Successful Bird Dogging

- Arrive early to make sure that you get inside the venue and are close to the stage and cameras.
- Know where your candidate stands on the issues so that you can frame your question correctly.
- Frame your question ahead of time. You can look at our sample question and customize locally.
- Work in pairs and disperse throughout the venue. If you have a partner you’ll be less nervous. If you have teams

of people throughout the venue you’ll have more opportunity.

- Be polite, calm and respectful.

#### Sample Question

The US military budget now eats up around 60% of the federal discretionary budget at a moment when there are 14 million people unemployed and our economy is on the brink. Meanwhile, the debate has been all about cutting from non-security related areas. This doesn’t make sense to me. **What would you do to balance federal spending priorities and give us real security, like job creation, healthcare and education?**



AFSC bird dog catches John Edwards in front of a camera to talk about the cost of war.