

Locals First DSA

Locals First DSA: Increase Share of Dues to Locals and Stabilize National Budget

Nell G (Metro DC), Ahmed H (NYC), Andrew T (Denver)

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Whereas, DSA's deepest, most consistent, and impactful organizing happens at the local level;

Whereas, the 2019 DSA National Convention voted to pass [Resolution #55 Resolution on Grassroots Fundraising and Small Chapter Growth](#), which established the following dues-sharing rates based on chapter size: "30% of the average monthly dues contribution for the first 50 monthly- dues-paying members; 25% for monthly-dues-paying members 51-200; and 20% for any monthly-dues-paying members exceeding 200";

Whereas, unions such as the Communications Workers of America Union (CWA) [directs 60% of dues to locals](#), and United Auto Workers (UAW) [sends 38% of dues to its locals](#) while left parties' such as Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT) in Brazil direct up to [85% of dues to its locals](#) (Art. 190);

Whereas, the current tiered-model of apportioning dues shares established by Res. #55 complicates staff work and creates uncertainty for chapters' treasurer projections, as the rates of dues shares are subject to constant change as a result of chapter growth or shrinkage, changes in type of dues (e.g. monthly versus annual), and variable calculations based on the type of dues and size and order of chapter membership lists;

Whereas, not all chapters are separately incorporated and/or maintain bank accounts, creating additional complications and increases in staff time for dues disbursement (e.g. PEX cards);

Whereas, DSA currently maintains an annually calculated reserve policy when budgeting that leaves six months' planned expenses for Staff Wages, Staff Benefits, Other Staff Fringe, Occupancy, Insurance, Equipment Leases, Equipment Purchases, Supplies, Telephone/internet, Shipping & postage, Printing & copying, Software, and Financial fees lines in reserve;

Whereas, DSA has experienced substantial increases in membership and revenue from dues following the re-election of Trump;

Whereas, tightening the feedback loop between recruitment and dues income encourages chapters to conduct sustained recruitment and engage in deeper organizing;

Whereas, increasing financial alignment between chapter and national incentives to focus on membership recruitment and retention is mutually beneficial and provides longer term stability,

Whereas, increased chapter funds are paramount to the ability of chapters to maintain and recruit membership through engaging programming and in-depth, concrete organizing that foster local and community-centered organizing work that responds and adapts to local needs and political realities and pursues more ambitious local campaigns and projects,

Whereas, increased chapter funds allow chapters to launch tailored programs to increase member engagement and equity such as initiatives to provide transportation access (e.g. transit fee reimbursements), tech support, childcare, and professionally translated chapter resources;

Whereas, any sudden cuts to chapter dues income can be extremely destructive to chapters' organizing projects and inhibit some of DSA's most valuable and consistent organizing;

Whereas, DSA's most important political interventions continue to happen at the local chapter level which eventually coalesce and accumulate to national interventions.

Be it therefore resolved, DSA shall **increase** dues shares to **30%** of all dues income for all chapters for the FY2026 Budget and **increase** dues share to **40%** of all dues income for all chapters for the FY2027 Budget and thereafter;

Resolved, DSA shall ratify and increase its existing budget reserve policy to cover nine (9) months of planned expenses as listed above by FY2028;

Resolved, in the case of a projected national budget deficit that may trigger the existing reserve policy, the National Political Committee (NPC) is required to notify chapter leadership and national membership by email and the DSA Forums two (2) months ahead of any decision to cut disbursement amounts of dues shares to locals;

Resolved, the NPC shall be permitted to cut dues shares below 30% in FY2026 and below 40% in FY2027 and thereafter if, and only if, DSA is operating with less than six (6) months of reserves (two quarters);

Resolved, the NPC may only cut up to 15% of chapter income derived from dues share in any given year;

Resolved, separately incorporated chapters shall be eligible for monthly dues share disbursements if they maintain financial requirements that streamline the disbursement process (e.g. active chapter treasurer information, ACH/direct debit, establish fiscal policies, operating budget to track all revenue/expenses in a ledger, etc) and a form shall be created for chapter treasurers to apply and maintain this information;

Resolved, chapters are strongly encouraged to allocate a portion of received increases in chapter funds to programs that increase members' ability to meaningfully participate in chapter organizing and democracy, including transportation access, childcare, and translation;

Resolved, the Growth & Development Committee shall provide guidance and support to chapters wishing to implement equity and accessibility programs, by sharing best practices.