

CLC Resolution: To make Bernie 2020 an NYC-DSA priority campaign in the event of a national DSA endorsement

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I. Introduction

Enacting this resolution would make Bernie 2020 a priority citywide priority campaign for NYC-DSA, as described in this document, in the event that Bernie Sanders runs for the Democratic nomination for president in 2020 and that national DSA endorses him. It does not call for an endorsement of Bernie at this time; instead, it puts in place the structure that will be necessary in the event of an endorsement.

This document outlines (1) why NYC-DSA should do work on Bernie 2020 in the event of an endorsement; (2) the political background in the city for the race; (3) what an electoral field structure would look like in such a priority campaign; (4) what a communications strategy for such a campaign would look like; and three other programs that a Bernie 2020 campaign would encompass, Labor for Bernie, YDSA for Bernie, and a series of Bernie 2020 Town Halls.

II. Why Work on Bernie 2020

A. Political Reasons for Making Bernie 2020 a Citywide Priority Campaign

When Bernie Sanders ran for president in 2016, more than 13 million working and middle-class people came together to campaign and vote for a democratic socialist. His

campaign, along with recent popular mobilizations and a national revolt against the election of Donald Trump, has helped catalyze the rebirth of the democratic socialist movement in the United States.

As Sanders considers running again in 2020, we believe that it is crucial for NYC-DSA to prepare a plan to support a new campaign *if* he decides to run and if national DSA endorses him. Our motivation for presenting this plan stems from our belief that the Sanders campaign can play a critical role in advancing the interests of working people, building DSA's capacity as a grassroots, democratic political force, and advancing the socialist project as a whole.

First, Sanders—like other DSA-endorsed candidates including Congresswomen Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Rashida Tlaib as well as Julia Salazar—is committed to a popular platform of demands that would attack the power of the capitalist class. Sanders has indicated his intentions to run on a platform that includes fighting for Medicare for All, a genuinely progressive tax system, a Green New Deal, an end to cash bail and a fight against mass incarceration, college for all, an end to US support for the war in Yemen and significant cuts to the defense budget, and a much more humane immigration policy that includes citizenship rights for undocumented immigrants. These demands are among the core demands that democratic socialists fight for every day. Moreover, Sanders's platform, if enacted, would represent a potentially devastating blow to the neoliberal political regime that has dominated the United States since Ronald Reagan, and put us on a path to building a better world.

Second, win or lose, Sanders's campaign has the potential to raise the class consciousness and political horizons of millions more working and middle-class people, and engage many of them in democratic, grassroots organizing that will continue beyond election day 2020. We are democratic socialists in part because we know that progressive change can't be won by a small handful of activists or elite politicians. To win real change, it will take the vast majority of society organizing in their workplaces and neighborhoods, fighting to stand up to bosses, landlords, cops, and politicians—in sum, producing the kind of massive social struggle that those who hold the power today can't ignore. And eventually: the kind of struggle that can remove those elites from power entirely and build a truly democratic society. None of that will be possible unless millions of people begin to first, see how their interests are in fundamental conflict with the interests of the rich and their politicians, and second, develop the skills, capacities and confidence we need to actually mobilize and win. The greatest predictor of voting for Bernie in the 2016 primaries was that someone was

voting for the first time: people who did not believe in the possibility for politics to address their problems saw the possibility of change.

Democratic socialist candidates play a key role in developing this kind of consciousness, and the national campaign provides the opportunities to expand our organizing capacities dramatically. By fighting for key redistributive demands like Medicare for All and the Green New Deal, they give people confidence that bold reforms can be popular and can be won. And by naming the enemies who stand in the way of enacting these policies—“the millionaires and billionaires”—they focus people’s attention on the real problem. The effects of campaigns like this can go far beyond one electoral campaign. One only has to look at the incredible developments in West Virginia, Arizona, and Oklahoma for example, where thousands of teachers, inspired in part by Sanders’s message in 2016, went into their own workplaces and started to organize to fight back. That’s the kind of class consciousness we need to be building. And with an early endorsement, NYC-DSA will have the opportunity to be the most organized, militant and democratic organization in the grassroots coalition that forms to support a Sanders candidacy in the city, and to connect many of Sanders new activists to the organized socialist movement.

Third, and finally, Sanders’s campaign would once again put the conflict inside the Democratic Party between its corporate leadership and its dissident, left-wing, and disproportionately working-class base, at the front and center of American politics. In DSA there are some who believe that the Democratic Party can be transformed for the better, others who believe it must be replaced by an independent party of the working class, and still others who believe that its leadership must simply be sidelined and its power neutralized. But we all agree that the ongoing conflict inside the party between those who want to continue the centrist direction of the Obama era and those who have a bolder and more progressive message that can inspire working class people is an incredibly positive development. A Sanders 2020 campaign would draw out those contrasts even further.

As democratic socialists, we see it as our duty to fight alongside all working people who want to build a better and more egalitarian world. We organize in our workplaces with our coworkers for unions and better contracts. We organize in our communities with our neighbors for an end to police brutality, rent control, and tenant rights. And we organize together at the ballot box, for candidates who support our policy demands and whose campaigns raise class consciousness and prepare the ground for a transformative political agenda to be enacted.

With all this in mind, we present the following plan to NYC-DSA to make the Bernie Sanders 2020 presidential campaign—if he runs and is endorsed by national DSA—a priority project for the chapter until the end of his campaign.

B. External Organizing: Affecting the Election

In 2016, Hillary Clinton easily won the New York state presidential preference primary, 1.1 million votes to Bernie Sanders's 820,000. In light of these numbers, it may seem like NYC-DSA—even in coalition with other chapters around the state--wouldn't make much of a difference.

However, Democratic national convention delegates are awarded proportionally; Hillary won 138 of the state's pledged delegates, but Bernie won 108. Unlike in our prior election campaigns, a presidential preference primary is one in which every vote counts.

Delegate allocation is controlled by both the national Democratic Party's rules and the New York State Democrats rules. The delegate selection plans for 2020 aren't yet available, but the 2016 process is instructive. First, based on the national rules, delegates were allocated to each state based on a formula that takes into account the Democratic vote in the last three presidential elections and the overall population of the state, with bonuses for holding the primary later in the year. (The allocation can be found in [this document](#).) Each of New York's 27 Congressional districts was then allocated delegates based on the overall population of the district and its Democratic presidential vote in the last two elections. (New York rules in 2016 are [here](#).) The remainder of the delegates are "at-large"—they're pledged based on overall statewide results. Out of the 246 pledged delegates, 84 were at-large delegates and 163 delegates were district delegates. Both at-large delegates and district delegates are apportioned proportionally.

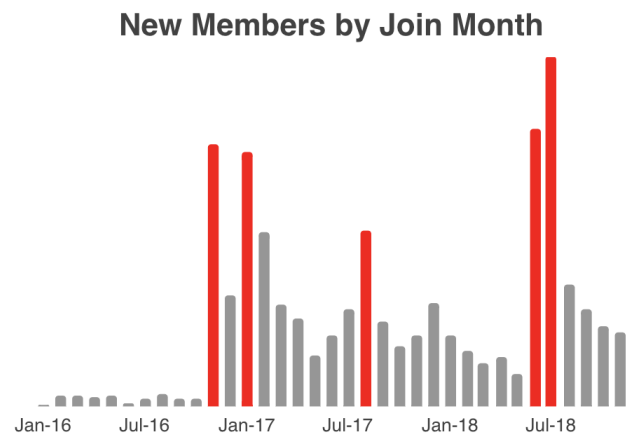
Statewide, the percentage point needed to gain an additional delegate was 1.6%, or about 30,000 votes. Thirteen of New York's Congressional districts have some portion located in New York City; the number of votes needed to get an additional delegate in Nydia Velazquez's district, for instance, was 6,000. While a single delegate is not going to win the nomination for Sanders, it's likely to be a significantly more crowded field in 2020, and DSA will not be trying to win the election on its own for Sanders. As part of a wider coalition, we can help win delegates that would vote for Sanders at the convention and provide him bargaining power if he doesn't ultimately win the nomination.

C. Internal Organizing: Growing NYC-DSA

The top four periods of NYC-DSA membership growth to date have been:

1. June/July 2018: reaction to Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez win (over 1,000 new members)
2. November 2016: election of Donald Trump
3. January 2017: Trump inauguration
4. August 2017: Khader El-Yateem & Jabari
Brisport city council campaigns

Electoral work is not the only focus of DSA, but elections are clearly focal points in the minds of the DSA-curious. Movement building is more than participation in electoral campaigns, but these campaigns provide concrete and accessible work that can be used to attract new members to DSA, train new leaders from our existing membership, spread the reach of our issue campaigns, and strike fear into the hearts of reactionary politicians.



Creating New Leaders

Electoral work is also extremely useful for developing new leaders and electoral talent. Through our electoral campaigns, NYC DSA has recruited and developed dozens of new leaders, who lead canvasses, run committees, hold meetings, participate in planning and strategy meetings and go on to be leaders in the organization in both electoral and non-electoral campaigns. It can be argued that traditionally one of the hardest tasks when starting a new non-DSA electoral campaign can be to identify talent, in particular field talent. For the last two years, NYC DSA has been training people brand new to electoral politics on field, data, compliance, fundraising, communications and research skills. Building a bench of skilled members and leaders will only help strengthen all our campaigns.

Joint Canvassing

The Julia Salazar campaign demonstrated the effectiveness of this tactic, with the Housing, Socialist Feminist, Immigration Justice, Ecosocialists and other working groups and branches creating specialized scripts and hosting their own canvasses to highlight a particular issue. With the prospect of a citywide campaign, these working group canvasses can be targeted at the districts of particular lawmakers who are holding up legislation important to their cause. Once we have lists of Bernie supporters, we can use those positive IDs to increase the effectiveness of primary challenges against these incumbents. This benefits not only the electoral campaigns, but the branches and working groups who are leveraging the campaign to talk to neighbors about specific issues which they are focused on. As mentioned previously, this also helps develop leadership and institutional knowledge.

III. Master Timeline

Between now and the time Bernie announces his candidacy:

Labor Branch will:

- Appoint the core of the Labor for Bernie committee.
- Map out endorsement processes for unions.
- Review 2016 NYC Labor for Bernie activity.
- Develop language for one-member one-vote resolutions.
- Speak to key already-existing DSA member union activists about joining the organizing committee of such a project.

YDSA will:

- Convene the citywide OC and begin meeting with chapters to set campus-specific timelines and strategies.
- Each chapter OC will identify topics for public events and reach out to speakers and reserve space on campus accordingly.
- Identify lead Bernie organizers.
- Begin identifying interested YDSA members and training those members as field leads.

Electoral Working Group Communications Committee will:

- Designate and train local media outreach point people in every geographically based branch.
- Build and train a Pitch Team

- Talk messaging, field requests (foreground message of democracy/deliberation for long endorsement process)
- Work with National to create modular design content that can be shared with other chapters (videos, talking points, visuals, etc.)

Between Bernie's announcement ~March 2019 and the New York City Presidential Primary in April 2020

Electoral Working Group will:

- Register Voters, Canvass for issue campaigns, and notify voters about the party affiliation deadline (Bernie's announcement – October 2019)
- Petition through street canvasses and door-to-door canvasses (December 2019 through February 2020)
- Persuasion Canvas and GOTV (February 2020 onward)

Electoral Working Group Communications Committee will:

- Host Bernie-specific messaging/talking points trainings so that every DSA group can weave this campaign into their work
- Continue training canvassers as spokespeople
- Coordinate with other groups to put on events and actions while working to ensure the primacy of DSA talking points and branding

YDSA will:

- Organize a citywide YDSA field lead training sometime soon after Bernie announces to try to pick up on the excitement and begin to gather and train young organizers.
- Begin setting up events. Set dates for at least 4 and ideally 8-9 large, outward facing public events at NYC YDSA chapters between now and the primary in March 2020. (February through May)
- Begin building and carrying out field operation. YDSA Citywide OC will continually meet with chapters and hold monthly YDSA for Bernie calls where local student organizers can ask for support or share resources. (February through May)
- By May 2019, NYC-YDSA should aim to have a small but growing database of student contacts in NYC who have either canvassed with us and/or attended a public event.
- Continue on- and off-campus field operation. Each chapter should be building student leaders and delegating responsibilities as needed, helping to build a broad "Students for Bernie" coalition on each campus. (Fall 2019 Semester)
- By the end of 2019, the YDSA Citywide OC should plan two more large, outward-facing, citywide YDSA public events for 2020.

- Have at least one large public event before primary, perhaps an AOC rally on one of our campuses. (Spring 2020)
- In the last month until primary day in April, NYC-YDSA will use the database of student contacts that will have been amassed to drive turnout for Sanders.

Labor Branch will:

- Put forward one-member one-vote resolutions in key bodies, and circulate petitions to the same effect among union members in NYC.
- Establish Facebook groups for key unions and do online organizing to identify a core base of interest and support for Labor for Bernie 2020 in NYC.

Following the Presidential Primary in April 2020

- Electoral Working Group will turn its organizing towards down-ballot elections, likely in June 2020.
- Electoral Working Group Communications Committee will tout our success, tell the story of how this movement is growing, how energized we are, etc.

IV. Field Plan

A. Introduction

NYC-DSA's electoral strength is in its efficient and large field programs. We are able to turn out our members at a high rate to do field work, and have prioritized the kind of leadership development that means the number of people who can run canvasses is always growing. The phrase, "we send an army," has become a cliché for a reason. The challenges presented by a Bernie 2020 field program would help us develop our capacity to run a campaign citywide, which in turn will allow us to run multiple serious electoral campaigns at once, as the 2020 and 2021 non-presidential primaries approach.

NYC-DSA has a citywide infrastructure through our branches, existing electoral work and field leadership a volunteering infrastructure that will not only help elect Bernie Sanders but will build a strong, well-equipped base on the left to push meaningful policies and help elect other down ballot candidates.

Furthermore, we would use the Bernie campaign to further develop our nationwide structure, giving electorally minded DSA members around the country a common purpose.

B. Current NYC-DSA Field Structure

Currently, NYC-DSA's electoral work is structured through the Electoral Working Group. Every NYC branch has its own electoral working group, except for the Brooklyn branches which have one for all of Brooklyn. The work of the electoral wg's is divided between Field, Research, Fundraising & Compliance, Comms and Data. Field tends to be the largest block of work within electoral.

Currently, each electoral branch has its own organizing committee and its own meeting schedule and member lists. There is a bi-weekly cross-branch electoral call for all the electoral branches.

NYC-DSA Electoral has a large roster of experienced field leaders, members who know how to organize and run canvasses, train new volunteers, execute petitioning canvasses, GOTV canvasses, issues canvasses, etc..

C. Compliance Issues

Compliance Background

NYC-DSA is part of national DSA; national DSA is a corporation. Corporations aren't allowed to donate to candidates for federal office. Instead, separate legal entities (most commonly called PACs, or Political Action Committees, but technically Separate Segregate Funds when attached to a corporation like DSA) must be used. This is similar to the rules for New York City candidates (our city council candidates); NYC-DSA formed a state/local PAC to support those candidates.

To support Bernie in his candidacy for federal office, NYC-DSA can't directly use its corporate resources to make contributions to the campaign (the NYC-DSA bank account or in-kind donations by members to NYC-DSA). Instead, all material support has to come through a separate legal entity.

Under federal law, all DSA PACs/SSFs, whether created by national or by locals and whether the local is separately incorporated or not are likely to be deemed "affiliated committees," and subject to one contribution limit: \$5000 per candidate,

per election. (You only reach the \$5K limit (otherwise it's \$2700) by fulfilling certain conditions the national SSF would reach but a local one might not, but it's likely (need to confirm) that even a local SSF would be governed by national's limit.)

We could, however, do unlimited "independent expenditures," the kind of spending at issue in *Citizens United*. Independent expenditures cannot be coordinated with the candidate/campaign. While a corporation can do both a coordinated campaign donation and an independent expenditure, they have to be rigorously firewalled from one another and those people involved in the IE cannot discuss election efforts with the coordinated side. We could however probably start with an independent expenditure and then move to a coordinated campaign (without using any of the resources from the IE).

Compliance Options

Use national's SSF. So, when a PAC is formed by a corporation, it's technically called a Separate Segregated Fund (although everyone just calls it a PAC). National has an SSF, which currently has about \$500 in it. Locals are allowed to use the SSF to do federal work for their endorsed candidates, whether or not that candidate is endorsed nationally. Functionally, this means that in-kind donations made at the local level--an individual paying for a space to launch a canvass, for instance--are reported as in-kind donations to the SSF and then from the SSF to the candidate. Because there is so little money in the PAC, however, it cannot serve at the moment as an effective source of funding for any Bernie work. While there are national efforts to change that underway, it remains to be seen whether they will bear fruit in time for New York to benefit, given our ambitious plans and early voter affiliation deadline.

- Benefits: Administered by national staff; already exists; easier coordination re: \$5K limit
- Drawbacks: Underfunded; lack of local control; so far no effective means to support locals quickly & efficiently when money needed; low limit

Create a separate NYC-based SSF. We could create our own PAC/SSF here in New York. Because of our common corporate identity with national, this would be an affiliated PAC. We would then be able to control raising and dispersing money locally and would be able to support other 2020 federal candidates for other offices more effectively. It would be more of an administrative lift, but we would never be in a position where we were unable to do something because of delays from national in approving or acting on requests. However, regardless of forming our

own SSF, we will still be limited to the same 5K collective limit on our Bernie spending.

- Benefits-->More responsive, greater control over money
- Drawbacks-->More work, still has same \$5K limit

Run an IE. Anecdotally, an independently run field program is significantly less effective than a coordinated field program, but given the low national limit of \$5K, it is worth considering as an option. This would allow us to (1) use any DSA resources we wanted; (2) use an infinite amount of money; and (3) dispense with a lot of the reporting requirements and any coordination with national. The main drawback would be not communicating with the campaign about the work we were doing and not being able to share resources, and it would also leave us unable to coordinate with or assist any chapter not also doing an IE.

- Benefits: Infinite budget, less compliance work.
- Drawbacks: Not being able to coordinate with anyone ever.

Recommended Course of Action

Unfortunately, many of the moving pieces (How soon will the campaign arrive in New York? Will campaign staff be interested in dealing with DSA as an important partner, either nationally or locally, and helping out on these issues? How soon will we be able to get lit from them? How will national deal with this problem? What is national's actual legal counsel's opinion of how to run an IE and how to firewall from any coordinated efforts? Will there be other IEs that can provide us lit?) will not be in place before the CLC meeting or even after Bernie announces a run, but instead not until farther along in the process. The formal recommendation of the compliance committee of the Electoral Working Group right now is to formally approve all three options (using national's SSF, forming a New York based SSF, running an IE) and give discretion to the electoral working group to choose among these options as events develop.

D. Proposed Internal NYC-DSA Field Structure

The electoral working group will designate regional leads and create a reporting structure on a weekly or more frequent basis to coordinate work.¹

¹The electoral working group will continue to ask its members to practice the conflict of interest policy that anyone being paid by a campaign may offer views on any particular decision, but should not vote on any decisions that involve the allocation of resources to a campaign.

The EWG will focus first on developing and putting into place a leadership structure that covers our priority areas so that anyone in the city who wants to can easily volunteer for Bernie.

Much like the Salazar campaign, the EWG will build a structure that is inclusive to people not in DSA but is essentially built and led by DSA members. Past experience of members of the electoral working group who were grassroots organizers for Bernie suggests that if the campaign is run on similar lines in 2020, formal cooperation is not likely until much closer to the election if at all.

We will work with other DSA chapters around the state to coordinate our field strategy and to collaborate statewide.

E. Ground Strategy

Our strategy should be informed by work the research and data teams will do, following an approach to targeting and analysis similar to past campaigns, with the expectation that we may have to collaborate and negotiate our approach with the campaign² and coalition partners as well as integrate any down-ballot candidates or priority campaigns endorsed by NYC-DSA.

We will identify “swing” and “base” turf areas (based on '16 Bernie performance), and have different strategies for each of them—canvassing for persuasion and turnout, respectively. We will rank priority neighborhoods and EDs within these two turf categories. The universe of target voters will include all Democrats that are highly likely to vote, less likely voters that are likely Bernie supporters (e.g. young/new voters), and voters that were identified as supporters of past DSA candidates and issue campaigns. We can work together with chapters around the state to help them do this in their areas as well.

We also have the opportunity, because of the longer campaign timeline, to target unlikely voters, people who have often been neglected by campaigns targeting based on likely voters in previous election cycles, including new registrants. We recommend integrating this work into existing issue-based campaigns.

² Depending on IE vs coordinated relationship with campaign

We will have a flexible on-boarding structure that allows us to coordinate work with both volunteers who are brand new to politics, as well as coalition partners who may have more autonomy and be able to run their own canvasses.

We will work closely with YDSA to register new voters, activate those new to the political process, and help direct new energy into tangible field actions.

F. Coalition Building

Coalition Leadership

NYC-DSA research teams will powermap potential coalition partners in coordination with the political landscape team, to allow for targeted outreach in each part of the city.

In our experience coalition partners are often happy to let us coordinate field work. Typically field is either not their area of expertise or not a priority component of their political strategy. We use the field work to develop and strengthen our relationship with existing coalition partners and to establish relationships with new ones.

As the Bernie campaign begins to come into focus, we will assess the feasibility of working together with other coalition partners in order to win greater concessions from the campaign.

Coalition Rank & File

As part of the DSA field program for the Julia Salazar campaign, we hosted weekly BBQs at the campaign's field office. We recommend a similar approach for Bernie 2020, hosting a regular Saturday or Sunday night event that all canvassers are encouraged to attend, with the location rotating to a different region each week. This will foster solidarity between the regions, will attract members of coalition groups to DSA, and furthermore these events serve as a great opportunity to sign attendees up for future shifts or recruit dedicated canvassers for DSA leadership positions.

G. Tools

In early 2019 we will assess the feasibility of using ROSA, Votivate, Reach, our own (or the WFP's) instance of VAN (the Democratic Party's voter contact program), or other VAN alternatives for voter contact. Even if we do coordinate with the campaign, we

want to start canvassing as early as the spring of 2019, and it's very likely that the campaign will not yet have purchased NYS VAN.

H. Down-ballot Races in 2020

The opportunities presented by a Sanders 2020 campaign are not limited to the presidential race itself. A citywide field campaign in the 2020 presidential primary election could also help NYC-DSA expand our capacity to participate in local elections. While there might be concerns that a Sanders campaign could overwhelm or distract from such work, there are many more reasons to think that, with basic preparation, it could enhance these campaigns and expand the base on which we would be building.

The Sanders '16 campaign remains a great source of data for all of NYC-DSA's electoral work. How a district voted in that primary is a helpful predictor of its receptiveness to a socialist message. But as time goes on, that data will become less reliable. More importantly, the larger canvass operations that DSA is capable of running will allow us to obtain even more detailed data on where voters are inclined to support a DSA-backed candidate. Data obtained (from persuasion canvasses, phone banking, tabling, etc.) between the spring and fall of 2019 can be used to profile what city, state, or federal representatives will be vulnerable to a socialist challenger in 2020/21.

Down-Ballot Recruitment

The Sanders '16 campaign proved to be an opportunity to identify future DSA candidates, including Sanders supporters (Debbie Medina), delegates (Jabari Brisport), organizers (Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez), and elected officials who broke with Democratic ranks to endorse him (Jumaane Williams). By more proactively identifying potential democratic socialist candidates from the larger Sanders coalition, we can start to develop candidates for 2020/21 races in the summer and fall of 2019, and provide a test to politicians who will seek our endorsement in coming years.

Beyond Bernie: Building NYC-DSA

Perhaps the biggest opportunity presented by a Sanders campaign is the opportunity to grow our capacity for future campaigns. Thus far, the electoral campaigns endorsed by NYC-DSA have only minimally overlapped. In the only instance where we had multiple candidates on the ballot on the same election day (Nixon/Williams/Salazar), we made the strategic decision to concentrate resources on Senate District 18. As we grow in electoral power, though, we will need to be able to run multiple campaigns

simultaneously, in different districts. Pairing the Sanders campaign with down-ballot races can be a testing ground, especially ahead of the 2020 state and federal elections and the 2021 City Council elections.

A Sanders 2020 campaign would be a true citywide campaign, with simultaneous operations in every part of the city. This will allow us to harness and test the full field capacity of NYC-DSA. While most of the DSA volunteers on the Salazar campaign came from the North and Central Brooklyn branches, a citywide campaign would allow all canvassers to work closer to home. Each branch ought to be able to develop their own local field capacity, with scripts tied to local campaigns, with support from the central EWG field program so that work does not need to be duplicated. Each branch would have the opportunity to identify a Congressional, Senate, or Assembly district to endorse in along with the Bernie campaign, and the chance to build a field operation locally that could support it.

V. Communications Plan

A. Introduction

Bernie Sanders' 2016 campaign was galvanizing and transformative. Inspired by Sanders' democratic socialism, millions of Americans ratcheted up their political involvement. A tremendously energetic cohort of voters, organizers, candidates, and officials have emerged from Sanders's 2016 campaign to reinvigorate the American left. Many of these people have found a political home in DSA. If Bernie runs again, DSA must position itself to absorb as many Bernie supporters as possible, working to keep them active and engaged as members of a larger socialist movement by branding ourselves as *the* place to do this work. Below is our plan to support a hypothetical Sanders campaign while harnessing its energy to further empower DSA.

B. Strategy

Our chief goal is to position DSA as *the* group through which people support the Sanders campaign and—when that's over—the organization that retains their energy and support. We want to be understood as the most ardent, efficacious, and far-sighted group of Bernie supporters in the field. When a would-be volunteer thinks about taking action, we want them to look to DSA for their marching orders. We plan on positioning

ourselves to absorb as many volunteers as possible and, ultimately, to engage them in the larger socialist movement.

We will do this by:

Capturing the attention of local media

The Electoral Working Group (through its Communications Committee) will designate point people for local media outreach in each of NYC-DSA's geographically based branches, as well as within major issue-based committees such as Housing and Healthcare. We believe that a Bernie 2020 campaign presents a unique opportunity for us to build relationships with local reporters. Smaller outlets will be looking for local angles on the presidential election, and we should be ready to provide them with plenty of material. We will invite press to canvasses, town halls, voter registration drives, and other events, especially those that explicitly connect Bernie's campaign to other local issues and campaigns.

Not all small outlets will be able to send reporters, photographers, etc. to events they might otherwise be inclined to cover. For this reason, the Communications Committee also plans on developing a "pitch team" (within the committee and/or outside of it) that can pitch content, sending off complete/polished/packaged pieces for direct publication.

These structures and relationships will be best forged in the context of this campaign but will serve us well throughout our future campaigns, projects, and fights.

Building a compelling brand/ID system

One of NYC-DSA's greatest strengths is the array of talented graphic designers, copy writers, videographers, and other creative professionals that it counts as active members. These artists will be critical in positioning DSA as the keystone group in the pro-Sanders coalition. DSA branding/design work—eye-catching and unmistakable—should be visible everywhere. Our own canvasses, of course, should be branded to the gills, with everyone wearing DSA-for-Bernie, buttons, stickers, T-shirts, etc. and making our DSA affiliation unmissable. No photo of a DSA event should plausibly read as anything else.

Since our talent pool is deep, we should be able to support smaller chapters, producing modular or universal DSA-for-Bernie materials that can easily be used or modified by

any DSA chapter. As soon as a national endorsement comes down, we can begin distributing these materials to other chapters, particularly to chapters in early primary states, such as Iowa and New Hampshire. This will empower these smaller chapters to broaden their reach and increase their notoriety, help increase communication and goodwill between far-flung chapters, and make DSA an unmissable element in Bernie's movement from the minute his campaigning kicks off.

We are already talking about codifying some of our chapter's hard-won wisdom and expertise in the form of training videos and other content and materials that we could also share with branches making their first forays into electoral work. These videos, style guides, and other tools can be disseminated as soon as they are ready, as they are not Bernie-specific, but merely tools to increase our skills across the chapter(s) that would likely come in handy should he run and should he be endorsed.

Encouraging prominent DSA members to support Bernie within the context of the organization

The Sanders campaign will likely be courting DSA-endorsed candidates and elected officials, looking to them as endorsers, surrogates, etc. To foreground DSA, as well as to ground Bernie's movement more clearly in socialist language, values, and institutions, we should be sure to encourage our high-profile DSA members to campaign for Bernie with DSA. We will put together events at which these figures can rally voters and volunteers while garnering media attention in a specifically socialism-forward, DSA-branded context.

Being a one-stop shop for plug-in opportunities

Even when the official campaign is up and running, we should plug all campaign events on our own socialists.nyc. calendar. Beyond that, we will create parallel Facebook events for all official campaign events. This will help us to ensure that we remain a hub for Bernie volunteering/organizing, even after the campaign comes to town, and that DSAers continue to be a visible presence at all Bernie events.

C. Proposed New Roles/Structures

The Electoral Working Group (through its Communications Committee) will designate point-people for local media outreach in each of NYC-DSA's geographically-based branches. We will also continue to work to cultivate skilled spokespeople in each issue-based working group who can help spot media opportunities and represent DSA's work in their issue area.

The Communications Committee also plans on developing a “pitch team” (within the committee and/or outside of it) that can pitch content, sending off complete/polished/packaged pieces (digital and print) for direct publication.

D. Timeline

Our committee anticipates dividing the upcoming year into the following periods, accomplishing within them the tasks outlined below.

Period One: Now — Bernie announces:

- Continue to raise member confidence and competence with regular media trainings for branches and working groups
- Designate and train local media outreach point people in every geographically-based branch
- Build and train the Pitch Team
- Continue to deepen our knowledge of and ties to the local media landscape, cultivating local reporters and updating our press lists

Period Two: Bernie’s announcement— DSA’s endorsement (National):

- Talk messaging, field requests (foreground message of democracy/deliberation)
- Be ready to explain the difference between national and chapter endorsements
- Be ready to positively present our long endorsement process*, to keep us relevant and appealing as we deliberate
- Work with National to create modular design content that can be shared with other chapters (videos, talking points, visuals, etc.)

Period Three: DSA endorses (NYC-DSA) — NYC primary:

- Be ready to celebrate/promote endorsement
- Be ready to connect our Bernie-oriented activities to our other campaigns and issues — i.e. when we are racing to register voters as Dems before the party change deadline, we should build a call for electoral reform/an election reform-oriented ask into our rap (“Why do we need people to register as Dems? Why now?”)
- Host Bernie-specific messaging/talking points trainings so that every DSA group can weave this campaign into their work
- Be training canvassers as spokespeople
- Coordinate with other groups to put on events and actions while working to ensure the primacy of DSA talking points and branding

Period Four: NYC Primary and after

- Tout our success, tell the story of how this movement is growing, how energized we are, etc.
- In advance of our endorsement process, we will have prepared talking points and pitches that emphasize how uniquely democratic and participatory DSA is. We can also dramatize the gravity of the decision we are mulling; will DSA commit its considerable might to supporting the Sanders campaign? Will we act as Bernie's army? These frames — that DSA is scrupulously democratic and hugely efficacious will maintain our attractiveness as an organization, drawing recruits to us even before we enter the fray.

VI. NYC-DSA Labor For Bernie

A. Overview

If DSA endorses Bernie Sanders, it will present labor organizers in DSA with key short-, medium-, and long-term projects to accomplish two major goals: (1) build organized labor support for Bernie 2020; and (2) create a pipeline from the activist layer of union membership to the Bernie 2020 campaign to NYC-DSA. In order to pursue these goals, we'll need to build an effective NYC-DSA labor/electoral operation that can maintain organizational independence from both the Bernie campaign itself and groups like Labor for Our Revolution while closely allying with those groups.

The crux of this plan is a dual organizing strategy, targeting both the unions as institutions that make high-profile political and strategic interventions in elections and the rank-and-file membership base of the unions. In an ideal case, we would identify groups of rank-and-file activists that can push a program of support for Bernie 2020 within their unions, organizing the membership to successfully push the leadership to endorse. This would have the dual effect of building material support for Bernie, while also cohering an activist base of rank-and-file members who would work closely with NYC-DSA to develop organized labor-oriented political education and a Labor for Bernie field operation.

In reality, if we see any success, it will be quite uneven, with occasional COPE (committees on political education) or executive board endorsements, such as that of TWU Local 100 in 2016, while on the other hand we will likely see groupings of rank-and-file members who are unable to capture the institutional power of the union,

but may be able to organize members and polarize the membership against more conservative union leadership. We saw the latter effect in miniature during the Cynthia Nixon campaign, but without a coherent Labor for Cynthia operation or a campaign that could activate the rank and file who were put off by the leadership's resistance to a class struggle labor platform.

B. Structure of NYC-DSA Labor for Bernie 2020

NYC-DSA's Labor Branch should appoint a committee to take on this project, and recruit activists from the Labor Branch, the Electoral Working Groups with labor connections and experience. The subcommittee would work closely with Labor for Our Revolution and grassroots formations of union members who support Sanders. Ideally, the committee would be comprised of rank-and-file activists from across NYC's organized labor movement, and make an effort to recruit from the following categories:

1. Local or New York state unions who endorsed Sanders in 2016, like Transit Workers Union Local 100, New York State Nurses Association, Communications Workers of America Local 1180;
2. The largest political players in NYC, including the United Federation of Teachers, District Council 37, the Professional Staff Congress;
3. NYC locals of national unions that supported Bernie in 2016, such as Amalgamated Transit Union, American Postal Workers Union, Communication Workers of America, National Nurses United; and other unions with active layers of reform activists.

C. Labor Timeline

Before Sanders announces his candidacy, NYC-DSA should

- Appoint the core of the Labor Branch Labor for Bernie committee.
- Map out endorsement processes and review 2016 NYC Labor for Bernie activity
- Develop language for one-member one-vote resolutions
- Speak to key already-existing DSA member union activists about joining the organizing committee of such a project

Soon after Bernie announces his candidacy

- Put forward one-member one-vote resolutions in key bodies, and circulate petitions to the same effect among union members in NYC.

-- Establish Facebook groups for key unions and do online organizing to identify a core base of interest and support for Labor for Bernie 2020 in NYC.

VII. NYC-YDSA For Bernie

A. Goals

- To supplement NYC-DSA's role in Bernie 2020 field operations with a plan for NYC-YDSA
- To cohere YDSA's existing demands, specifically College for All, with Bernie's political platform in order to build a strong, independent student campaign for Bernie 2020
- To transform NYC YDSA members from passive members into canvassers and external organizers
- To push NYC students to become active YDSA members in an existing NYC chapter on campus or to start a chapter of their own
- To advance NYC-DSA and YDSA organizational priorities

B. Existing Structure

- NYC-YDSA has three existing chapters in its jurisdiction: City College of New York (CCNY), New York University (NYU), and Hunter College.
- The NYC-YDSA Organizing Committee is currently headed by Co-Chairs Nina Svirsky and Alex Pellitteri. They are joined by representatives of each YDSA chapter mentioned above. To avoid confusion, the term YDSA Citywide OC is used to refer to the group just described, which should be distinguished from the organizing committee of any one campus's chapter.

C. Plan

Chapters of NYC-YDSA will organize regular Bernie canvassing at our three existing YDSA chapters, both on campus in dorms (where relevant) and off campus in conjunction with NYC-DSA. Chapters will also take the lead on creating campus-based "[Insert Campus Name] for Bernie 2020" social media pages that will recruit non-YDSA students online, direct them to our field operation, and/or mobilize them to attend our public

events. With regards to off-campus canvassing, a joint NYC-DSA/YDSA operation can be carried out by pairing branches and campuses in the following manner:

1. CCNY YDSA with Bronx/Upper Manhattan DSA
2. Hunter or NYU YDSA with Lower Manhattan DSA
3. NYU YDSA with North Brooklyn DSA

Through one-on-one student conversations, our on-campus canvassing will politicize NYC students about Bernie's political program and provide important information on registration deadlines, forms, and more. It will also serve as a source of recruitment both into our YDSA chapters and into the off-campus Bernie/DSA landscape. We will be collecting contact information from any student who shows interest in Bernie and/or YDSA, and our follow-up strategy will be threefold: (a) inviting potential student recruits to YDSA-hosted follow-up events on campus, (b) inviting them to a YDSA general meeting on campus, (c) inviting them to NYC-DSA-hosted Bernie events off campus. Ideally, as we continually canvass and recruit, a broad "Students for Bernie" coalition across multiple student groups will coalesce on each campus and ultimately help build NYC YDSA's capacity to sustain this field operation.

D. Necessary Roles

1. At least one lead organizer dedicated to Bernie work at each of our three existing chapters: NYU, CCNY, Hunter. This lead organizer need not be elected to the organizing committee of their chapter.
2. The organizing committee of each NYC YDSA chapter should be enlisted to help with organizing the large follow-up events for canvassing recruits.
3. YDSA Citywide OC will be tasked with organizing across campuses and perhaps at campuses like Columbia University where we have a presence but not a chapter. They will also engage in citywide coordination with official contacts from the Students for Bernie campaign if necessary.
4. YDSA Citywide Co-Chairs will monitor the NYC Students for Bernie 2020 Facebook page.
5. Relevant DSA chapters (B/UM, LoMan, North Brooklyn) should coordinate with nearby YDSA chapters where appropriate.

E. YDSA Timeline

February-March 2019 (or until Bernie announces)

YDSA Citywide OC meets with chapters and sets a campus-specific timeline and strategy. Identify and/or elect lead Bernie organizer for each chapter. Chapter OCs will identify topics for public events and reach out to speakers and reserve space on campus accordingly.

Each YDSA chapter's lead Bernie organizer will identify members in their chapter who are interested in organizing around Bernie and begin training field leads. Lead organizers will also research and be in accordance with, where relevant, each school's policy on in-dorm canvassing.

Lead YDSA Bernie organizers could potentially coordinate a citywide YDSA field lead training sometime after Bernie announces to try to pick up on the excitement there will inevitably be.

April 2019

Begin setting up events. Set dates for at least 4 and ideally 8-9 large, outward facing public events at NYC YDSA chapters between now and the primary in March 2020.

Begin building and carrying out field operation. YDSA Citywide OC will continually meet with chapters and hold monthly YDSA for Bernie calls where local student organizers can ask for support or share resources.

Each chapter will make it a priority to follow up via phone banking with students they've canvassed in order to encourage them to attend our public YDSA-hosted and DSA-hosted events. Ideally, these will be scheduled in advance so that they can invite student contacts to them *at the door*.

By May 2019, we should aim to have a database of hundreds of student contacts in NYC who have either canvassed with us and/or attended a public event.

May 2019-March 2020

By the end of 2019: Plan two more large, outward-facing, citywide YDSA public events for 2020.

2020: At least one large public event before primary (AOC rally on one of our campuses?)

March 2020-April 2020 (or primary day)

Use database of student contacts we have amassed to drive turnout for Sanders. Plan big recruiting/new member event for week after primary to maximize returns from upswell in enthusiasm.

VIII. Bernie Issue Town Halls

A. Goals

The goal of a Bernie Issue Town Halls is to develop a strong, outward-facing political education program as a component of NYC-DSA's Bernie campaign. This program would be oriented towards regular voters not involved in DSA but who are interested in learning more about what we and Bernie are fighting for. The plan would be to use these town halls to:

1. Popularize Bernie's platform of demands, and empower regular people to speak effectively about the key issues in the campaign.
2. Connect the individual demands Bernie is fighting for to our overall vision of democratic socialism.
3. Convince curious voters that by joining NYC-DSA's campaign for Bernie Sanders they can play a meaningful role in fighting for these demands.
4. Lay the groundwork for new volunteers to become democratic socialists and join DSA.

One of the key elements of these issue town halls would be to try to reach a much larger and more diverse audience than DSA currently reaches, and in so doing to broaden our social base and our membership.

B. Plan

Laying the Groundwork

We would identify the key issues from Bernie's initial platform that we want to prioritize as the main reasons we're fighting for his campaign. These should be issue areas that a) address the material needs of working-class people in New York City, b) are popular

and connected to our socialist vision, and c) address a wide array of political concerns that people might have. Some possibilities would include: Medicare for All, ending mass incarceration, free college for all, the “Green New Deal”, and ending US military interventions and cutting the defense budget. We would work with the working groups to identify issues and speakers.

Having identified a couple of key issues, we would form a subcommittee dedicated to making these town halls happen. The first task of the subcommittee would be to recruit talented public speakers from NYC-DSA who we can work with to develop relatively short 10-20 minute speeches on the issue area they will specialize in. We will likely want to test pilot one issue and try a few town halls out this spring before dedicating too much in the way of resources to this project.

Setting Up Town Halls

Branch-level electoral working groups or branch OCs will partner with the town halls committee to host forums in different neighborhoods in the city. These events should be held in a public and accessible space. They should also be well advertised starting 2-3 weeks in advance, with posters put up in the neighborhood, possibly flyer at subways, phone banking our members in the area (to ensure a base-level turnout), and including invitations while canvassing in the neighborhood.

The Town Hall

An initial chair of the meeting would welcome people to the event and explain what DSA is and what we’re doing for the Bernie campaign. Then the main speaker would give their 10-20 minute speech on the issue. From there we could have microphones set up for members of the audience to contribute short 2-3 minute comments about their own experiences with health insurance, college debt, etc. The main speaker would wrap up by summarizing people’s comments and making a pitch for getting involved in the campaign. Field sign-ups and a pitch to get involved in other DSA campaigns would be collected throughout the event.

Co-signed by (Sign on in support [HERE](#)):

Daniel Cheng, Lower Manhattan

Diane Isser, Central Brooklyn

Justin Charles, North Brooklyn & Labor

Carolyn Weaver, Central Brooklyn
Michael Cavadias, Lower Manhattan
Oren Schweitzer, Lower Manhattan & NYU
Patrick T. Shepherd, Labor & North Brooklyn
Aaron Taube, Queens
Joe Catron, Queens & Anti-War
Michael Grochowski, North Brooklyn
Alex Leitch, Queer Caucus & Central Brooklyn
Tyler Curtis, Labor & Queens
Casey Lange, Queens & Labor
Joe DeManuelle-Hall, South Brooklyn & Labor
Noah Weston, South Brooklyn
Molly Crabapple, Lower Manhattan
Laura Gabby, Labor & B/UM
Daniel Millstone, South Brooklyn
Milagros Garcia, NYC DSA
Dan Zimberg, Bronx/Upper Manhattan
Susan Kang, Queens
Danya Lagos, Central Brooklyn
Sasha Weinstein, Queens
Maia Rosenberg, North Brooklyn
Matthew Nathaniel Bond, Lower Manhattan
Christie Offenbacher, Central Brooklyn
Michael Carter, Central Brooklyn
Kathryn Dale, Queens
Daniel Lynch, Queens
Wesley Higgins, North Brooklyn
Ben Packer, North Brooklyn
Osman Chaudhary, North Brooklyn
Ben Beckett, Queens & Labor
Leslie Roeder, Lower Manhattan
Javier B. Garcia-Torres, North Brooklyn
Michael Korn, South Brooklyn
Jordan Sangrillo, Brooklyn
Leanna Ballester, Central Brooklyn
Zohran Kwame Mamdani, Queens
Jake Barszcz, South Brooklyn
Charlotte Albrecht, North Brooklyn
Jahan Nanji, Lower Manhattan

Boris Santos, North Brooklyn
Katie O'Marra, Central Brooklyn
Anders J. Lee, North Brooklyn
Mark Papish, Queens
Brandon Laventure, North Brooklyn
Alex Silva, South Brooklyn
Duncan Bryer, North Brooklyn
Aaron Freedman, Central Brooklyn
Miriam Bensman, Queens
Cale Brooks, Lower Manhattan
Ethan B. Fox, North Brooklyn
Neha Kallianpurkar, NYC
Tami Shaloum, NYC
Ben Rottman, Central Brooklyn
Chris Rowland, Lower Manhattan
Ben Koditscheck, North Brooklyn
Vigie Ramos Rios, Queens
Carrington Morris, North Brooklyn
Keyian Vafai, North Brooklyn
Michael Hirsch, Lower Manhattan, Labor
Lewis Grupper, Labor