

Democrats in crisis after collapse of fake “working class” candidacy of Graham Platner in Maine

Barry Grey
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On Friday, Graham Platner officially ended his campaign to unseat Republican Senator Susan Collins of Maine, submitting his withdrawal letter to the secretary of state. Platner is a Marine and Army veteran and former Blackwater/Constellis mercenary with multiple deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan. He was recruited by the AFL-CIO bureaucracy and promoted by the “progressive” wing of the Democratic Party, including the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), to run as a supposed populist tribune of the working class.

In this attempt to reverse the collapse of working class support for the Democrats and give the party a “progressive” veneer, promoters such as Sen. Bernie Sanders and Rep. Ro Khanna downplayed the Nazi SS Totenkopf (death’s head) tattoo Platner had emblazoned on his chest while in the Marines. They also dismissed complaints of sexual mistreatment from multiple women Platner had dated. The same forces just a few years ago, it should be noted, were promoting the #MeToo movement’s witch-hunt of alleged sexual predators based on the slogan “Believe the woman.”

Platner handily won the Democratic senatorial primary last month by appealing to the anger of voters over economic inequality, the soaring cost of living, the assault on immigrants, war and Trump’s dictatorship in the making. At the same time he rejects socialism, calls himself a small businessman and former Marine, and proclaims his loyalty to the Democratic Party.

The much vaunted Platner juggernaut began to collapse on Monday, July 6, when *Politico* and CNN published interviews with Jenny Racicot, a former girlfriend, who accused Platner of raping her in 2021.

Platner has denied the accusation and attributed it to an “establishment” conspiracy to sabotage his supposedly pro-worker campaign.

The top party leadership withdrew its support within hours of the media reports, followed shortly by Khanna and other “progressive” Democrats. Sanders waited until the following day to urge Platner to step down. On Wednesday, Platner announced he was suspending his campaign. On Friday, he submitted his official letter withdrawing his candidacy.

Notably, the letter, which he posted on X, included the parting line, “F___ ICE.” The use of an expletive typified his campaign, reflecting the views of the upper-middle class and bourgeois social layers he represents. They do everything they can to promote backwardness, which they identify with the working class.

Within hours of Platner’s formal withdrawal, the Maine Democratic Party announced it would hold a nominating convention on June 25 in Bangor to select his replacement to run for the US Senate against Collins. The long-time incumbent Collins is considered to be vulnerable and the Maine contest is seen as critical to Democratic hopes to retake the upper legislative chamber in November’s midterm elections.

By choosing Platner’s replacement by means of a snap convention rather than a new primary election, the party leadership is seeking to tightly control the process and its results. The Democrats face a July 27 deadline to name a new nominee.

The convention will consist of 601 voting delegates, 101 who are members of the Democratic State Committee and 500 who will be appointed at nominating meetings in each of the state’s 16 counties. Each candidate will be required to submit a declaration

of intent to run at the convention, including a 300-word statement outlining their vision to “continue to build on the grassroots movement to ensure no Mainer is left behind by their next United States senator.” They will also need to collect at least 500 signatures from registered Democratic Maine voters.

The voting will be conducted in rounds, with the five highest vote-getters advancing to the second round and the candidate with the fewest votes eliminated in subsequent rounds until one remains.

At least half a dozen politicians have announced their candidacy to replace Platner as the Democratic senatorial nominee, for the most part claiming his mantle as a “progressive” advocate for workers. Candidates who lost the state’s Democratic gubernatorial primary in June are considered the top contenders.

Nirav Shah, the former Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention director, finished second in the gubernatorial primary. At a campaign launch event Thursday, he was introduced by former Platner supporters and took questions from the media. He embraced Medicare for all, making billionaires “pay their fair share,” fixing “our broken immigration system” and ending foreign wars.

Shah was at the center of a public health scandal and coverup in his previous position as director of the Illinois Department of Public Health. Under his watch, 13 people died in an outbreak of Legionnaires’ disease at the state-run veterans’ home. At the time, both Illinois senators called for his resignation. In April 2020, Illinois resolved several wrongful death and negligence lawsuits through a \$6.4 million settlement with families of 11 deceased veterans and one visitor who died in the outbreak. On Thursday night, Illinois Senator Tammy Duckworth, who called for Shah to resign in 2018, publicly opposed his Senate run.

Troy Jackson, a former state senator, ran for governor this year and finished third in the Democratic primary. He was endorsed in his gubernatorial bid by the Maine DSA. Rep. Ro Khanna immediately began boosting Jackson after he announced his candidacy. When he served in the Maine state Senate, Jackson supported anti-abortion causes. He received a 100 percent voting score from Maine Right to Life early in his career.

Shenna Bellows, Maine’s secretary of state and former executive director of the Maine ACLU, finished

fourth in the gubernatorial primary. In a 2014 Senate run she lost to Collins by more than 36 percentage points.

Jordon Wood, who was defeated in a congressional district Democratic primary, called on Platner to end his campaign in October after learning about Platner’s tattoo, but later endorsed him.



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