

Socialist Equality Party (US) 2024 presidential campaign initiates ballot access drive in Michigan

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On Thursday, the Socialist Equality Party (US) presidential campaign initiated its ballot access drive in Michigan, sending campaign teams to Wayne State University in Detroit and Stellantis' Warren Truck Assembly Plant in nearby Warren.

The SEP's presidential candidate Joseph Kishore and vice presidential candidate Jerry White led the campaigns, speaking with dozens of students and autoworkers throughout the day. Explaining the party's program in the 2024 elections, the candidates were warmly received, with many workers expressing enthusiasm upon learning that there will be a socialist alternative to the two capitalist political parties.

Both front-runners in the elections, Joe Biden for the Democrats and Donald Trump for the Republicans, are loathed by broad sections of the population in Michigan and across the United States. In the Michigan primaries held on Tuesday, 101,436 voters cast a protest vote of "Uncommitted" in direct opposition to "Genocide Joe" Biden, who garnered the support of only 7.9 percent of the voting age population. Only 9.6 percent of the voting age population cast a ballot for Trump.

As has often been the case, Michigan will be a critical "swing state" in the 2024 elections. Polls indicate that Trump currently has a slight lead over Biden, who narrowly won the state in 2020. Thus, the Democrats in particular can be expected to do everything in their power to keep third-party candidates—in particular socialists challenging them from the left—off the ballot.

As with most states across the US, the requirements to get on the ballot in Michigan are onerous and entirely anti-democratic. Officially, the state requires third-party candidates to collect 12,000 signatures of registered voters, including at least 100 from at least

seven of the 13 congressional districts in the state.

Given the fact that state officials selected by the Democrats and Republicans are responsible for counting the ballots and validating signatures, and have a history of disqualifying as many signatures as possible on technical grounds, the de facto requirement is at least 20,000 signatures. With a July 18 deadline to submit petitions, the SEP is organizing an aggressive campaign in the months ahead to ensure that this 20,000 signature threshold is met in time.

On Friday, Kishore posted reports on his Twitter/X account noting the significance of the SEP's ballot access campaign in Michigan, the center of the US auto industry. These included a video statement showing both candidates campaigning at Wayne State University and Warren Truck Assembly Plant.

In a separate post with photos from Warren Truck, Kishore wrote:

The Socialist Equality Party campaign in the 2024 presidential elections began its fight to get on the ballot in Michigan yesterday. @JerrywhiteSEP and I found an enthusiastic response from students at Wayne State University and workers at Stellantis' Warren Truck Assembly.

We spoke about the need to develop a working class movement against the #GenocideinGaza and the eruption of imperialist war. We explained the connection between the fight against war and the fight of workers against inequality and capitalism, and for #socialism, which must be waged against

both the Democrats and Republicans.

Kishore also highlighted the fact that both candidates and all SEP campaigners wore high-quality N95 masks throughout the campaigns, both to protect themselves and all those they spoke with from catching COVID-19, which remains a significant ongoing health risk to the entire global population. He wrote:

During the campaign, Jerry and I, along with our campaign team, wore N95 masks. This is because, despite the lies of the Biden administration and the entire political establishment, the #COVID19 #pandemic continues. Wastewater data show that nearly one million people continue to be infected every day in the US, and every week over 1,000 Americans are dying. At least 20 million Americans are suffering from the impact of #LongCovid and are totally ignored by the powers-that-be.

We did not encounter any opposition from workers and youth to masking, and we took the opportunity whenever possible to explain the measures that are necessary to protect public health.

On Friday, the US Centers for Disease Control (CDC) updated its isolation guidelines for COVID-19, encouraging individuals to self-diagnose and leave isolation when they are “fever-free” for at least 24 hours. This unscientific policy change, which the *World Socialist Web Site* reported on last month, totally ignores the fact that a large portion of COVID-19 transmission occurs through asymptomatic cases. This will only facilitate the further spread and evolution of the coronavirus.

In a tweet Friday, Kishore denounced the CDC policy change, writing:

Throughout our campaign, @jerrywhiteSEP and I will fight for a socialist public health program in opposition to the Democrats and

Republicans’ policies of mass infection, debilitation and death. We will fight for a vast expansion in funding for #LongCovid research, the renovation of all public spaces to ensure they have clean indoor air, the scientific education of the public so that everyone knows that #CovidIsAirborne, and for a new Operation Warp Speed to create nasal and other vaccines that provide truly sterilizing immunity to all #SARSCoV2 variants.

In the months ahead, the *World Socialist Web Site* will continue reporting on the SEP’s ballot access campaign in Michigan and other states, as part of its ongoing coverage of the 2024 US elections.



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