



For Immediate Release

October 1st, 2021, 12pm

On Wednesday, September 20th, the Democratic Party revoked my campaign's access to a crucial canvassing tool without warning, leaving volunteers who had come for weeknight doorknocking with no way to canvass. We were suddenly locked out of the digital database and canvassing platform commonly referred to as the "VAN," less than two months from Election Day, when our ground game was ramping up. What we first assumed was a temporary setback turned out to be a permanent lockout from the Democratic Party.

It is no secret that our campaign for Ward 2 City Council has been hitting the doors hard. As socialists, we know the most powerful tool for a grassroots campaign like ours is connecting with voters face-to-face and getting our message to residents of the ward. Canvassing apps like the VAN are integral to any campaign's ability to forge connections with community. The timing of the decision to deprive our campaign of this vital tool is no coincidence. This strategic blow comes just two weeks after a small group of powerful interests tried to subvert the democratic process by blocking a vote on public safety in Minneapolis.

Our campaign and what we stand for has not changed since we were approved access to the VAN by the DFL back in April. Since day one, we have been committed to enfranchising and elevating working class Minneapolis residents, particularly Black, brown, and Indigenous communities, around a program of universal housing, public safety beyond policing, and taxing the rich. We are not the first independent socialist campaign to have been granted VAN access without intention of running as a DFL candidate. We are, as far as we know, the first campaign to have access removed without warning. Our access was denied only after six months of authorized use, where they gladly benefited from the information we've been gathering at the doors of thousands of Ward 2 voters.

On paper, both our campaign and the platform of the DFL strive to elevate all residents of Minneapolis and create a more equitable city, where we all can thrive. We can only imagine that's why they granted us access to the VAN back in April. Since then, nothing about our mission or approach has changed. What changed for the DFL? Perhaps we became a threat when we actually began to mobilize the working class people the DFL claims to represent. We've used our campaign to build and organize power amongst working class people and Black, brown, and Indigenous communities. As a result of this intentional organizing, my campaign has proven to be the thing the political establishment fears most; a mass, multiracial, independent, working class coalition for change.

To be clear, we expected resistance to our bold vision. We know from experience that the establishment will stop at nothing to keep movement-based candidates like me out of office. As



we witnessed with Bernie Sanders, Nina Turner, and most recently, the Yes 4 Minneapolis campaign, when candidates and movements on the left effectively organize, they are met with intense pushback from the Democratic establishment.

The reality is that corporate forces within the Democratic Party are burning bridges with crucial voter bases, like young people and voters of color, that campaigns like mine are bringing into the political process. Whether you run inside or outside the Democratic Party, if you're on the left, the corporate wing will mobilize to take away the tools they believe you will need to effectively compete.

Six weeks before the election, the DFL pulled one of our most important tools out from under us without warning, making it that much harder to connect with communities and fight for change. But our campaign is set to proceed stronger than ever. Our ground game will continue to be one of the strongest in this election, building on independent voter tools that are not reliant on permission from the ruling class.

The Democratic establishment doesn't want to see the first independent Black Democratic Socialist on City Council. They want to make that fight as hard as possible. What they don't realize, however, is that we won't give up our fight for a more equitable world, because we can't.

So no, we're not done fighting. In fact, we're just getting started.