

Socialist Equality Party candidates on the ballot in New Jersey

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The Socialist Equality Party ticket of Joseph Kishore for president and Jerry White for vice president will be on the ballot in New Jersey as independent candidates this November, state officials have confirmed. The New Jersey Secretary of State made the announcement Friday.

Supporters of the SEP filed petitions July 29 with nearly 1,700 signatures, more than double the required 800. The Division of Elections accepted 1,638 of the 1,689 signatures filed.

SEP presidential candidate Joseph Kishore issued a statement welcoming the New Jersey ballot certification. He wrote:

The SEP campaign is explaining the connection between imperialist war abroad and the class war at home. The only way to stop the genocide in Gaza, the escalating US-NATO war against Russia in Ukraine and the turn of the ruling class to fascism and dictatorship is through the mobilization of the working class in the fight for socialism.

The SEP is the only party even treating the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic as a serious issue. We have taken every opportunity to explain to workers the continued threat of infection, the reality of Long COVID and what must be done to stop the spread of the virus and save lives.

Campaigners gathered signatures throughout the state, including the major cities of Newark, Jersey City, Paterson and Elizabeth. In the course of tens of thousands of discussions, campaigners noted

widespread hostility to both the Democrats and Republicans and a growing interest in a socialist alternative.

Kishore stated that the SEP campaign “explained the unity of the interests of all workers, in the US and internationally. More than 2 million of New Jersey’s 9 million residents are foreign-born. As elsewhere around the country, migrants have been scapegoated in an attempt to redirect social anger away from the ruling class and the failure of capitalism.”

He noted that there was particularly significant support from key sections of workers, including longshore and warehouse workers, logistics workers and healthcare workers.

Workers cannot advance one step without a complete break with the Democrats, the Republicans and the entire capitalist political system. In these elections, one of the principal parties of the ruling class, the Republicans, has acquired an increasingly overt fascistic character. The central priority of the Democrats, dripping in blood from the genocide in Gaza, is the escalation of imperialist war, which threatens all of humanity.

On July 31, supporters of the SEP in Washington state filed 1,398 signatures on petitions, well over the 1,000 required, to place Kishore and White on the ballot. The campaign won broad support among workers and youth in Seattle, Tacoma, Spokane and Vancouver (across the Columbia River from Portland, Oregon) for the SEP’s opposition to genocide and war.

The filings in New Jersey and Washington follow the

submission of more than 20,000 signatures to put the SEP candidates on the ballot in Michigan, far above the 12,000 signatures required under the state's election law, one of the more restrictive in the country.

On August 1, the Michigan Board of Elections notified the SEP that no challenge had been filed to the petitions nominating Kishore and White. The Democratic Party is challenging the petition filed by independent Cornel West but did not seek to challenge the petitions filed on behalf of Kishore and White.

The Michigan Board of Elections, however, has not yet reported on its count of signatures. The State Board of Canvassers has until September 6 to approve a final list of candidates for all offices to be chosen in the November 5 election.

Both the Democrats and Republicans have sought to block third-party and independent candidates from gaining ballot status, and the corporate media systematically excludes independent candidates from debates and most election coverage.

In addition to challenging the petition filed by Cornel West in Michigan—one of the most closely contested “battleground” states—the Democrats have excluded nearly all challengers from the ballot in New York state, where they control every branch of government. West, Green Party candidate Jill Stein and the Libertarian Party are not on the ballot, and the Democrats are challenging independent Robert F. Kennedy Jr. on a technicality.

In North Carolina, the Democratic-controlled election board has barred West from the ballot, forcing his campaign to spend heavily on a legal challenge.

In Georgia, the Democratic Party challenged West, Stein, Kennedy and Claudia de la Cruz, candidate of the Party for Socialism and Liberation. Democrats claimed that separate petitions with 7,500 signatures each were required for each presidential elector, not just for the candidates themselves, and that some electors had failed to pay a nominal \$1.50 filing fee. Administrative hearings have been set for de la Cruz on August 19, and for Stein and West on August 22.



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