Twitter Thread by Amy Jo Cousins



Amy Jo Cousins
@_AJCousins



So, here's a story. You've heard me talk about my cousin in Arizona before. (A ton of you sewed masks & sent them to her for distribution to the local Navajo community, thank you!) Post-2016, she took a look at her AZ community & decided to get involved in local politics.

She started looking up who to talk to in her precinct, and realized that there was no Democratic precinct captain/committee member for her precinct. In fact, there were a *ton* of precincts where no one had run for the Dem. precinct. Every precinct had a GOP captain though.

For non-USians, every precinct has both a Democratic & Repubican precinct captain or committee person. They campaign on behalf of their party's candidates. Talk to voters, canvass door-to-door, share info about voting. They're critical for GOTV efforts & it's an elected position.

Precincts are tiny compared to things like counties or cities. You really get to know the voters, because they're literally your neighbors. But because it's not a role with power, a lot of precinct roles are vacant where there's a clear (or assumed) one-party advantage.

So my cousin and her husband (who had just retired) got involved. She ran for precinct captain in the next election and won. They recruited more Dems to run for these vacant precinct captain seats. They started going to local party meetings, learning the system, getting informed.

They started focusing on state races, getting Dems elected to state office in Arizona. But they also worked on hyper-local races. One of those local races was for the Maricopa County Recorder.

This is when I learned what a county recorder in Arizona does. :) They record deeds and keep county records. In Arizona, they also run elections at the local level.

Yeah, that part is important.

The Maricopa County Recorder at that time had been in office for 28 years. She was notorious for closing polling places & creating massive lines to vote.

The local Democratic party, incl my cousin & her husband, devoted 1000s of work-hours to campaigning for Adrian Fontes.

Mr. Fontes is an Arizonan-born attorney and an ex-Marine. In 2018, against a 28-year GOP incumbent, he campaigned on increasing voter access, reopening polling places, and modernizing the county record-keeping process.

He won.

Thousands of regular people in Arizona, just like you and me, have been working for 4 years to get Democrats elected at the county, city, and state levels, devoting time and effort to making sure every voters' voice is heard.

And look what they've done. ♥■

Getting a county recorder elected sounds like small potatoes. But the Maricopa County Recorder's office opened more polling places and instituted a policy of giving voters 7 days to "cure" their ballot if it was rejected. That policy was adopted statewide after a lawsuit, btw.

How do I, a Chicagoan, know so much about the Maricopa County Recorder? Because my cousin and her husband have literally reached out across the nation for support for Arizona Democrats. I listened and I learned, & if the results aren't damn inspiring, I don't know what is.

Arizona went blue for the first time in 24 years. And this is how it happened. Local folks working hard for years. That's what gets it done.

And that's what we can do. No matter what. Support the people working hard on the ground to turn red states blue.

And find out for yourself how things actually work in your state, your city, your county. Find out what office runs elections, and then find out who's running for those offices. Find a local state rep or senate district that's close to tipping and get involved.