

“Fighting Oligarchy” by electing Democrats: Bernie Sanders campaigns for Angie Nixon in Florida

Matthew Taylor, Jacob Crosse
20 October 2026

This past weekend Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont joined Angie Nixon, the Democratic nominee for the US Senate and recent convert to the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), in a series of rallies across Florida as part of the “Fighting Oligarchy” tour.

Sanders and Nixon campaigned in Tampa and Melbourne on October 17, followed by Gainesville and Tallahassee on October 18. Reported attendance was about 2,000 in Tampa, “thousands” in Melbourne and approximately 1,600 in Tallahassee. In Gainesville, roughly 750 filled the University of Florida auditorium, with organizers estimating more than 2,500 outside. These gatherings were considerably smaller than earlier “Fighting Oligarchy” stops, including rallies with Sanders and New York Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez that drew more than 12,000 in Nampa, Idaho and approximately 9,000 in Missoula, Montana in April 2025.

Nixon, a state representative, is challenging Republican incumbent Ashley Moody, whom Governor Ron DeSantis appointed in 2025 to replace Marco Rubio after he became Trump’s secretary of state. The winner of November’s election will serve the remaining two years of Rubio’s term.

Moody, a long-time ally of DeSantis, has predictably flooded the airwaves with red-baiting ads insisting that her opponent will defund the police, empty Florida’s prisons, and force transgender surgery upon children. She has refused to debate Nixon, fearing that a public accounting of her close support for the historically unpopular Trump administration will damage her candidacy.

The Florida events continued Sanders’ “Fighting Oligarchy” tour, launched in February 2025. Throughout the tour, Sanders has sought to channel anger over social inequality, war and Trump’s attacks on democratic rights

into support for the Democratic Party, a party that, no less than the Republicans, defends the capitalist system and the financial oligarchy.

Sanders has performed this function repeatedly. In 2016 and 2020, he attracted millions of supporters by promising a political revolution against the billionaire class, then directed them behind Hillary Clinton and Joe Biden. His latest campaign seeks once again to give a progressive face to a party of Wall Street and imperialist war.

Nixon only recently joined the DSA, along with the Working Families Party, during her primary run. Since her primary victory she has downplayed any association with the DSA or socialist politics. In an interview with CBS News Miami last August Nixon stated:

“I do want to be clear: I am not a socialist. I am someone who just really cares about people and believes that hardworking, everyday people should get to shape what our communities look like and what our economies look like. I believe that everyday people should be the ones that are telling us lawmakers the types of policies and the types of legislation that we should be putting forward.”

At the Tampa rally, Nixon continued to distance herself from the socialist label. She introduced herself to the crowd as a “wife, mother, small business owner” running to “fight against corruption.”

In addition to eschewing support for socialism, in her over 27-minute speech in Tampa, Nixon said nothing about the Trump administration’s persecution of Representative Ilhan Omar, who has endorsed her campaign. On October 12, Homeland Security Investigation agents raided Omar’s Washington home, seizing laptops, personal notebooks, cell phones and her passport, in an attempt to gin up evidence to facilitate Omar’s denaturalization and deportation.

This silence reflects the political line of the Democratic Party as a whole. After issuing a few statements last week, the Democrats have remained virtually silent on the fascist campaign against Omar, which threatens the democratic rights of everyone, regardless of immigration status or political allegiance.

This is not a mistake, the Democratic Party is more than capable of mounting coordinated national campaigns when its interests demand. Their deliberate silence is aimed at promoting the illusion that the November elections can proceed as an ordinary contest and that fascism can be defeated at the ballot box.

While remaining silent on the danger of dictatorship, Nixon offered the familiar catalogue of “progressive” promises: a “living wage,” her support for “Medicare for All,” the “right to organize a union” and a pledge to “make the wealthiest pay their fair share.”

Speaking in Gainesville to the assembled students at the University of Florida Nixon said, “I am tired of watching corrupt politicians like Ashley Moody get richer and richer while the rest of us are working harder and harder, only just to barely get by.”

Nixon declared herself “tired of endless wars” but named neither a war nor a country. She made no explicit reference to the illegal war against Iran or the US-backed genocide in Gaza, while in the same breath offering assurances to the military, “I believe in supporting our service members.”

The former Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Florida field director also recalled working on Sanders’ 2016 presidential campaign. Later on she introduced Sanders as her “former boss,” underscoring their longstanding political relationship.

At all four rallies speakers denounced the Immigration and Customs Enforcement raids that have seen thousands of workers and their family members in Florida illegally detained and deported. ICE’s terror campaign in Florida has generated fierce opposition, particularly within the state’s large Latino population, and has sharply eroded support for the Republican Party.

Addressing the Tallahassee rally Sanders, who like the national DSA ignored Nixon’s primary campaign and only endorsed her two days after her victory, promoted the delusion that a Democratic majority in the US Congress will reverse the oligarchic takeover of American society.

Sanders said, “Trust me on this, after Angie wins, this is going to be a spark that is going to ignite the entire country...If we can end Republican control over the

House, mobilize the American people to stand up and fight for their rights, there is nothing we can’t accomplish”

Sanders’ promise rests on the claim that electing “progressive” candidates can transform the Democratic Party into an instrument of working class struggle. But the Democrats are a capitalist party. Electing Nixon or other candidates endorsed by Sanders cannot change its class character. Promises of universal healthcare, higher wages and taxes on the wealthy serve to draw workers behind a party whose defense of capitalist ownership places it in opposition to their interests.

The record stretches across two centuries. The Democratic Party defended the slavocracy, imposed repression against socialists and militant workers under Woodrow Wilson, incarcerated Japanese Americans under Franklin Roosevelt, dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki under Harry Truman and escalated the Vietnam War under Lyndon Johnson. Its contemporary support for Israel’s genocide in Gaza and the US-NATO war against Russia continues this record of imperialist violence.

With the federal debt exceeding \$40 trillion, the ruling class is demanding that workers pay for its financial crisis while pouring resources into war. The obstacle to meeting social needs is the concentration of wealth in private hands and the subordination of society to profit and imperialism. A Democratic congressional majority would leave these foundations intact, alongside a Trump presidency determined to impose the oligarchy’s demands through authoritarian rule.

One cannot fight oligarchy by supporting a party of the oligarchy, or oppose war while remaining politically subordinate to a party of imperialism. The struggle for healthcare, decent living standards and democratic rights requires the independent mobilization of the working class against both capitalist parties. It requires a socialist program to expropriate the financial oligarchy and reorganize society to meet human needs.



To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact