

# Campaigners for D'Artagnan Collier near signature goal in Detroit mayoral race

An SEP campaign team  
29 April 2013

The mayoral campaign of D'Artagnan Collier continued this weekend, as petitioners collected signatures at various locations around Detroit to place Collier on the mayoral ballot. Campaigners have presently collected almost 800 signatures. This is well over the 500 required for ballot access, but the campaign has pledged to collect 1,000.

Collier and a campaign team petitioned at Eastern Market, which is Michigan's largest open-air marketplace, where tens of thousands of people buy fresh produce and flowers and enjoy outdoor music each Saturday.

Collier and campaigners emphasized that the issues facing Detroit were not unique to the city; rather, the attack on Detroit is a part of a global process. The appointment of an emergency manager in Detroit was seen by the ruling class as a model for similar efforts across the country and around the world.

When asked what they thought of the emergency takeover of the city, many people were quick to point out that Michigan voters had defeated the legalization of such measures at the ballot last November, only to have a nearly identical law passed weeks later.

Campaigners' opposition not only to Emergency Manager Kevyn Orr, but also to the City Council and Mayor David Bing, won strong support. There was widespread disgust with all factions of the political establishment, technocrats and elected representatives alike.

Bill, an engineer who is about to retire, took notice of the fact that Collier was not a businessman, but a city worker, and that his father had been a Chrysler worker. Bill said that "the corporations are out of control", and he asked many questions about how society could be run under a socialist system. "I'm more of a philosophical person. I've always been thinking about

these types of questions", he told Collier.

Collier explained that under the capitalist system, the economy took on the character of "anarchy of the rich", where the drive for private profit encouraged the hoarding and misuse of resources. Under socialism, the banks and big industry would be put under the democratic control of the workers themselves, and could be run to provide for the social need of the majority of people, instead of the private profit of the few.

Other campaign teams petitioned elsewhere in Detroit this weekend. Hundreds of signatures were gathered outside a local credit union in the northwest of the city. Campaigners had discussions with hospital workers, including some at Detroit Medical Center, where 300 jobs are being eliminated due to federal budget cuts and the merger of Beaumont and Henry Ford hospitals.

Some signers were Detroit firefighters. One said that this coming week, Emergency Manager Orr would be meeting with firefighters union officials to reveal the contract he would be imposing this July. The Detroit Fire Department has already undergone major budget cuts under Bing and the City Council, with firefighters losing 10 percent of their wages and seeing their health benefits slashed.

Campaigners also received support from many auto workers at several plants in the area. Workers are disgusted with the two-tier wage system—under which new hires are paid 50 percent of senior workers—as well as new 10-hour shifts imposed on Chrysler workers with collaboration of the UAW.

Campaigners pointed out that, taking inflation into account, the current wage of \$15 per hour made by new hires was less than what auto workers were paid in the 1930s. One auto parts factory worker said that he was only paid \$9.50 per hour. Meanwhile, Ford just

reported \$2.4 billion in first-quarter profits, and GM CEO Dan Akerson's 2012 compensation was recently reported to have been \$11.1 million.



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