



Montgomery County

Democratic Socialists of America

Montgomery County DSA General Body Meeting Minutes

Zoom link:

2PM - 4:30PM November 21, 2021

- I. 2:45 Q&A with Gabe (MD State Delegate, District 39)
- A. Question (Nicole): Why seeking endorsement as a rival to incumbent? Answer: There is movement of centrist/moderate/conservative state candidates and delegates to target progressive/leftist candidates so assistance of DSA is very important to get the best policies passed; must ensure that socialists are elected
 - B. Question (Ingrid F): If not in leadership favor, what is the best approach to support socialism in this environment? Answer: In MD fighting against republicans; there is a piece meal approach that has been taken and we need more holistic approach; must build movement outside of General Assembly so that a piece meal, incremental approach does not dominate;
 - C. Question (Larry from Greenbelt) – What issue(s) can best most mobilize people to build the community power you stand for? Answer: Some issues: Cannibis, police accountability and several others can mobilize people; things outstanding are still police transparency/accountability; Green New Deal at the state level (still taking piece meal approach); Maryland incarceration – we incarcerate at higher level than any other state; need for paid leave of employees
 - D. Question (Alex): What are views on Zionism, why support BDS movement; what is your role to advance Palestinian liberation? Answer: Explains his understanding of situation in Palestine and need to build BDS movement and hold our state, local and federal gov't accountable and its contribution to apartheid in Palestine; must be very clear in our platforms about where we stand and our responsibility of socialists to do this
 - E. Question (David Mott): What is your reaction to the BACC settlement and what contributions must be made by County Planning Board, HOC, Council, District reps? Answer: Gabe was only rep in MoCo who had signed on to BACC letter; Will continue to show solidarity as much as he can; make sure negotiation are taking place in good faith
 - F. Question (Adam C): What are thoughts on mono cultural farming and other farming methods? How do you define mutual aig and direct action? What are major blocks that you have seen to hinder progress on democratic socialist policies? Answer: Not expert on farming but need solutions to food desserts is encouraging

community/urban farms; making sure that we are not destroying the land environmentally. Direct Action/mutual aid: Everyone in community taking responsibility for welfare of all of us – more than just giving \$ must step up to taking responsibility for each other; Any type of action that is in coalition to advance collective goal to get us all free; Major blocks – In Annapolis there is sheep mentality – no real room to disagree or break away from norm; must be electing people who will change this culture, standing up and being unpopular

- G. Question (Susan) MoCo DSA has been fighting for several years to take away the huge tax loophole for country clubs in order to obtain more resources for the state. Now that Delegate Kaiser will not on Ways and Means Committee, will you sponsor a bill on this in hopes that the environment may be more favorable? Answer: Yes; plans to keep on this and try to change tax code that is so regressive and obtaining resources from the wealthy to make a difference
 - H. Question (Diane) How do we prepare and respond to Delegate Barve who wants to let solar corporations come in to the ag reserve Answer: Suggest building even bigger coalition (including tenants) in District 17 to meet with him, engaging and perhaps direct action on this.
 - I. Question (Nicole): What is your next push? Answer: Police Accountability and a number of other pieces of legislation in order to more comprehensively transforming public safety; Green New Deal at state level; Universal Basic Income (UBI) – 500/mo for every MDer and for children aging out of our foster care system; Continue to address senior LGBT issues
 - J. Question (Abel): How can we do medical debt bill better? What do you want to meet with DSA on? Answer: Will co-sponsor the medical debt bill again; Push for Healthy MD Act; Working with DSA – continued work: on fair/free transit; universal basic income, Green New Deal, housing justice
- II. 3:30 Q&A with Max Socol (member of DSA since 2016; homegrown DSA candidate; community organizer by training; running against conservative incumbent; District 18 State senate representative)
- A. Question (Nicole) What are your priorities? Answer – Public safety; across my district housing is huge issue, trying to reduce housing costs, rent stabilization, social housing, addressing just cause eviction; addressing inequality in the tax system in the state, bring in progressive taxation
 - B. Question (Frankie) What is your strategy to beat incumbent? Opponent is well funded but not well liked; strategy is work with party insiders who have had their interests stymied with the present incumbent; raising enough \$ to be competitive; Focus strongly on field campaign of reaching electorate
 - C. Question (Olivia): What committee/sub committee would you seek to serve on? Answer: Like to be on comm./sub comm. that address housing and taxes as these are areas I can have the greatest impact
 - D. Question (Adam) What are your thoughts on mono cultural farming and other farming methods? How do you define mutual aid and direct action? Answer: Not a farming expert but understand that there is some progress in encouraging organic farming; support efforts to democratize the food supply. Mutual aid – any system that

enables people to give direct support of each other outside the scope of the state; Direct action - Often misunderstood, not just a protest but one that disrupts a system at a particular choke point such a barricade in front of home where eviction is being legally planned

- E. Question (Alex): Can you say more about work with Center for Jewish Non violence, views on Zionism. Answer: I cofounded this Center and worked with Tent of Nations in Palestine; to be a vehicle to reclaim land of farmers from neighboring settlers; Center's diversity of viewpoints – seemed best way to move forward is to operate with discretion of Palestinian leaders who may have diverse views; Alex expressed interest in speaking with Max more about this
- F. Question (Nicole): What is role of state gov't in implementing our DSA agenda? Answer: Revenue is huge question in order to do things at local level; must create this revenue do what we need on big ticket items; MD is a very wealthy state but a very repressive tax system; Jeff W (incumbent) does nothing to challenge this and directly gets contributions from regressive forces in state; MoCo has done what it can on environmental issues but they are state regulated (coal) and we are falling way behind on this; also huge role by state in funding state colleges and we need to address this
- G. Question (Runal): What is the basis of support that Jeff W has? Who do you hope to get behind you? Answer: Incumbent has been in office a long time but does not have organic base of support facing no real challengers in the past; it is a fractured district regarding median income, level of services and density, No way to identify a specific constituency to try to make a real change – this process takes a long time. Enemies of incumbent are those very hurt by racial policies, those who face transportation issues and housing issues
- H. Question (Abel): How will your campaign engage in communities? Answer: Doing language access work/live interpretation and in written materials; door knocking in immigrant communities; asking them what their key issues and who are leaders in community; taking more community organizing bent to concentrate on community leaders
- I. Question (Joseph): How to work with data on the district? Answer: We hear that District will grow in working class areas