

An open letter to WDIV Local 4 News in Detroit

Stop the censorship of the Socialist Equality Party campaign!

Niles Niemuth
2 November 2018

To: Kim Voet
News Director
WDIV Local 4 News

I am writing you to protest the censorship of my campaign for Michigan's 12th congressional district by WDIV Local 4 News and ClickonDetroit.com.

Only two of the four candidates, incumbent Rep. Debbie Dingell (Democrat) and Jeff Jones (Republican), were given the opportunity to record two-minute video statements in your studio, which were then posted on your website. Despite being on the ballot, both myself and Gary Walkowicz (Working Class Party) have been completely excluded by your news station, including from the list of candidates in your official voter guide.

A representative of my campaign called your station on Wednesday to request an interview for myself and a correction to the voter guide. They were told over the phone that as News Director you had made the decision that only Dingell and Jones would appear on WDIV and ClickonDetroit.com even though Walkowicz and I are on the ballot. A voicemail was left with you which has yet to be returned.

Even before Wednesday supporters of my campaign have sent information about my campaign to your news station, without any response.

The exclusion of any information about my campaign is an anti-democratic act of political censorship which disenfranchises voters by depriving them of critical information required to make a decision when they vote on Tuesday, November 6.

There is no legitimate excuse to omit me from your coverage as I have been profiled as one of four candidates in the race by WDET and the *News Herald*.

My campaign for Congress has also been noted by the *Michigan Daily*, Michigan Radio and the *Dearborn Press and Guide*.

The program I am running on as a socialist, against social inequality, war and the threat of fascism and dictatorship, has found support from working people and youth within the district and across the country. My campaign gathered more than 5,800 signatures from registered voters in the 12th district to appear on the ballot, more than any other candidate running for the House of Representatives.

Under conditions of growing hostility to capitalism and rising interest in alternatives—a recent Gallup poll found for the first time that a majority of young people favor socialism—I can only conclude that you have made a conscious decision to keep workers and young people in Michigan from knowing that there is an independent party on the ballot which is fighting for a socialist alternative. As a member of the Socialist Equality Party I am the only candidate in the midterm elections who is running on a genuine socialist program.

Your censorship is part and parcel of the role typically played by the corporate media in reinforcing the two-party political monopoly by covering only the Republicans and Democrats. This is the case in every race profiled by WDIV and ClickonDetroit.com, not just the 12th congressional district.

WDIV is the flagship news station of Graham Media Holdings, what remains of the Katharine Graham family media empire after they sold the *Washington Post* to billionaire Jeff Bezos for \$250 million. Chairman Donald Graham is reputed to have a net worth in excess of \$500 million. In other words, the

censorship of my campaign comes as little surprise since the station is owned and run on behalf of the super-rich.

This only goes to show that the entire electoral process is an anti-democratic farce, with innumerable financial and bureaucratic obstacles, along with a media blackout, placed in the way of third-party candidates. While the Democrats and Republicans can raise enormous sums of money from their corporate financiers and receive non-stop press coverage, third parties are consistently blocked from reaching a wider audience.

I demand that you reverse your blackout and offer equivalent coverage to myself and Walkowicz in order to provide voters in Michigan's 12th district with information about all of the congressional candidates that will appear on their ballot next Tuesday.

Niles Niemuth

Socialist Equality Party candidate for Congress,
Michigan's 12th district

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I encourage my supporters to write letters to Kim Voet at kimv@wdiv.com demanding WDIV reverse their decision to censor my campaign.



To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact