

# DSA member Rae Huang announces candidacy for Los Angeles mayor

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30 November 2025

Rae Huang, a Presbyterian pastor, nonprofit executive and member of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), has announced her candidacy for the June 2, 2026, Los Angeles mayoral election, challenging incumbent Democratic Mayor Karen Bass.

Millions of workers and young people are searching for an alternative to the policies of austerity, repression and war offered from the two corporate-controlled parties in the US. There is growing opposition to Trump's fascistic drive to establish a dictatorship, the war on immigrants, the destruction of social programs and the global eruption of war and genocide. In Los Angeles, Bass's administration has become a byword for austerity, law-and-order policing and unrestrained support for real-estate developers.

Bass's 2025-26 budget has fueled opposition among workers facing overwork, stagnant wages and crumbling services. Her response to January's wildfires, after slashing fire department funding and leaving positions vacant, intensified public anger over the inadequate response to climate disasters.

Bass has positioned herself as a law-and-order Democrat, denouncing the slogan "Defund the Police" and expanding the LAPD budget, even as the department joins federal immigration raids—exposing the fraud of her "sanctuary" rhetoric. Her homelessness policy follows the same pattern: while declaring a state of emergency and launching "Inside Safe," she has channeled funds to developers, cleared encampments and warehoused the unhoused in overpriced private facilities.

Under these conditions, little-known figures such as New York's Zohran Mamdani and Seattle's Katie Wilson have gained sudden support. Huang is of the same political type, and like Mamdani and Wilson, her campaign is a political trap.

In her campaign launch, Huang states she is "running to make Los Angeles affordable and healthy," promising to "lower our rent," "deliver housing for all," "create an economy for the people, not the billionaires," transition to renewable energy, provide "fast and free transit," protect small businesses, and achieve "real public safety" through mental-health services.

How all this is to be achieved, she does not say, but her whole campaign is based on the lie that the interests of workers can be secured through the Democratic Party, and without a frontal assault on the wealth of the oligarchy, the real-estate developers, finance capital and corporate titans who dictate city policy, in Los Angeles and beyond.

On housing, Huang acknowledges the scale of the crisis with mass evictions, record rents and tens of thousands pushed onto the streets, but refuses to name the principal forces responsible: the Democrats who control the state, real estate conglomerates, banks, private-equity firms and developers who treat housing as a commodity and who dominate Los Angeles politics. Her proposals for stronger tenant protections, legal-aid expansion, "deeply affordable" units, and nonprofit-led "social housing" all accept the continued private ownership of land and housing.

Her enthusiastic support for SB 567 and SB 555 further proves this pro-capitalist orientation. SB 567, marketed as an "anti-eviction" measure, preserves the prerogatives of landlords and private developers. SB 555 mandates only a study of social housing, producing no homes and committing the state to nothing.

Huang's campaign rhetoric on immigration is even more revealing. She asserts: "as a mayor I would be enforcing the fact that we should not be allowing any federal-LAPD relationships. We should be enforcing

what it means when we say we are a sanctuary city and ensuring that all of our families are safe.”

These phrases are deliberately deceitful and indistinguishable from those uttered by every Democratic politician in California. The entire sanctuary-city framework has been exposed as a fraud by the real experience of workers throughout the state, where figures like Governor Gavin Newsom and Mayor Karen Bass have simultaneously proclaimed “sanctuary” status while collaborating with federal agencies, expanding police powers, and presiding over mass deportations. Huang’s statements serve only to sow false illusions that the Democratic Party will shield immigrants from the machinery of the federal state.

Huang’s “care-first” public-safety rhetoric carefully avoids challenging the LAPD’s fundamental function as the armed enforcer of capitalist property relations.

The DSA currently occupies key positions within the state apparatus in Los Angeles. The DSA-aligned city council members Huang points to as proof of a “new kind of leadership” have, in practice, upheld the status quo: backing developer-driven homelessness policies, supporting giveaways to big business and standing behind the union bureaucracy as it sabotaged the struggles of city and county workers in recent months.

The city has four city council members who identify with or orbit the DSA. After celebrating Mamdani’s victory in New York as a supposed triumph for the “left,” they now line up squarely behind the political establishment in Los Angeles. Nithya Raman and Eunisses Hernandez hail Bass as “the most progressive mayor we’ve ever had,” while Hugo Soto-Martínez dispenses with the pretense of independence from the political establishment altogether and endorses Bass outright.

Indeed, at the time of Bass’s rise to mayor, the DSA offered only mild criticisms and even falsely portrayed her as having once been a “socialist,” a myth used to politically legitimize her within left-leaning circles.

More broadly, the DSA functions as a faction of the Democratic Party and an increasingly critical role as a bulwark of class rule.

The experience of Zohran Mamdani in New York demonstrates the political role of these DSA-backed campaigns. After posturing as a champion of the “left,” Mamdani appointed his transition team: a roster of right-wing Democratic Party operatives, selected not from

the working class but from the political establishment and corporate-aligned nonprofits.

Even more revealing was Mamdani’s meeting with Donald Trump, ushering a “partnership” and legitimizing the fascist president at the very moment he was deepening his assault on democratic rights and confronting growing popular opposition.



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