

SEP candidate D'Artagnan Collier on ballot for Detroit mayor race

Jerry White
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D'Artagnan Collier, the Socialist Equality Party's candidate for mayor of Detroit, has been informed that his name will be placed on the ballot for the August 6 primary election. According to a notification from the city's board of elections, the SEP turned in a sufficient number of valid signatures on nominating petitions to qualify Collier, a city worker and socialist fighter for three decades, for the mayoral race.

SEP supporters collected signatures of 1,000 Detroit voters, double the required number to attain ballot status. The petition campaign tapped into an overwhelming sentiment of opposition in the working class towards the undemocratic installation of an emergency manager with dictatorial powers to tear up labor agreements, gut essential services and sell off public assets.

Outside of the SEP campaign there is no other political opposition to the savage austerity measures that have been outlined by Kevyn Orr, a former bankruptcy attorney who is a front man for the banks and wealthy bondholders. Orr enjoys the backing of the entire political establishment, from Michigan's Republican Governor Rick Snyder to the Democrats, including state treasurer Andy Dillon, Mayor David Bing and the City Council.

Speaking to the *World Socialist Web Site*, D'Artagnan Collier said, "I would like to thank all those who signed our petitions, along with my campaign team and supporters who worked very hard to collect 1,000 signatures in a relatively short period of time. We campaigned among different sections of the working class from, autoworkers at the factories, to health care workers and teachers, to single mothers at grocery stores, as well as among the unemployed, retirees and students.

Collier added that the eagerness with which Detroit

residents signed his petition reflects the growing receptivity of workers and young people to a socialist alternative. "There is a growing sense, in Detroit, throughout the US and around the world, that capitalism has failed," Collier said. "The entire economic and political system is oblivious to the needs and concerns of the working class, and only functions to pile ever more money into the pockets of the corporate CEOs and Wall Street bankers."

Detroit is at the front line of a global assault on the working class. Earlier this week, Kevyn Orr released his preliminary financial plan for Detroit, which includes a slash and burn policy of attacking health care for retirees, slashing wages for city workers, shutting down entire parts of the city, and privatizing city assets.

Collier said. "Like a tin pot dictator, Orr has declared that he is the sole decider and the opinions of the vast majority of people count for nothing.

"The working class, however, has a very different view, and it has yet to be heard from.

"I am running in this election to provide a political voice and program to every section of the working class—employed and unemployed, black, white and immigrant, in Detroit and throughout the metropolitan area. The working class has a rich history of struggle. It will fight once again, but this can only take place through a fight against the corrupt trade unions and civil rights establishment.

"It is impossible for workers, in what is already the poorest city in America, to accept the further destruction of our jobs, livelihoods and essential programs. The time has come to answer these attacks with a powerful counter-offensive. We will fight for a socialist program that begins with our needs, not the demands of the bankrupt capitalist system."

Among others in the mayor race, Collier will oppose

Mike Duggan, former Wayne County prosecutor and CEO of the Detroit Medical Center, and Benny Napoleon, the Wayne County Sheriff and former Detroit police chief. Mayor Dave Bing, whose approval ratings have fallen below 10 percent, announced Tuesday he would not seek reelection.

Collier is calling on workers and youth to join this campaign and build up the widest audience for a political struggle to throw out the emergency manager and replace the City Council with a council of workers representatives. His program includes the fight to unify workers throughout the US and around the world on the basis of a socialist program to nationalize the banks and major corporations and reorganize economic life on the basis of social need, not private profit.

For more information and to join the campaign contact the SEP here.



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