



TO: Interested Parties

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RE: El-Sayed's Michigan Win Puts DSA Agenda on the Ballot Nationwide

Abdul El-Sayed is Michigan's Democratic nominee for U.S. Senate. He has headlined Democratic Socialists of America events since 2017, built his campaign around Medicare for All, restricting free speech in the name of campaign finance reform, and abolishing ICE, and backed it with an economic platform stacked with massive tax hikes and a Green New Deal-style pledge to phase out fossil fuels. He campaigned alongside Bernie Sanders and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez to get there.

Michigan Democrats did not nominate an outlier. They nominated the direction their party has been moving in for years — a direction built on a simple premise: that government, not free people, is the answer to every problem in your life. Every Democratic candidate on a 2026 ballot, in every state, should understand what that means for their race — and be ready to answer for it.

DSA Is Not a Faction Anymore. It Is the Direction.

El-Sayed is not an isolated phenomenon confined to a handful of deep-blue primaries. He is the latest and most prominent example of a pattern building for years: a Democratic base pushed further left, cycle after cycle, until the Democratic Socialists of America's platform — not a moderate alternative to it — is what energizes the people who actually show up to vote in a primary. From Chris Pappas in New Hampshire to Mary Peltola in Alaska, every Democratic Senate and House candidate on the ballot this fall must be measured against this same shift. Voters deserve to know where each of them actually stands: with a party that believes it should decide where you live, what you're paid, and how your healthcare works, or with a vision that trusts free people to make those choices for themselves.

Watch What They Do, Not What They Say They'll Do

Less than a year ago, Virginia elected a governor who ran on pragmatism and lower costs. Abigail Spanberger opened her victory speech by declaring that "Virginia chose pragmatism over partisanship," and won by 15 points campaigning as exactly that kind of Democrat. Within months, the legislature her party controls had introduced more than fifty new tax increases in a single session, and Spanberger signed the measure rejoining the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative — a cap-and-trade scheme that raises electricity costs for every family and business in the state.

Congress has run the same play. Moderate Democrats sold the Inflation Reduction Act to voters as a deficit-reducing, affordability-focused bill, then used it to push through hundreds of billions in new special interest subsidies and a major expansion of IRS enforcement — the same bait-and-switch Spanberger ran in Virginia, at national scale.

The real test isn't the label on the campaign. It's the vote that follows it — and when that vote is on the line, these candidates have consistently sided with a party moving further left, not with the people back home. A campaign brand tells voters what a candidate wants them to believe; it says nothing about what the party they're joining will do with power once they're elected. Control doesn't announce itself. It arrives dressed as moderation, and that gap between the campaign and the governing, in Virginia and in Washington alike, is where the DSA agenda gets a foothold even in races where it never appeared on a yard sign.

The Contrast Is the Whole Ballgame

Strip away the branding, and the platform driving Democratic primaries this cycle keeps arriving at the same place: government decides, not you. Every plank is offered as compassion. Underneath the language, it is the same bargain: give up a little more of your freedom, and government will manage the problem for you. It never does, because it removes the one thing that has ever actually lowered costs and improved lives — free people responding to what other free people need, not a bureaucrat deciding what they're allowed to have.

Universal rent control doesn't lower rent, it lowers the number of homes available to rent. A government-run health system doesn't lower costs, it rations care by waitlist instead of price. A mandated workweek doesn't raise your pay, it just shifts the cost of the hours onto your employer or your prices. A wealth tax built to punish success today caps the builders of tomorrow.

This is the affordability debate the country is actually having. Democrats are offering to solve a cost-of-living crisis with more government control over the very things driving costs up. AFP Action-endorsed candidates believe in something different: the ingenuity and potential of every American, and the confidence that when government gets out of the way, free people build, compete, and solve problems that politicians only ever promise to solve. Less red tape, more supply, more competition, more freedom to build. That is the fix, and it is the optimistic one.

Every Candidate, Every Race, Every Conversation

This cycle, AFP Action is engaged in Senate races in Alaska, Iowa, Michigan, Montana, New Hampshire, North Carolina, and Ohio. In every one of them, and in every competitive House race across the country, candidates should be pressed on where they stand on each plank of this platform. Do you support rent control? A government-run, single-payer health system? A government-mandated workweek? Phasing out fossil fuels in favor of public ownership of energy? A tax built to cap how far success can go? These are not hypothetical questions. They are the actual platform of the fastest-growing wing of the Democratic Party, and voters deserve an answer from every candidate before they cast a ballot — not after.

The Contrast Wins at the Door

This is not a message that only works in theory. AFP Action's grassroots teams have already knocked nearly 2 million doors across those key Senate battlegrounds this cycle, proving this out in real conversations, not just polling. When our canvassers talk to voters about our candidates' plans to lower costs and draw a clear contrast with an opponent offering more government control, 60 percent of persuadable voters move toward our candidate. That is proof our candidates win when they show up, make the case, and offer a credible, optimistic alternative instead of just opposition. The task now is to put that contrast in front of every voter — at the door, in every ad, in every mail piece, and in every debate, between now and November.

Two Visions, One Choice

Americans are looking at two paths ahead, and the destinations could not be more different. One path is offering more government control while calling it liberation — using real anxiety over housing, healthcare, and a paycheck that doesn't stretch far enough to convince Americans to trade away their freedom. We believe in something very different: the freedom, ingenuity, and potential of every American, and the confidence that when government gets out of the way, free people will innovate, build, and prosper. One vision leads to more freedom, more opportunity, and a rising standard of living for every American. The other leads to the poverty and stagnation that government control has produced everywhere it has ever been tried. AFP Action will be making this argument now through Election Day, and we urge every candidate we're supporting to do the same.