

Citywide Leadership Committee Bulletin #2

January 21, 2019

Meeting Agenda

Proposals

1. [Amendments to the NYC-DSA Grievance Policy](#)
2. [Citywide Priority Campaign to Stop Amazon's HQ2](#)
3. [Disclosure & Conflict of Interest](#)
4. [Draft Bylaws for NYC-DSA](#) **[Tabled]**
5. [Dues Sharing](#) **[Tabled]**
6. [Hiring Staff](#)
7. [Making Bernie 2020 a Priority Campaign in the Event of an Endorsement](#)
8. [Membership Identification Numbers and Standardized Citywide Voting](#)
9. [Mutual Aid/Disaster Preparedness Subcommittee](#) **[Tabled]**
10. [Policy Platform for NYC-DSA](#)
11. ["Where We Stand" Statement](#) **[Tabled]**
12. [Working Group Census](#)

Amendments

1. [Amendment to Proposal 2: Citywide Priority Campaign to Stop Amazon's HQ2](#)
2. [Amendment to Proposal 7: Making Bernie 2020 a Priority Campaign in the Event of an Endorsement - Political Education and Recruitment](#) **[Tabled]**
3. [Amendment to Proposal 7: Making Bernie 2020 a Priority Campaign in the Event of an Endorsement - Outreach to People of Color](#)
4. [Amendment to Proposal 7: Making Bernie 2020 a Priority Campaign in the Event of an Endorsement - Clarify Main Goal of Bernie 2020 as a Citywide Priority](#)
5. [Amendment to Proposal 7: Making Bernie 2020 a Priority Campaign in the Event of an Endorsement - Include Tabling at CUNYs](#)
6. [Amendment to Proposal 7: Making Bernie 2020 a Priority Campaign in the Event of an Endorsement - Explore Areas of Disagreement with Sanders Campaign](#)
7. [Amendment to Proposal 7: Making Bernie 2020 a Priority Campaign in the Event of an Endorsement - Edit to District Voting Language](#)
8. [Amendment to Proposal 7: Making Bernie 2020 a Priority Campaign in the Event of an Endorsement - Conditions](#) **[Tabled]**
9. [Amendment to Proposal 8: Membership Identification Numbers and Standardized Citywide Voting - Eliminating Constitutional Issues](#)
10. [Amendment to Proposal 8: Membership Identification Numbers and Standardized Citywide Voting - Remove Membership Identification Numbers](#)
11. [Amendment to Proposal 10: Policy Platform for NYC-DSA](#) **[Tabled]**
12. [Amendment to Proposal 12: Working Group Census](#) **[Tabled]**

Member Comments

Introduction:

The next scheduled meeting of the Citywide Leadership Committee (CLC) will be held February 10. This Bulletin is being sent out in accordance with a proposal passed at the April 22, 2018 CLC meeting. The text of the passed proposal is [available here](#). One major part of the bulletin is encouraging members to submit comments concerning the proposals or general state of the chapter to be considered by the CLC. Please click [here](#) to see the Member Comments section of this Bulletin.

Timeline/Deadlines:

1/19: Comments on and amendments to CLC proposals for the citywide bulletin due.

1/21: Second draft bulletin goes out to all members, prior to January branch meetings, with comments on CLC proposals.

2/10: February CLC meeting.

Meeting Location and Date

The meeting will be held Sunday, February 10 from 9:30am to 5:30pm at UAW Local 2110, 256 W 38th St, New York, NY 10018.

Meeting Agenda

Due to time constraints and the high number of proposals, CLC delegates voted on which proposals to prioritize for discussion at this meeting. Proposals that did not make the agenda have the word **[Tabled]** next to them. They are eligible for the next CLC meeting or the annual NYC-DSA Convention.

The top six ranked proposals made the agenda, as well as two proposals that make up the Consent Agenda. The Consent Agenda allows for multiple proposals with high levels of support to be voted on together.

9:30 am - Breakfast (30 min)

10:00 am - Opening (5 min)

10:05 am - Consent Agenda - Amendments to Grievance Policy & Disclosure & Conflict of Interest (10 min)

10:15 am - Healthcare Priority Campaign Assessment (45 min)

11:00 am - Making Bernie 2020 a Priority Campaign in the Event of an Endorsement (1 hour 15 min)

12:15 pm - Policy Platform (30 min)

12:45 pm - Lunch (1 hour)

1:45 pm - Citywide Priority Campaign to Stop Amazon's HQ2 (1 hour 15 min)

3:00 pm - Working Group Census (30 min)

3:30 pm - Hiring Staff (1 hour)

4:30 pm - Citywide Voting (1 hour)

5:30 pm - Meeting adjourned

Proposals

Proposal 1: Amendments to the NYC-DSA Grievance Policy

Proposed Amendments to the NYC-DSA Grievance Policy

Proposed by: Active Grievance Committee - Rachel Rampil, Saje Liese, Martha Larson, Sherry Baron, and Landry Levine.

CLC delegate sponsors: Leslie Fine, Jen James

Template:

1. Amendment: Purpose of Amendment

This amendment would add / remove / alter language to (1) allow X; (2) clarify Y; (3) no longer allow Z.

Amendment proposed by:

Section of Policy to edit:

- A. Policy that is already there and can remain in place, ~~text to be deleted~~, text to be added.

1. Amendment: Grievance officer approval process

This amendment does a several things:

- 1) It formalizes the currently informal practice of the GC submitting applications to the SC for approval of Grievance officers. This allows for both groups to review a candidate and the GC in particular to veto a candidate prior to SC review.*
- 2) It would allow grievance officers to be approved with a $\frac{2}{3}$ super majority of the Steering Committee. The purpose of this amendment is so that the process of Grievance Officer appointments aren't stymied by a single SC member without discussion or consensus from the group. If an individual shouldn't be a GO, then it will require the SC to discuss and come to a consensus on that rather than giving all the power to any individual SC member who can decide with no explanation required. The GCs review process has enough oversight on who is a GO that we shouldn't give any single person unilateral veto power.*

Amendment proposed by: the Grievance Committee

B. Grievance Officers

1. Grievance Officers (GO's) will be solicited by the ~~SC~~GC and confirmed by a ~~unanimous~~ vote of a two thirds majority vote of the SC.
2. In order to facilitate the speed of an investigation and to keep the GC as depoliticized as possible, GO's should not be members of Branch or Working Group Organizing Committees, Citywide Leadership Committee, or Steering Committee.

Proposal 2: Citywide Priority Campaign to Stop Amazon's HQ2

Citywide Priority Campaign to Stop Amazon's HQ2

Submitted by: Will Luckman (Tech Action Working Group), Andrea Guinn (Queens Branch), Cea Weaver (Working Group Coordinator)

Sponsors: Aaron Taube (Queens), Alex Crowley (Queens), Ben Beckett (Queens), Magdalene Harris (Queens), Alex Burgos (North Brooklyn), Amy Wilson (North Brooklyn), Ariel Zakarison (North Brooklyn), Abdullah Younus (South Brooklyn), Evan Grupsmith (South Brooklyn), Tascha Van Auken (South Brooklyn), Elijah Stevens (Central Brooklyn), Daniel Cheng (Lower Manhattan), David A. Lee (Queens)

Summary: This proposal asks NYC-DSA to adopt the campaign to stop Amazon's HQ2 as a citywide priority campaign. It would also set up a temporary committee to coordinate working groups and branches across the chapter—such as the Housing Working Group, Queens branch, Tech Action Working Group, and other interested bodies—in democratic decision-making, deliberation, coalition-building, and information-sharing to develop a unified campaign to stop the Amazon deal while allowing autonomy for working groups to pursue a variety of tactics and identify ways to strategically leverage opposition against Amazon toward existing demands, such as our campaign for universal rent control.

Background: On November 12, Amazon announced plans to open a new headquarters in Long Island City, Queens on promises of nearly \$3 billion in public subsidies, along with forfeiture of public land and properties. In return, the company promises to bring 25,000 white-collar jobs to New York City. The proposal—unprecedented in scope—is the result of a private deal between three powerful men: Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos, the richest man in the world; New York Governor Andrew Cuomo; and New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio. Meanwhile, New York's subway system, schools, public housing, and working-class institutions are underfunded—starved to the point of collapse. If Amazon comes to Long Island City, the impact on our working-class communities will be devastating. Looking at the example of Seattle, and the increase in rents we have already seen in Long Island City and surrounding areas since the plan was announced, Amazon's presence will explode the already disastrous housing crisis we are experiencing across the city.

Amazon abuses and exploits its workers from the corporate office to the warehouse line to last mile deliveries. We know Amazon will subcontract a large portion of its workforce, providing a fraction of the pay and none of the benefits enjoyed by the projected 25,000 new white-collar hires. We also saw Amazon create a housing crisis in Seattle and then wield their political power to shut down a publicly-supported tax attempting to ameliorate the situation. We know that Amazon doesn't pay its fair share in taxes. And we are disgusted by Amazon's support for ICE raids at home and military engagement abroad.

Proposed Priority Campaign: NYC-DSA should oppose Amazon's arrival in Queens without concessions, and should make efforts to kill the deal a citywide political priority. The Queens community—including our members and coalition partners in the fight—has already been loudly speaking out against this deal. Its negative impacts will be most felt by low-income and working-class New Yorkers of color—members of the Queens community who are leading a charge against Amazon's efforts to come to Queens. NYC-DSA must join with our neighbors and allies and be explicit in our intent to stop Amazon from coming to New York City. As NYC-DSA members, we should be explicit in our intent to keep Amazon out of New York City. And Amazon's impacts will not only be felt in Queens. As Democratic Socialists, we believe that this deal robs New York State as a whole, and that Amazon plays a unique role in undermining democracy, destroying the environment, expanding American imperialism, and eroding labor protections. For all these reasons and more it is our responsibility to do everything we can to keep Amazon from setting up a base of operations in New York City.

Timeline: From what we know so far, it will take 12–18 months for Amazon to break ground and begin building, although they are already moving employees into leased space in Long Island City. In this time, we should be focussed on shutting down the deal and keeping Amazon out. Meanwhile, we should be building contingency plans for what happens if the efforts to kill the deal fail.

There are two procedural leverage points that have been identified as possible methods for killing this deal before then. The first is the State Legislature-recommended, Governor-appointed, Public Authorities Control Board (PACB), which will determine whether Amazon can receive certain State grants, and which will also need to approve reclassification of this project as a General Project Plan to keep avoid the City-run Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP). The second is next year's State budget negotiations, which will have to raise the cap on the Excelsior Jobs Tax Credit to secure the amount that has been promised to Amazon. However, part of the mandate of this committee will be to discuss other leverage points and strategies for shutting down this deal that have yet to be identified.

Members of NYC-DSA have already done the following work (as of December 2018):

- Hosted a community forum in coalition with grassroots groups across Queens. Over 350 people attended and speakers presented on housing, labor, immigration, corporate welfare, and Amazon's impact on Seattle. *(Queens Housing Working Group)*
- Ran over a dozen canvasses in Long Island City and surrounding neighborhoods of Queens, where tenants will be most immediately affected, to speak to them about the impacts of the deal and need for universal rent control. Our canvases generated over 300 contacts, and we have already followed up with these contacts to further involve them in the work. *(Queens Housing Working Group, Queens Branch, Electoral Working Group)*
- Co-sponsored an anti-Amazon rally and march on Assemblymember Cathy Nolan's offices, councilmember for Long Island City. *(NYC-DSA Steering Committee)*
- Participated with coalition partners in an anti-Amazon rally and public disruption of the first scheduled PACB meeting in Albany since the deal was announced. *(Tech Action Working Group, Queens Branch)*
- Participated with coalition partners in the public disruption and banner drop on the City Council's first of three planned hearings regarding Amazon. *(Tech Action Working Group, Queens Branch)*
- Circulated a "No Work For Amazon NYC" pledge for white-collar tech workers to sign, promising not to work for Amazon if they build in Long Island City, with nearly 600 pledges. *(Tech Action Working Group)*
- Incorporated Amazon into existing canvasses in the Bronx for universal rent control, targeting Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, who holds veto power over parts of the deal. *(Bronx/Upper Manhattan Branch)*

Citywide No Amazon Campaign Committee

Our opposition to Amazon intersects on multiple fronts—from its impact on housing and on labor rights to its implications for immigrant communities—and should incorporate these perspectives into our political education and broader strategy. In order to better coordinate groups within the local, marshal the limited resources of the chapter, and avoid duplication of work, the NYC-DSA Working Group Coordinator will be tasked with overseeing a temporary, citywide committee, open to all membership. To the extent possible, the committee should be coordinated by elected leadership from various groups already executing the work, such as the Queens Housing Working Group and Tech Action. Among the goals of the committee will be to:

- Work with NYC-DSA's political leadership across the chapter to fight Amazon.
- Build NYC-DSA's capacity and campaign skills by giving NYC-DSA members across the chapter opportunity to both learn about the campaign and become involved in the work.

- Create a space for deliberation, brainstorming, and strategy discussions.
- Create a structure for engaging in coalition with groups across the city and state fighting to stop Amazon's HQ2, as well as other DSA chapters involved in work against Amazon.
- Democratically agree on outward-facing demands and positions.
- Share resources, identify tactics, and collaborate in research.
- Develop a unified, cohesive media strategy.
- Identify potential campaign spokespeople.

Similarly to working groups, the committee should have access to chapter-wide communication platforms for the purposes of promoting actions and events, the ability to request funds and endorsements of the Steering Committee, seek the support of functional working groups such as the Media Working Group, and the ability to maintain its own membership lists. Working groups and branches may continue to coordinate actions independently, and find ways to support their existing campaigns through anti-Amazon organizing, but should report back on their activities and needs directly to the committee and to the Working Group Coordinator where needed.

Proposal 3: Disclosure & Conflict of Interest

Disclosure & Conflict of Interest

Proposed by: Sam Lewis

Summary: Bylaws proposal that creates guidelines concerning disclosure and conflicts of interest in decision making in NYC-DSA.

Intended Outcome: NYC-DSA's ability to act as an independent political force on behalf of its membership will be protected by setting clear guidelines around disclosure and conflicts of interest and recusals.

- I. General Disclosure
 - A. NYC-DSA members serving as members of the Steering Committee, Citywide Leadership Committee, and branch or working group Organizing Committees shall disclose
 1. Ownership of, investment in or a compensation arrangement including employment with organizations that have an official position on or financial stake in a decision being deliberated. Relevant decisions include but are not limited to coalition membership, endorsement of events or campaigns, endorsement of candidates, and the allocation of financial resources by NYC-DSA.
 2. Active membership in organizations that have an official position or financial interest in the decision being deliberated. Relevant decisions include but are not limited to coalition membership, endorsement of events or campaigns, endorsement of candidates, and the allocation of financial resources by NYC-DSA.
 - B. Disclosures shall be made to the other officers serving on that body.
 - C. Disclosures shall be made without prejudice, and shall have no effect on voting rights of the officer making the disclosure unless it reveals a financial conflict of interest which requires recusal, as defined below.
 - D. In the contexts of debates, disclosure should be made prior to speaking, without subtracting from speaking time.
- II. Financial Conflict of Interest and Recusal
 - A. NYC-DSA members serving as officers on the Steering Committee, Citywide Leadership Committee, branch or working group Organizing Committees shall recuse themselves from any decision in which they have a financial conflict of interest. A financial conflict of interest exists if a member has ownership of, investment in or a compensation arrangement with an entity with which NYC-DSA has, or is considering, a transaction involving exchange or gift of money, goods, or paid labor.
- III. NYC-DSA members serving on the Citywide Leadership Committee shall recuse themselves from voting on candidate endorsements if they are currently employed by or negotiating employment with the candidate whose endorsement is being considered.
- IV. Should a member fail to recuse themselves from a vote in which they have a financial conflict of interest, any member of NYC-DSA may call for a vote by the leadership body overseeing the decision to require the interested person to recuse themselves from participating in that vote. Leadership bodies can require members to recuse themselves if by a vote of 60% they determine that there is a financial

conflict of interest.

- V. For decision making that is open to non-officer NYC-DSA members, including working group, branch and citywide votes, it is recommended but not mandated that Interested Persons make general disclosures and recuse themselves from vote(s) in which they have a financial conflict of interest.

Proposal 4: Draft Bylaws for NYC-DSA [Tabled]

Note: Authors and sponsors of the draft bylaws have voluntarily opted to table their consideration until the next CLC meeting, immediately following the February meeting, in order to continue working on the proposal. However, you may still review the current draft below and submit comments or amendments to the bylaws, or email the authors any questions or feedback, by contacting info@socialists.nyc.

Draft Bylaws

Authors/Sponsors: Justin Charles, Kelly Gilbert, Andrea Guinn, Madi Mornhinweg, Erin Neff, Zelig Stern

Proposal:

The following are proposed bylaws drafted by the bylaws committee of the Citywide Leadership Committee. The bylaws proposed are based predominantly on common practice, as well as resolutions passed by the steering committee, citywide leadership committee, and conventions. Sections were divided among committee members to be drafted.

Please see next page.

Adopted _____
(Last Amended _____)

ARTICLE I: STEERING COMMITTEE

Section 1: Roles

1. The SC officer roles are outlined in Article V, Section III of the Constitution

Section 2: Responsibilities

1. Steering Committee members are trusted to make decisions in between steering committee meetings on issues they are tasked to deal with.
2. Steering Committee members shall inform the rest of the Steering Committee before making decisions, but unless another Steering Committee member requests a vote on the decision, it should be assumed to be agreed upon.
3. Branch Representatives to the Steering Committee should provide regular report backs to their Organizing Committees on the activities of the Steering Committee.

Section 3: Proposals

1. Proposals put forward on email will have a 48 hour period for discussion and amendments.
2. After 48 hours votes will proceed on amendments. Immediately following voting on amendments, votes will proceed on the proposal, as amended. During voting there will be no discussion.
3. In extreme circumstances where proposals need to be addressed in less than 48 hours the proposer should include with the proposal a modified timeline that lays out a shorter discussion period or none at all. Proposers should strive to leave as much time for debate as possible. Whenever shorter discussion periods are used the proposer should call or text each member of the SC to inform them that a rushed vote will be taking place.

Section 4: Meetings

1. Agendas should be kept in an Agendas folder on the Steering Committee Google Drive
2. Agendas should be prepared well in advance of meetings
3. Any member of the Steering Committee is empowered to create a meeting agenda file and add items to it. Ideally, the first person who raises an agenda item in the period between meetings should create the file.
4. Agenda items should be added to the agenda as they are raised, and should include an intended outcome
5. Members who raise an agenda item should, ideally, add it to the agenda. The nature of the item should also be indicated: is it a discussion of an issue? A reportback? Is a vote required? Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the meeting chair to ensure that issues raised are added to the agenda within 48 hours.
6. Substantive agenda items for which a vote is requested must include a link to the final proposal at least 72 hours before the meeting at which it will be taken up
7. Unless in exceptionally important or urgent circumstances, a vote will not be held on a substantive proposal (proposals that are significant enough to be typed, such as the adoption of a policy, the creation of a working group, endorsement of a campaign, etc.) unless that proposal is linked to the meeting agenda at least 72 hours before the meeting begins. It is the responsibility of the person who calls for a vote to ensure that the proposal is linked to the agenda in time. When necessary, the meeting chair will be responsible for brokering an agreement among members about whether the circumstances of an issue are “exceptionally important or urgent.”
8. In addition to action items, agendas should state the date, time, location, and chair of the meeting

9. The meeting chair should broker an agreement among Steering Committee members at the beginning of each meeting to finalize the contents and time allocations for each agenda item.
10. The chair will have the final decision about the agenda, but should indicate when items are being excluded or their time is cut.
11. Branch reps can have surrogates attend SC meetings. They can speak but cannot vote. Must be elected by entire O.C.

Section 5: Membership Observation at Meetings

1. All regularly scheduled Steering Committee and Administrative Committee meetings will be open to observation by any DSA member in good standing.
2. Upon entering an executive session, members may be asked to step out of the room.

Section 6: Documentation & Minutes

1. The Steering Committee and Administrative Committee shall take minutes at all meetings, including regularly scheduled meetings and informal meetings.
2. The minutes shall be made available to all members in the Steering Committee weekly email, soon after the meeting.
3. In the event that sensitive and or confidential information is discussed, the Steering or Administrative Committee may go into executive session and redact that information from the minutes. However, a brief explanation must be provided as to why an executive session was held (Ex. "Discussing the personal grievance of a member.").
4. The Steering Committee may keep minutes and reports in a google folder or other sharing medium, access of which shall be given to branch and working group organizing committees.
5. All documents are intended for internal use only and Organizing Committee members will commit to not sharing them.

Section 7: Reporting Back to Membership

1. The Steering Committee shall prepare a monthly update, which may be in the form of a newsletter, to update members on developments of branches, working groups, and decision made by the Steering Committee.
2. The Steering Committee shall provide quarterly reports on the following:
 - a. State of the chapter
 - b. New initiatives the chapter will take on, including endorsements, new campaigns, new working groups
 - c. Financial report which shall include
 - i. Number of monthly dues paying members
 - ii. Income
 - iii. Expenditures
 - iv. Current balance
 - v. Expected future expenditures
3. Branch Representatives to the Steering Committee should provide regular report backs to their Organizing Committees on the activities of the Steering Committee.

Section 8: Town Halls

1. The Administrative Committee shall hold at least two town halls a year that are open to the public. The purpose of the town hall shall be to give membership an opportunity to address concerns directly to the Administrative Committee, as well as for the Administrative Committee

Section 9: Personal Leave

1. Members of the Steering Committee may request a temporary leave of absence of one to three months, not to exceed three months cumulatively. The Steering Committee must be notified in writing about the reasons for leave and the estimated length of the absence. The Steering Committee will vote to accept the leave of absence by simple majority, and will appoint a replacement to serve while the officer is absent. Branch representative replacements may be chosen by their branch Organizing Committee. If an officer would like to take more than three cumulative months during a one year term, the Steering Committee may request the officer's resignation.

ARTICLE 2: CITYWIDE LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE (CLC)

Section 1: Composition, Election, and Calling Meetings

1. The number of delegates for each branch, as well as the election of the delegates and calling of meetings is dictated by the Constitution of NYC DSA.

Section 2: Proposals

1. The CLC may amend the chapter bylaws by a vote of two thirds of the delegates seated at a meeting.
2. The CLC may also pass resolutions, as well as approve working groups, caucuses, committees, citywide priority campaigns, and take on additional tasks as designated by members of the CLC by a majority vote of delegates seated at a meeting.
3. Proposals may also include debating a particular topic.
4. Any CLC delegate may make a proposal to the CLC.
5. Any NYC DSA member in good standing may make a proposal to the CLC with the sponsorship of at least one CLC delegate from any branch.
6. Proposals may follow any format but shall include, the purpose, intended outcome, and approximate duration of discussion for the proposal.

Section 3: Amendment of Proposals

1. After proposals have been submitted, CLC delegates may submit an amendment to any and all proposal and shall have two weeks from the time proposals are sent to delegates to do so.
2. Any NYC DSA member in good standing may propose an amendment with the sponsorship of at least one CLC delegate from any branch.
3. Any proposal with an amendment must be considered in conjunction during the meeting.

Section 4: Communication of Proposals and Amendments to Members

1. The Steering Committee Secretary shall collect, summarize, and publish all proposals and amendments, approximately six weeks prior to when the relevant CLC meeting is scheduled.
2. Members shall have approximately two weeks to submit written comments on the proposals and amendments.
3. The Steering Committee Secretary shall also publish all proposals to membership in conjunction with sending them to CLC delegates so that members may submit amendments.

Section 5: Bulletin

1. Membership comments and any additional amendments shall be collected by the Chapter Secretary and sent out to the entire membership at least three weeks prior to the scheduled CLC meeting.
2. The Secretary shall not edit or remove any membership comments, unless they violate the chapter's code of conduct. (I added the last part, do we have a code of conduct? I remember talking about creating one as part of the grievance committee at some point).

Section 6: Branch Collaboration

1. Branches shall designate a portion of their last branch meeting prior to the scheduled CLC meeting to have an open discussion on the CLC proposals.
2. Branch delegates shall make every effort to be present at the branch meeting.
3. The bulletin shall be made available and inform the discussion at the branch meeting.

Section 7: Agenda Setting

1. The agenda of the meeting is set by the delegates of the CLC.
2. All agenda items, including proposals, report backs, discussions, etc., shall be submitted at the same time proposals are due.
3. Agenda items shall be submitted to info@socialists.nyc and collected by the steering committee.
4. In the event time constraints of the meeting do not allow for discussion of all potential agenda items collected, CLC delegates will vote on what items will be on the agenda.
5. All matters tabled at past CLC meetings, as well as matters delegated to the CLC by the NYC DSA Citywide Convention delegation or national DSA shall automatically be on the agenda.

Section 8: Meeting Operation

1. Meetings shall follow Roberts Rules of Orders or a modified version approved by a majority of CLC delegates.
2. Meetings shall have a timekeeper, stack keeper, marshalls, vote counters, and note takers present.
3. Progressive stack shall be taken, prioritizing underrepresented voices and those who have not already spoken.
4. The meeting may be chaired by the steering committee co-chairs or other CLC delegate(s) approved by a majority of the CLC delegates. Any decision of the chair may be overruled by motion and majority vote of CLC delegates.

Section 9: Debate

1. The duration of a debate on any proposal may be set by the steering committee or the CLC, but shall be the following order and format:
 - a. Motivation by author and/or sponsor.
 - b. Delegates may ask clarifying questions to the motivator of the proposals.
 - c. At least two comments against the proposal, if any
 - d. At least two comments for the proposal, if any
 - e. Open discussion.

Section 10: Voting

1. Per the Constitution of NYC DSA 60% of the CLC must be present at a meeting to meet quorum.
2. How each delegate votes on substantive proposals shall be recorded and included in an addendum in the minutes.
3. Procedural votes need not be recorded.

Section 11: Minutes

1. Minutes shall be recorded at all meetings.
2. Minutes shall be provided to delegates within a week of the meeting to allow delegates to correct any typos, misrecorded statements, missing statements, and other technical mistakes in the minutes.
3. Delegates shall not substantively change what they said.
4. Minutes shall be sent to all NYC DSA members.

Section 12: Follow Up on Passed Proposals

1. The Chair of the meeting shall designate a point person for each passed resolution to ensure that it is implemented and to report back to the CLC.
2. The point person shall ensure that a brief report is drafted and provided to the CLC on the implementation of the resolution.
3. The report shall be submitted at the same deadline as agenda items for the relevant CLC meeting. However, the CLC on a majority vote, may change the deadline or frequency of reports for each resolution.
4. On a majority vote of CLC delegates, the CLC may elect to reassess any previously passed resolutions.

Section 13: Report Back

1. The steering committee shall publish a report to all NYC DSA members after each CLC meeting with the following
 - a. Final versions, as amended, of all passed proposals
 - b. The votes of all delegates
 - c. Minutes
 - d. Contact information for the chapter/branches.
2. All delegates shall report back to their branch the events of the CLC meeting and make the report available.

Section 14: Proper Handling of Member Information and Confidentiality

1. Official NYC-DSA accounts shall include social media accounts, email accounts, and accounts on other online services, operated by and in the name of branches, working groups, other bodies created or provided for by the NYC-DSA constitution, or bodies defined within it, as well as the Local itself. The Citywide Leadership Committee shall have the purview to adopt rules regarding password strength, two-factor authentication, password managers, encryption, privacy settings, security settings, and other account settings with the aim of protecting the security of member data and correspondence.
2. The Citywide Leadership Committee shall be empowered to adopt rules suggesting or requiring that Elected or Appointed officers of the bodies outlined in Section 1 attend training on the regulations adopted pursuant to that Section.
3. Member data shall be defined for the purposes of this document as the names, contact information, addresses physical and digital, photographic or other likenesses of a member's person, records of attendance at meetings or other functions, payment information, personally identifying numbers such as Driver's License or Social Security Number, and other personally identifying information of members, former members, and event attendees. The Citywide Leadership Committee shall be empowered create rules regarding the storage, transmission, use of, and access to member data.
4. When the publication of such things as an elected delegate or officer's vote is necessary or customary, a member who is concerned about privacy shall have the right to be identified by their initials and branch or working group membership only in meeting minutes and vote counts.

ARTICLE 3: BRANCHES

Section 1: Requirements for Branches

1. Any group of eight or more members of NYC-DSA, in good standing, may be recognized by the Steering Committee as a Branch. A Branch can define itself by geography, shared interest, or membership in an institution.
2. A group of members seeking to establish itself as a Branch must apply to the SC, CLC, or Convention, in writing, including the names of its members; a description of purposes, functions, and membership criteria; and other information deemed necessary by the SC or CLC.

3. Branches may be recognized as such after making bylaws and scheduling elections for leadership.
4. A majority vote of the SC, CLC, or Convention, will be required to establish a Branch. A Branch may have its status revoked by a majority plus one vote of the SC, CLC, or Convention, following a hearing open to all NYC-DSA members.

Section 2: Purpose and Responsibilities

1. Key to DSA's vision of liberation through radical democracy, this strategy is devised and enacted from the bottom up - as the democratic "home" for the membership, each Branch fosters democratic organizational structures. These structures include electing representatives to the citywide leadership bodies: SC, CLC, and Convention,
2. Branches are responsible for direct membership participation in political debates at Branch meetings, allowing members to weigh in on the issues and tactics that are important to the community in which the Branch functions. Branches are responsible for holding political discussions of the work of the Chapter, implementing the political education program of the city wide political ed working group, mobilizing their members around the campaigns of the working groups and the city wide campaign, and organizing social events.
3. Each Branch shall maintain an official membership list. The SC will, from time to time, review the status of Branches to insure that they are in minimum compliance with the Constitution.
4. Branch reports must be submitted to the SC in writing before SC meetings.
5. Branches are encouraged to adopt Mobilizer systems.

Section 3: Membership and Voting

1. Branches are required to accept the eligibility [to vote] of all members in good standing who consider themselves to be members of these branches. Eligibility will be determined based on a roster of the membership generated in advance of branch meetings, or by other proof of membership in Democratic Socialists of America.
2. Additionally, a Branch shall define its own rules for membership in its bylaws. A Branch's definition of its membership must be approved by the Steering Committee.
3. Voting as a member of multiple Branches: Every NYC-DSA member may vote in only two Branch elections, although they may be a member of as many Branches as they wish.

Section 4: Representative to the Steering Committee

1. Each Branch will have one representative on the Steering Committee.
2. Young Democratic Socialists chapters in New York City may jointly elect one representative.
3. Because the Branch representative on the Steering Committee is intended to directly represent Branch members to the Steering Committee, and because the constitution clearly intends that these representatives will be directly elected, each branch should ensure that their Steering Committee representative is directly elected by the branch's members as a branch Steering Committee representative.

ARTICLE 3: WORKING GROUPS

Section 1: Definitions

1. *Issue Based Working-Groups* - Issue Based Working Groups (herein referred to as "working groups") are a place where members who are interested in a particular issue within the broader anti-capitalist struggle come together voluntarily across all branches to coordinate at a citywide level on campaigns targeting a specific issue. Working Groups are tasked with formulating socialist demands that relate to their particular issues, devising

and implementing strategies to win those demands, and leading the branches, and the chapter as a whole in the campaigns they put forward.

2. *Functional Working Groups* - Functional Working Groups are tasked with carrying out a specific internal organizational task.

Section 2: Proposing a Working Group

1. Any NYC DSA members in good standing may propose a working group.
2. At least half of the members proposing the working group may not be a cis white man.
3. A proposed working group shall submit a written document with the following information
 - a. Purpose
 - b. Goals
 - c. How the working group will advance the cause of socialism and/or challenge capitalism.
 - d. An outline of how the group would function and regular tasks.
4. The citywide leadership committee or steering committee may also commission the creation of a working group or functional working group and appoint an interim organizing committee to lead the working group until such time as an election can be held for leadership.

Section 3: Approval

1. *Working Groups* - The overall priorities and strategic perspectives of the working groups and their campaigns must be approved by a majority vote of either the Convention, the CLC, or the SC. The particular implementation of these priorities and strategies can be directed by the Working Groups as they see fit.

Section 4: Interaction with Steering Committee

1. Working groups should coordinate with the SC through the Working Group Coordinator, including submitting a written monthly report on their activities.
2. Working Groups should designate a point person to coordinate with the SC. If the working group has geographically specific subsections, each sub section should also designate a point person to coordinate with the SC.
3. *Functional Working Groups* - The functional working groups should operate as direct functions of the Steering Committee.
 - a. Functional Working Groups should coordinate with the SC through either the Membership Coordinator or the Treasurer depending on their function, including submitting a written monthly report on their activities.

Section 5: Accountability

1. These bodies can also de charter a Working Group or Functional working group if it is deemed to be inactive.

Section 6: Citywide Communication

1. One member of each Working Group and Functional Working Group will have access to the Chapter's mass e-mail and membership list unless otherwise specified. Any email sent to the whole chapter must be approved by the SC.

Section 7: Internal Organization

1. Each working group should develop its own internal structure. The internal structure of the functional working groups be determined by the SC on advisement from the members of the working group.
2. The leadership of working groups shall be democratically elected.

Section 8: Campaigns

1. Each Working Group will identify a primary campaign, pending approval from the CLC or convention and provide a campaign timeline for the campaign to the SC. In the event that a Working Group sees fit to identify primary campaigns in between Conventions or CLC meetings, the SC can provisionally approve new campaigns pending ratification by either of the higher bodies.

Section 9: Existing Working Groups

1. *Working Groups* - Labor and Strike Solidarity, Socialist Feminist, Anti-War, Immigrant Justice, Racial Justice, Housing, Healthcare, Debt and Finance, Eco Socialist, Religious Socialism, Tech Action, Service Workers, Electoral
2. *Functional Working Groups* - Membership Development, Political Education, Media, Red Rabbits, Medics.

Section 10: Spokespeople

1. The Administrative Committee will reach out to working groups to recruit spokespeople for campaigns and issues. Working groups will present the Administrative committee with 2 or 3 options. The administrative committee will select from that pool and appoint them as spokespeople. The administrative committee will connect them with the Citywide Communications team.
2. Whenever possible, the spokespeople will be elected leadership from the Steering Committee. Those spokespeople will be trained by the Citywide Communications team on speaking with the press.
3. The Administrative Committee will update the Citywide Communications team on any changes in the appointed spokespeople. The Citywide Communications team will be responsible for working with the spokespeople to develop any press-facing documents to be released.
4. The Co-chairs will be responsible for signing off on any talking points or press-facing documents developed by these spokespeople with assistance from the Citywide Communications team

ARTICLE 4: NYC-DSA POLITICAL EDUCATION WORKING GROUP

Section 1: Composition

1. The Political Education Working Group of NYC-DSA may consist of up to 2 members from each Branch of the NYC-DSA Chapter.
2. These members shall be appointed by their Branch Organizing Committees, and at least one of them must identify as a person of color, LGBTQ, or a woman. The working group will also include a Chair appointed by the Steering Committee.
3. All decisions will be made by majority vote. In the case of ties, the Chair will have the tie breaking vote. Meetings should follow Robert's Rules.

Section 2: Tasks

1. The Working Group will have two functions. First it will organize citywide political education programs and events for NYC-DSA. The Working Group will work with the Steering Committee to identify political education priorities. Second it will help coordinate the local work of the branches and issue based working groups, e.g. by maintaining a resource-sharing system for local political education project materials.

Section 3: Inclusive Political Education

1. Political Education shall include racialized capitalism, as well as authors of color, female authors, LGBT and non-binary authors.

ARTICLE 6: NYC-DSA CITYWIDE ELECTORAL WORKING GROUP ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

Section 1: Purpose and Tasks

1. The NYC-DSA Citywide Electoral Working Group Organizing Committee exists to coordinate borough-based electoral working groups
2. The NYC DSA EWG OC shall develop best practices and make recommendations to the branch EWGs.
3. The NYC DSA EWG OC shall develop systems and practices to resolve disputes and issues involving electoral work.
4. The NYC-DSA EWG OC shall make decisions on how to proceed on endorsements and other electoral issues that involve races that cross borough lines or otherwise involve more than one electoral working group.
5. The NYC-DSA EWG OC shall make recommendations for actions involving electoral work to the Chapter's Steering Committee and Citywide Leadership Committee.

Section 2: Composition

1. The NYC-DSA Citywide EWG OC shall consist of at least one but no more than six representatives from each branch/borough's electoral working group, to be appointed by each electoral working group in a democratic fashion.
2. The NYC-DSA EWG OC shall appoint additional members and/or specialists as it deems necessary by majority vote, although these additional members shall not increase the allocation of votes.

Section 3: Votes

1. Votes for any decisions shall be allocated as follows: Six for Brooklyn Electoral Working Group; two for Lower Manhattan Electoral Working Group; two for Queens Electoral Working Group; two for Bronx/Upper Manhattan Electoral Working Group.
2. This allocation shall be revisited at the time of each NYC-DSA Convention and as necessary to reflect borough/branch membership. The allocation and casting of these votes within the boroughs/branches shall be determined democratically within each borough/branch's electoral working group.

ARTICLE 7: CAUCUSES

Section 1: Definition

1. Caucus shall be defined as a group of people within the chapter that organize based on a particular identity including, but not limited to, political ideology, race, gender, LGBT identity, age, etc. A caucus may take on a campaign, provide a place for discussion for members of the specific identity, advocate for view representative of the identity etc.

ARTICLE 8: GRIEVANCE PROCESS

1. The [passed process](#) should be incorporated into the bylaws.

ARTICLE 9: RED RABBITS/MARSHALS

1. Bylaws incorporated.

Proposal 5: Dues Sharing **[Tabled]**

Dues Sharing Proposal

Cosponsored by: Jen James (BUM)

Whereas: NYC-DSA members are asked to pay dues at the National, Local, and Branch level and this creates a conflict of interest between the Local and the Branches when it comes to fundraising

Whereas: There is dues sharing between the National and Local

Whereas: Many Branches struggle to pay for the costs of holding monthly meetings and have no regular fundraising mechanism besides passing the hat at meetings.

Whereas: As of the last financial report, only 252 NYC-DSA members have become recurring donors to the Local and none of the Branches are meeting their recruitment goals to sign up more recurring donors.

Whereas: The Branches would have a financial incentive to sign up more donors if they received a percentage of the dues.

Be it resolved:

Branches shall receive from the Local 30% of the recurring donations contributed by the members in their jurisdiction. Branches shall receive the donations on a quarterly schedule, paid out within one month of the end of each quarter.

Proposal 6: Hiring Staff

Proposed by: Zelig Stern

NYC-DSA has neared its maximum potential as an all volunteer run organization. As we grow in scale the amount of administrative work necessary to maintain our organization grows exponentially. Our volunteers and elected leaders are overwhelmed with tasks like database management, sending and replying to emails, finding meeting locations, fundraising, making photo copies, setting up FB events, etc. Beyond that, as we gain power, the scale of our organizing efforts also grows. Serious organizing campaigns require organizers focused primarily on the campaigns, something that is much easier to provide as staff than as a volunteer. As a point of comparison the Brooklyn local of CWA has approximately the same number of members as NYC DSA. That local's 9 elected officials all work full time for the local along with two or three administrative staff. This isn't to suggest we should follow that model, but our local would be well served with setting a goal of two or three full time staff and an office. Hiring even one part time staffer would go a long way to scaling up our organization and could help lead to an increase in funding which would pave the way for further growth. NYC-DSA's revenue has increased greatly over the last year. As it stands we can afford to hire a part time staff person without cutting into other spending needs with virtually no additional fundraising.

Proposal

The CLC tasks the SC with developing a plan to hire a part time or full time staff person, including a job description. This staff person would split their time (approximately 80/20) between administrative work, including fundraising, and organizing support for our priority campaigns. NYC-DSA will continue to save its money until our bank account reaches the annual cost of the staff person at which time we will begin the hiring process of the part time staff person. This staff person will be managed by the Administrative Committee. One primary goal for the staff person would be to raise enough money for the chapter to promote them to full time and rent an office and meeting space in Manhattan.

The SC will determine if the staff person should be part time (30 hours) or full time based on potential candidates and financial considerations.

The staff person will be hired through the national office. NYC-DSA will take on the costs of the hiring process. Once the staff person is hired, NYC-DSA will donate the equivalent costs to the national in monthly or weekly instalments as long as the staff person is employed. Negotiations with the national and with the Staff Union to work out such an arrangement will begin immediately. Although it appears that this arrangement should work, if it is discovered that no such arrangement is possible, the SC will devise a parallel plan to hire a staff person directly within one month of negotiations breaking down.

The CLC will set as an objective for the future leasing an office with meeting space, offering our staff person full time to expand their organizing capacity and hiring another staff person devoted full time to organizing.

Financial Plan

While the CLC entrust the SC with working out the details of a financial plan here is an outline they could use to work from.

Expenses of a part time staff person

The most cost effective way to hire a staff person would be to ask the national organization to hire them for us and our chapter would donate the expenses in return. This will save money on administrative and healthcare costs. This would also place the the staff person into the DSA staff union.

Per the union contract a staff person, receiving an organizers rate, working 30 hours per week would receive an annual salary of \$32,625. A full time employee at the same rate would cost \$43,500. Benefits, taxes, and other expenses will cost roughly \$22,500. Annual reimbursements, including transportation costs around the City could be roughly \$2,000. **This makes a total expense of roughly \$57,000 for a part time employee and \$66,000 for a full time employee.** We will also set aside \$500 for the hiring process with the understanding that it will likely cost significantly less than that.

This plan would likely require opening negotiations with the staff union to create a sub contract for local organizers. Primarily, this would create a seperate seniority list in the event of layoffs and possibly create a new title.

Current revenues and expenses

We currently raise roughly \$3,000 in monthly voluntary dues for an annual total of roughly \$36,000.

We currently receive roughly \$5,000 in quarterly dues sharing from the national organization for a total of \$20,000 annually.¹

Our two annual fundraising events combined for a gross revenue of roughly \$16,000.

In sum our total annual revenue is roughly \$72,000

Extrapolating from the May to October numbers, our chapter currently spends roughly \$18,500 annually. Our biggest expenses are event costs such as our convention or holiday fundraisers. We also spend a significant amount of our money on administrative costs such as our email server. Finally we spend money on renting spaces, printing flyers and signs, etc.

This places our net revenue at roughly \$3,500 under the needed amount to hire a part time staff person or \$12,500 under the needed amount to hire a full time staff person.

Financial safety net

A staff person will greatly increase our fundraising potential both by directly fundraising and expanding our organizing capacity which will lead to an increase in members. This increased capacity should easily more than cover the difference between our current net revenue and projected costs. It is still important that we take precautions to ensure we do not commit the Chapter to expenses we cannot afford.

The first precaution will be to hire the staff person as a **12 month temporary hire**. This will give us a year to figure out if this is a financially viable plan before committing to the employee. **Our aim should be to make the staff person permanent once we see that it is financially viable and not to renew a temp contract.**

¹ As of January 1st, 2018, the chapter receives 20% of national monthly dues paid by NYC-DSA members on a quarterly basis. Q1 and Q2 yielded \$4,424.57 per quarter. Q3 yielded \$5,929.41. Proceeds per quarter are expected to fluctuate based on the number of dues paying members.

The second precaution will be to have the annual cost saved before hiring the staff person. This will ensure that no matter what, we have the money to pay the person for the length of their temporary contract. We already have just over \$50,000 in our account, which means we should be accomplished by the date of the CLC meeting for part time and shortly thereafter for full time.

Job Description

While the CLC entrust the SC with working out the details of a job description here is a draft they could use to work from.

NYC-DSA staff will report directly to the Administrative Committee of the NYC-DSA Steering Committee. The staff person will split their time between seeing to the administrative work of the chapter and providing organizing support for our priority campaigns. They will spend roughly 80% of their time on Chapter administration and the remaining 20% on organizing.

Administrative work could include include some combination of the following the following.² Helping Branches and Working Groups get their events and propaganda posted on our various social media platforms and websites. Database management, including keeping an updated list of members and their information, an updated list of non-member contacts and their information, an accurate list of Branch membership, etc. Providing Branches and Working Groups with access to member lists when necessary. Help Branches and Working Groups find meeting space. Help Branches and Working Groups with printing needs. Help the Steering Committee reply to email inquiries. Manage any office we may have. Keeping track of task follow through for Convention, CLC, and SC proposals and resolutions. Organizing the convention and CLC meetings. Managing the citywide storage space until an office space is secured, as well as all citywide material resources including banners, posters, flags, and translation equipment.

Most importantly the administrative work will include recruiting more members to participate in our voluntary monthly dues program and organizing other fundraising activities. Specifically they will work to add two high donation fundraising efforts to our annual fundraising efforts. Fundraising goals for the Chapter will be set to cover a full time employee and an office space within 18 months of this resolution being passed. The Administrative Committee will set fundraising goals for the staff person based on this objective taking into account the 1 year temporary agreement.

When our priority campaigns have big pushes, e.g. major GOTV efforts before an election or important rallies that need extra turn out, the staff person will be directed to help organize these efforts. This could include organizing phone banks or canvasses, sign making parties, getting permits for rallies, organizing trainings, etc.

Hiring Process

The Administrative Committee will be tasked with soliciting applicants and interviewing them. Once they find an applicant they think is right for the job, they will present them to the SC who will require a 60% majority vote to hire them. If the SC votes no, the Administrative committee can either present their next choice or continue soliciting and interviewing applicants until they find another candidate to present to the SC for a vote.

² We have never managed an employee before so it is hard to calculate exactly what this split can cover. I am sure the tasks listed will take more time than is available so the Administrative Committee will have to decide which of them are priorities for the staff person to work on and which can better be handled by volunteers.

Proposal 7: Making Bernie 2020 a Priority Campaign in the Event of an Endorsement

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

CLC sponsors/authors: Nina Svirsky, Tascha Van Auken, Neal Meyer, Sam Lewis, Abdullah Younus, Michael Kinnucan, Annalisa Wilde, Asher Ross, Devin McManus

Non-CLC authors: Jonah Furman, Renée Paradis, Paul Swartz, Abi Hassen, Sam Ghitelman, Jasmin Oppenheimer, Naomi Dann, John Schneider

CLC Supporters: Daniel Cheng (Lower Manhattan), Justin Charles (North Brooklyn), Michael Cavadias (Lower Manhattan), Michael Grochowski (North Brooklyn), Joe DeManuelle-Hall (South Brooklyn), Susan Kang (Queens), Danya Lagos (Central Brooklyn), Matthew Nathaniel Bond (Lower Manhattan), Charlotte Albrecht (North Brooklyn), Renee Greene (Bronx/Upper Manhattan)

Sign on in support [HERE](#)

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Introduction | 2 |
| Why Work on Bernie 2020 | 2 |
| Political Reasons for Making Bernie 2020 a Citywide Priority Campaign | 2 |
| External Organizing: Affecting the Election | 5 |
| Internal Organizing: Growing NYC-DSA | 6 |
| Master Timeline | 7 |
| Field Plan | 9 |
| Introduction | 9 |
| Current NYC-DSA Field Structure | 9 |
| Compliance Issues | 10 |
| Proposed Internal NYC-DSA Field Structure | 12 |
| Ground Strategy | 13 |
| Coalition Building | 14 |
| Down-ballot Races in 2020 | 14 |
| Communications Plan | 16 |
| Introduction | 16 |
| Strategy | 16 |
| Proposed New Roles/Structures | 18 |
| Communications Timeline | 18 |
| NYC-DSA Labor For Bernie | 20 |
| Overview | 20 |
| Structure of NYC-DSA Labor for Bernie 2020 | 21 |
| Labor Timeline | 21 |

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----------|
| NYC-YDSA For Bernie | 22 |
| Goals | 22 |
| Plan | 22 |
| YDSA Timeline | 23 |
| Bernie Issue Town Halls | 25 |
| Goals | 25 |
| Plan | 25 |

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.

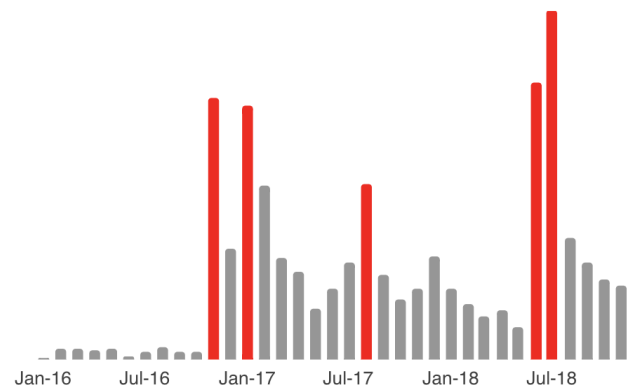
C. Internal Organizing: Growing NYC-DSA

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

New Members by Join Month



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. Anecdotal, 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.³

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 campaign⁴ and coalition partners as well as integrate any down-ballot candidates or priority campaigns endorsed by NYC-DSA.

³The 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.

⁴ Depending on IE vs coordinated relationship with campaign

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.

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-DNA'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-DNA 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-DNA. 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-DNA/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/DNA 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-DNA-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

flyering 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

Proposal 8: Membership Identification Numbers and Standardized Citywide Voting

Expanding Membership Engagement and Internal Democracy: NYC-DSA Membership Identification Numbers and Standardized Citywide Internal Voting

Author: Danya Lagos (SC/CBK)

I. NYC-DSA Membership Identification Numbers

I.A. Summary of Proposal Section:

- NYC-DSA will create membership identification numbers for each member, which will be used to confirm membership in NYC-DSA and to assist OCs and working groups in engaging members using reliable data while protecting member privacy.

I.B. Motivations:

- **Information Security:** When engaging with membership, OCs and working groups often request member information from the Steering Committee. It is important for chapter leaders to release the minimum amount of information necessary, in order to protect the privacy and identifiability of our membership data. Too often, we are basing our information on programs like Action Network, which contain sensitive information that does not need to be accessed by most OC and working committee membership at most times.
- **Verifying Membership Quickly and Efficiently:** We often do not have an easy way to confirm whether attendees are official DSA members. Sometimes attendees themselves do not know if they are members, or whether their dues are current. By developing identification numbers, we could speed up processes like signing in to meetings for members by simply asking for people's ID number instead of a form that repeatedly asks for personal information.

I.C. Implementation:

- The Steering Committee will generate a unique ID (NYCDSAID) for each existing member, and each new member that joins. This ID number will stay with each person for the entirety of their membership, and will be communicated to them by email, and potentially as a printable membership card for easy access.
- NYCDSAIDs will be recorded in Action Network, as well as the central spreadsheet of membership that is maintained by the Steering Committee.

II. Citywide Internal Votes in NYC-DSA

II.A - Summary of Proposal Section:

- NYC-DSA will define the following elections as citywide internal votes, which will be standardized and maintained by the Steering Committee, even though they take place in each branch:
 - Elections for Citywide Convention
 - Elections for National Convention
 - Elections for Steering Committee Representatives
 - Elections for CLC Representatives
 - Branch Votes Related to Citywide Endorsements
- The following elections will be excluded from this definition:
 - Elections for Organizing Committee Officers (Excluding Steering Committee Representatives)

- Elections for Working Group Organizing Committees
- For citywide internal votes, NYC-DSA will uphold the following standards:
 - Every dues-paying member of DSA who has formally registered with a branch will be eligible to vote in citywide internal votes hosted in that branch. No additional requirement will be placed in order to vote.
 - All citywide internal votes will be conducted online.

II.B. - Motivations:

- **Lightening the Burden on OCs:** OCs are tasked with quite a lot as it is, when it comes to making meetings happen and engaging with members at the local level, and running elections can often be a burden - especially if they are frequent. While OC members may wish to hold discussions related to our internal democracy, voting at meetings can often be hard to schedule with other programming that might be more germane to the schedules of branch members.
- **Standardization of Citywide Democratic Processes:** Different branches currently operate elections that have citywide implications using widely varying standards for participation, which can often lead to confusion about eligibility, processes, and timing. This past year, we did not have a full Steering Committee elected until a month or two after we needed one, and while understanding that each branch works differently, we can all work more efficiently if we coordinate across the city for democratic processes that have citywide implications.
- **Expanding Participation in Our Democracy:** Full participation in DSA must be available to members of our organization regardless of their ability to attend meetings. People with work and family commitments, disabilities, and other activist commitments should not be barred from expressing their preferences if they cannot attend our in-person activities. For more on the importance of online voting see the following: https://www.bostondsa.org/political_education/mike-mullin-1/. DSA ought to become a mass organization that encourages mass participation in decision-making without placing any barriers to democracy and the ballot - a challenge we are often fighting against in our cities, states, and country.

II.C. - Definition of Citywide Internal Votes in NYC-DSA

- Included: Convention delegates (Citywide and National), steering committee representatives, branch votes in citywide endorsements.
- Excluded: Branch Organizing Committees, Working Group Organizing Committees.

II.D - Eligibility for Citywide Internal Votes in NYC-DSA

- Every Dues-Paying Member who has registered in NYC is eligible to vote. No other requirements to vote in citywide internal votes will be made, other than registering with a branch (see II.E).

II.E - Branch-Level Registration for Citywide Internal Votes

- Each member has the right to sign up for one geographic branch as a voting member, and must be registered with a branch in order to participate in its citywide internal votes.
- A member can request to join an additional non-geographic branch at the discretion of that branch, or request to transfer their voting registration from one geographic branch to another geographic branch. Members are able to register with a branch using their NYCDSAID number on any day leading up to elections and during elections, provided that they have not already voted in another branch's election for the same citywide positions or referenda.

II.F - All Citywide Internal Votes must be conducted online. Coordination of these votes will be the responsibility of the Membership Coordinator, who can also delegate responsibilities to other members of the Steering Committee, and/or to a group voted on by a majority of the Steering Committee.

Proposal 9: Mutual Aid/Disaster Preparedness Subcommittee **[Tabled]**

CLC Proposal: Mutual Aid/Disaster Preparedness Subcommittee as Facilitation Arm in Time of Disaster

Sponsors: Aaron Eisenberg (SBK), Ella Merrill (BUM), Nikhil Shimpi (CBK), Amber Ruther (CBK), Magenna Brink (NBK), Thomas Niles (NBK), Joe Thornhill (SBK), Sarah Lyons (QNS), Fred Murphy (BUM), Christine Pries (BUM), Ethan B. Fox (NBK), Jordan Brown (CBK), Phil Yakushev (CBK)

CLC Sponsor: Cea Weaver (Steering Committee)

Summary: *Prepare a proactive plan outlining DSA's participation in preparedness and relief efforts in the next disaster in New York City.*

Intended Outcome: *Develop plans and processes outlining how NYC-DSA will prepare for the next disaster and facilitate an effective, immediate response.*

Problem:

In light of the most recent IPCC report, which states that we have 12 years to avert catastrophic climate collapse and that we will begin to experience flooding at the magnitude of Hurricane Sandy every five years on our current trajectory, we need to be proactive and develop a plan of action prior to the next major disaster.

In times of disaster, every moment is critical. Having a plan of action will ensure that NYC-DSA is able to mobilize our over 4,000 members quickly, in a way that effectively engages in mutual aid with communities in the path of the storm and fill gaps left by the state and aid-giving nonprofits. It will allow us to minimize the amount of time lost to bureaucracy, redundancy, and uncertainty, and dedicate the maximal amount of time we can to immediate disaster response, ensuring that our recovery efforts will be as efficient and helpful as possible. It will also allow us to analyze which areas and communities are most vulnerable to disasters, to determine and quickly communicate what services and resources are most needed where, as the situation unfolds, and to determine which DSA members can best provide those services and resources.

Proposal: *Designate the Mutual Aid/Disaster Relief Subcommittee of the Ecosocialist Working Group ("MA/DR") as the facilitation arm of NYC-DSA for disaster relief organizing. Have the MA/DR group facilitate communication amongst branches and individual DSA volunteers in affected regions, distribute resources such as supplies and money raised by NYC-DSA to disaster victims and vetted partner organizations, and facilitate key decisions on how to proceed.*

Procedures:

- 1) *Upon approval of this proposal, MA/DR will coordinate with the Working Groups Coordinator of each branch to create a disaster specific branch contact and protocol.⁵ MA/DR will also coordinate meetings with each of the branch OC's to delineate procedures and clear lines of communication in the event of a disaster.*
- 2) *MA/DR will create a Disaster Relief specific Cash App Account under the purview of NYC-DSA Treasurer to be the official account for relief efforts. In the event of an elevated disaster situation, the Steering Committee will alert membership that the account is open for receiving funds and is the designated recipient for that emergency. The MA/DR designated treasury board for the specific disaster will be responsible for distributing those funds to disaster victims in the form of cash or supplies.*
- 3) *MA/DR will continue its efforts of cataloging NYC-DSA member skills, tools, and resources, as well as those of existing local relief organizations and other partner organizations throughout the city. It will build connections with these local relief groups to determine which new tasks and resources are most needed, which are already being provided, and which of those already provided can be effectively leveraged by direct support from DSA.*
- 4) *In the run up to a knowable disaster⁶ the Ecosocialist Working Group OC will reach out to the Citywide Working Groups Coordinator of the Steering Committee on behalf of the MA/DR subworking group requesting elevated disaster facilitation status.⁷*
- 5) *If the request of elevated disaster status is approved by CLC, the MA/DR group will begin facilitating disaster relief efforts with local branches of the most affected areas. During this period, in consultation with MA/DR, the Steering Committee will send out emails to all of NYC-DSA alerting membership to the plan in place, such as what tasks and resources are most needed as the situation develops and where to direct financial donations.⁸*
- 6) *A ledger outlining who the money is distributed to and what it is spent on will be maintained by the MA/DR designated treasury board. Volunteers in charge of purchasing supplies and distributing cash will be asked to save receipts and keep lists of who they distribute cash and items to, in the interest of transparency. MA/DR will prepare a report to be delivered at the following CLC meeting and then distributed to membership.*

⁵ The Ecosocialist WG already has representatives to each branch, the MA/DR subworking group will work with these members to set up the branch specific plans.

⁶ For the sake of this proposal we are limiting ourselves to expected/or knowable disasters i.e. a Hurricane or Heatwave which necessitates and allows for a proactive response. This proposal is not focused on unexpected disasters i.e. oil spills, earthquakes, or terror attacks, in which case we would be reactive. While the MA/DR group is comfortable assisting in unexpected disasters, the protocols included here are focused on knowable disasters.

⁷ Elevated disaster facilitation status allows for the MA/DR group to have access to steering committee member lists, phone numbers, and ability to receive funds directly through the cash app.

⁸ MA/DR has already and will continue to develop strong relationships with organizations involved in hyper-localized relief and response in advance of disaster events, in many communities throughout the city, as well as efforts on the part of food pantries and houses of worship, in order to understand how these funds and volunteers may be of best use in time of disaster.

Proposal 10: Policy Platform for NYC-DSA

CLC Resolution: To create a policy platform for NYC-DSA, to be shaped and debated by the membership and passed at the 2019 convention.

Authors/Sponsors: Justin Charles, Bianca Cunningham, Evan Grupsmith, Sam Lewis, Devin McManus, Abdullah Younus, Neal Meyer, Cea Weaver

Why do we need a policy platform?

At the October 2018 Citywide Leadership Committee meeting, NYC-DSA CLC members debated at length the political moment in New York City and New York State. In order to better understand NYC-DSA's role in social and political movements in New York, we seek to develop a 12-point policy platform from the membership that will help us evaluate our organization and our work.

By developing a policy platform, we hope to:

- 1) Make better decisions about Citywide campaign priorities and endorsement decisions informed by a vision of our organization, the world we want to build, and an analysis of our existing capacity
- 2) Help distinguish our allies from our targets and further identify what socialist and non-socialist organizations we act in coalition with
- 3) Further develop our skills at putting our politics into practice how to put our politics into practice;
- 4) Give us a framework for holding our elected leadership -- both internally in NYC-DSA and externally, i.e., politicians -- accountable
- 5) Provide a statement of our values as an organization as well as a practical path forward for socialism in our lifetime
- 6) Increase our relevancy to the working class in New York and recruit new members to DSA

What exactly do we plan to create?

The document will be a publicly facing document that lives on our website (see examples of our inspiration for this project [here](#), and [here](#).)

For the purpose of this document, we are focused on policy solutions that are available to New York City and New York State (though not exclusively.) I.e., the document will be deeper than "Housing is a Human Right," but less specific than "We want to end vacancy decontrol in New York City's rent stabilized housing." We hope to develop one page policy papers in each specific issue area (see more below) that both can function as stand alone position papers, but also hold together a cohesive document.

Policy platforms necessarily grow and shift as the political terrain shifts. We envision this as a living document that can be amended by the Citywide Leadership Committee or NYC-DSA Convention.

How are we going to do it?

Over the next six months, the ad-hoc policy committee (members of the CLC) will recruit volunteers and convene a series of meetings for our members to debate, develop, and shape this platform, that we hope to pass at the 2019 convention.

We have identified 12 “planks” for this platform,⁹ and have recruited feedback on this list from the membership via a online Google Form.

Over the next 6 weeks, we will continue to push members to fill out the Google Form using internal social media, Working Group, Branch, and Citywide Emails. Prior the the CLC meeting, the Ad-Hoc Policy Committee will edit the “planks” into paragraph-long summaries based on the feedback from the membership writ large.

In the month of January and February, we will endeavor to speak about this process and get feedback from each of the branches.

In the month of March, we will hold **three citywide platform meetings**. At each of the platform meeting, we will discuss 4 of the 12 proposed planks. We will endeavor to plan and co-host each of these platform meetings with appropriate working groups or individuals that seek to participate.

During the months of January to March we will also generate more online feedback from the membership.

In the month of April, the Ad-Hoc Policy Committee will retreat to revise the expand upon the summaries based on this feedback from the membership. We will then submit the re-written document to the CLC to revise and vote on. Should it advance through the CLC, it will be submitted to the membership as a whole at the Citywide Convention.

⁹ Housing is a human right; Deepening and expanding our democracy; Ecosocialism; Worker control over the economy; Immigration justice; U.S. Imperialism; Mass incarceration and an end to the carceral state; Education justice; Labor and Workers’ Rights; Revenue and taxing the rich; Healthcare and reproductive rights; Anti-Discrimination (racial, gender, ability)

Proposal 11: “Where We Stand” Statement [Tabled]

Where We Stand - Draft Proposal

Authors/Sponsors: Justin Charles, Dan La Botz, Madi Mornhinweg, Erin Neff

Proposal

To create a *Where We Stand* statement for the New York City Chapter of DSA that expresses our ideological convictions. This is separate from our policy platform that is currently being created, as it seeks to provide overarching principles, rather than stances on city and state demands. However, this should supplement the policy platform to provide a cohesive perspective on our beliefs as socialists.

This document should be used as a political education and membership development tool, in addition to being an outward facing document available to the public. To that end, the statement will be published on the NYC-DSA website and made available to members, particularly in materials aimed at new members. Members should be asked to sign onto the statement, as a means to engage with the statement and cohere a basic principles across the chapter. However, whether or not a member signs on will have no bearing or adverse effect on their membership or ability to be active in the chapter in anyway. The purpose of signing on is merely a symbolic gesture that provides an active means for members to engage with the statement.

The statement should also be provided to all candidates seeking our endorsement and sent with the candidate questionnaire. They should be asked to sign on to the statement and whether or not they signed onto the statement should be made public to NYC DSA membership.

Below, is draft of Where We Stand, we realize drafting an ideological statement that represents the chapter is a task that requires input from a larger cross section of people than those who have sponsored this proposal. Accordingly, we are very open to friendly amendments, in addition to sending amendments through the regular process, please also send them to Erin Neff (erinneff86@gmail.com) and Dan La Botz (danlabotz@gmail.com) so that we may present a more comprehensive complete version at the CLC meeting.

Without further ado...

Where We Stand - New York City, Democratic Socialist of America

We are an anti-capitalist organization and we demand human needs come before profit! An economy motivated by profit and protected by the state will always exploit the vast majority of society, especially the working class and the poor. We know that in order to achieve true liberation we must replace capitalism with socialism. We must establish a robust democracy where the people own, manage, and control the government and the economy, thus enabling the creation of a classless society that provides for human needs and allows people to live fulfilled and meaningful lives. We demand a society of abundance: devoid of austerity, where everyone is free to enjoy the fruits of our labor, and luxury isn't reserved for the wealthy few.

As the New York City Chapter of DSA we organize campaigns to combat patriarchy, climate change, imperialism, the suppression of labor rights, police brutality, mass incarceration, and the detention and deportation of immigrants, because we understand that these are all expressions of capitalism that are bolstered by a government designed to

protect it. Our drive to end capitalism cannot exist without a determination to also end racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, xenophobia, nationalism, and all discrimination against marginalized people.

As a democratic socialist organization, we welcome all those who oppose capitalism and will fight for socialism to join us in building a mass movement of and for the working class. While we engage in efforts to reform the system to build working class power, we understand that campaigns, like Medicare for all, are just the beginning, and that ultimately capitalism must be replaced with socialism. We realize overthrowing capitalism requires the unification and mass mobilization of working class people.

We know the enemy is the capitalist class, with its banks and corporations and capitalist governments that exploit workers around the globe. We believe that the working class of the United States cannot be free until all are free throughout the world. As a U.S.-based organization, we oppose imperialism, war, and global domination by multinational corporations. We stand for solidarity with workers of the world, and fight for a future free from the violence of borders.

We ask that you show your commitment to these principles that make up the core beliefs of the NYC Democratic Socialist of America, by signing below.

Proposal 12: Working Group Census

CLC Resolution: To create an annual Working Group census to be overseen by the Working Group Coordinator and the NYC-DSA Steering Committee

Author: Cea Weaver

Sponsors: Michael Cavadias, Danya Lagos, Cea Weaver, Abdullah Younus

Intended Outcome: NYC-DSA will be able to develop stronger strategic plans by having a stronger analysis of our role in social and political movements in New York City and New York State. We will have a stronger picture of our allies/coalition partners and our targets. Working Groups will develop a culture of operating citywide and of working alongside one another. NYC-DSA's membership will have a stronger understanding of the work that is going on in NYC-DSA.

New York City DSA has fifteen different working groups.¹⁰ Our working groups provide a critical space for our members to engage in campaigns that seek to address the violence of capitalism. Working groups are where our members engage in base-building and organizing in impacted communities; form solidarity networks; develop campaigns strategies; build coalition; plan powerful direct actions; practice mutual aid, and more. Through our working groups, our members are able to hone their politics, develop their skills and leadership, and put political theory into action.

Our working group leaders are experts and often are the external face of our organization. Whether it is speaking to the press, developing external coalition relationships, or planning demonstrations, our working groups are embedded in the issue areas they work on.

Without a full picture of our campaigns, our targets, and our coalition partners, it is impossible for NYC-DSA to develop a coordinated strategy to advance socialism in New York City and State. Developing a coordinated strategy that empowers the working groups and encourages them to work with one another and with the branches, rather than compete for the same resources, will lead to a stronger NYC-DSA.

Our working groups have the freedom to develop their own internal governing structures and democracy. They often organize locally -- in branches or neighborhoods -- but work on city wide or Statewide campaigns. Other working groups provide critical technical support to the functioning of our organization.

At the May 2017 convention, NYC-DSA created the position of a Working Group coordinator to support and coordinate the working groups. Since that time, the number of working groups and the campaigns that NYC-DSA engages in have multiplied. Over the course of the last 18 months, the Working Group coordinator and NYC-DSA have experimented with different ways to support and evaluate the working groups. We have developed trainings, requested working group reports, held one on ones with working group leadership, held joint working group meetings, and more. As our organization grows, it is necessary to constantly evaluate and re-evaluate the critical roles that the fifteen working groups play in our organization.

¹⁰ Anti-War, Debt and Finance, Eco-Socialist, Electoral, Healthcare, Housing, Immigration, Labor and Strike Solidarity, Media, Political Education, Racial Justice, Religious Socialism, Service Workers, Socialist Feminist, Tech Action.

Proposal: In the next six months, the Steering Committee will undertake a census of the working groups in order to get a stronger picture of NYC-DSA's role in the left on New York City. We will evaluate working group campaigns and campaign timelines, their coalition partners, and current targets. We will endeavor to understand the issues that the working groups take on in order to best represent the organization. This Working Group census and evaluation will happen annually under the role of the Working Group coordinator between in the months preceding the annual convention.

How we will do it:

- Ask working groups to submit to the Steering Committee a report and a survey. The survey will be drafted by the Working Group Coordinator in collaboration with the Steering Committee. Questions will likely include:
 - Organizational: What is your citywide organizational structure? How often do you meet? How many people attend your meetings? How are you doing outreach to non-DSA members? How are you doing outreach to engage other DSA members?
 - Campaign: What are your current campaigns? What does your campaign plan look like?
 - Timeline to win?
 - When do you want to escalate? Proposed big action dates where NYC-DSA as a whole will mobilize?
 - Expected costs for the campaign?
 - What are the demands?
 - What is the strategy to win?
 - What are the tactics you have done so far, or expect to do?
 - Who are your targets?
 - Who are your coalition partners?
 - What is NYC-DSA's role in the campaign or coalition?
 - How will you measure success along the way?
 - The questionnaire is not intended to be onerous and can be done, if needed, through meetings and phone calls between the Working Group coordinator, Steering Committee, and working group. The goal is to help the Steering Committee further understand the scope and the goals of the Working Groups and better develop resources that serve the working groups' needs.

Outcomes of the Working Group Census:

- First, the Working Group coordinator, the Steering Committee, and the other functional working groups will be in a much stronger position to understand the needs and provide critical support to the various campaigns in NYC-DSA.
- NYC-DSA members will have a fuller picture of NYC-DSA's scope of work. This work can be used to further understand NYC-DSA's role in social and political movements in New York State. The Steering Committee, the CLC, and the membership will be able to use this work to further develop a strategic plan for NYC-DSA.
- Working Groups will be able to learn from one another and evaluate their own strengths and weaknesses through comparisons with other working group activities. Working groups may decide to collaborate on campaigns or shared projects.
- Should the Working Group be operating in a non-democratic way, operating without a clear purpose or vision, or working on campaigns that are at odds with NYC-DSA's goals, the Steering Committee may vote to put the Working Group into a probationary period that will last for six weeks. During this time, the Working Group will continue to meet.
 - The Working Group leadership could then vote to stop meeting, or to merge with another existing working group.
 - Should the Working Group decide to continue to meeting, the Working Group leadership would work alongside the Working Group Coordinator and the Steering Committee to address concerns; develop a

campaign plan or project, and make a case for why they should continue to meet as an official NYC-DSA Working Group.

- At the end of the six week probationary period, the Steering Committee will vote again and decide if the Working Group is in good standing or if the Working Group should be dissolved.
- Should the Steering Committee vote to a dissolve any Working Group, the Working Group may appeal the Steering Committee's decision to the Citywide Leadership Committee.

Amendments

Amendment to Proposal 2: Citywide Priority Campaign to Stop Amazon's HQ2

Submitted by: Will Luckman (Central Brooklyn), Andrea Guinn (Queens)

Purpose: This amendment slightly clarifies and narrows the purpose of the committee outlined in the proposal, which should act namely as a coordinating body between Working Group and Branch leadership carrying out No Amazon work. We have removed language that this committee would act in a similar fashion to Working Groups and have revised some of the language regarding its goals.

Citywide No Amazon Campaign Committee

~~Our opposition to Amazon intersects on multiple fronts—from its impact on housing and on labor rights to its implications for immigrant communities—and should incorporate these perspectives into our political education and broader strategy. In order to better coordinate groups within the local, marshal the limited resources of the chapter, and avoid duplication of work, the NYC DSA Working Group Coordinator will be tasked with overseeing a temporary, citywide committee, open to all membership. To the extent possible, the committee should be coordinated by elected leadership from various groups already executing the work, such as the Queens Housing Working Group and Tech Action. Among the goals of the committee will be to:~~

- ~~• Work with NYC DSA's political leadership across the chapter to fight Amazon.~~
- ~~• Build NYC DSA's capacity and campaign skills by giving NYC DSA members across the chapter opportunity to both learn about the campaign and become involved in the work.~~
- ~~• Create a space for deliberation, brainstorming, and strategy discussions.~~
- ~~• Create a structure for engaging in coalition with groups across the city and state fighting to stop Amazon's HQ2, as well as other DSA chapters involved in work against Amazon.~~
- ~~• Democratically agree on outward-facing demands and positions.~~
- ~~• Share resources, identify tactics, and collaborate in research.~~
- ~~• Develop a unified, cohesive media strategy.~~
- ~~• Identify potential campaign spokespeople.~~

~~Similarly to working groups, the committee should have access to chapter wide communication platforms for the purposes of promoting actions and events, the ability to request funds and endorsements of the Steering Committee, seek the support of functional working groups such as the Media Working Group, and the ability to maintain its own membership lists. Working groups and branches may continue to coordinate actions independently, and find ways to support their existing campaigns through anti Amazon organizing, but should report back on their activities and needs directly to the committee and to the Working Group Coordinator where needed.~~

Citywide No Amazon Campaign Committee

Uniquely, this campaign allows us to attack Amazon on multiple fronts and prominently center many of our demands as socialists — such as the immediate threats it imposes on tenants and immigrant communities and the need for universal rent control and to abolish ICE — in a way that should involve leadership from Working Groups and bodies across the chapter. In order to better coordinate groups within the local, marshal the limited resources of the chapter, and avoid duplication of work, the NYC DSA Working Group Coordinator will be tasked with overseeing a temporary, citywide committee responsible for broader decision-making over the campaign. This committee should be coordinated

by elected leadership from Working Groups and Branches already engaged in campaign work, such as the Queens Housing Working Group and Tech Action. Working Groups and Branches interested in doing No Amazon work must designate a representative to the committee. Among the goals of the committee will be to:

- Work with political leadership across the chapter to fight Amazon and identify targets.
- Create a space for deliberation, brainstorming, and strategy discussions.
- Create a structure for engaging in coalition with groups across the city and state fighting to stop Amazon's HQ2 and identify liaisons.
- Democratically agree on outward-facing demands and positions.
- Share resources, identify tactics, and collaborate in research.
- Develop a unified, cohesive media strategy.
- Identify potential campaign spokespeople.

This committee should have access to chapter-wide communication platforms for the purposes of promoting actions and events, the ability to request funds and endorsements of the Steering Committee, and the support of functional working groups such as the Media Working Group. This committee will work to make broader strategy decisions as outlined above while primarily funnelling the work back through the Working Groups and Branches, who are encouraged to find ways to support their existing campaigns through No Amazon work. While this committee should help new members and prospective members to easily get involved, such as through the creation of a centralized newsletter with updates on the campaign and upcoming events and actions, it would not maintain an official membership list, and responsibilities for building our base, growing our membership, and mobilizing members should fall primarily to Working Groups and Branches.

Amendment to Proposal 7: Making Bernie 2020 a Priority Campaign in the Event of an Endorsement - Political Education and Recruitment [Tabled]

Bernie 2020 Amendment - Political Education and Recruitment

Author: Erin Neff (North Brooklyn)

Proposal: The purpose of this amendment is to include some additional political education and recruitment tools to the Bernie 2020 campaign proposal.

DSA Promotion and Materials

1. Bernie field operations/events will include a brief presentation before trainings on what is DSA, which should include materials on how to connect with the local branch closest to the site of the operation.
2. DSA members engaged in field operations will be provided with flyers/materials that include a brief description of DSA, contact information, and upcoming important events, particularly the upcoming branch meeting of the branch closest to the site of the operation. These materials should also be available in Spanish.
3. Branches that have not yet created a rose buds/new member committee should create one to facilitate the introduction of new members into the chapter. The Membership Coordinator should assist with this.
4. The Steering Committee will restart new member orientations and/or provide branches with the support to enable them to have their own new member orientation.

Political Education

1. Bernie field operations will strive to include in their trainings/events brief presentations from working groups and other DSA members to educate volunteers on topics relevant to Bernie's platform and DSA's work (ex. Medicare for All). Similar to what occurred during Julia's campaign.
2. NYC-DSA will have a monthly introduction to socialism event. This can be a day school, reading group, panel, etc. This can be a citywide event or branch specific event. If possible, it should be coordinated by the citywide political education committee. Already planned intro to socialism events can also be included as a monthly event. These events will be promoted at all Bernie events/field operations. This can be combined with the new member orientations mentioned in the previous section.
3. One recommendation is to have branches on a rotating basis hold an event each month.
4. Intro to socialism reading lists and other educational materials will be made available at canvassings and other relevant events. Materials should also be available in Spanish.
5. The Electoral Working Group, CLC, or Citywide Political Education Committee will appoint 1 to 3 (or as many as needed) people to be a political education coordinator who will help with the above tasks.

Amendment to [Proposal 7: Making Bernie 2020 a Priority Campaign in the Event of an Endorsement](#) - Outreach to People of Color

Bernie 2020 Amendment - Outreach to People of Color

Author: Erin Neff (North Brooklyn)

Proposal:

1. The field operation leadership will include at least two Spanish language coordinators who will coordinate Spanish language canvasses and events. The purposes of this is to ensure that we are reaching Spanish speaking communities by not only canvassing Spanish speaking neighborhood but holding our own events in Spanish, so Spanish speakers feel comfortable taking part in our actions/events.
2. The EWG operations should ensure that POC dominated neighborhoods are incorporated in their plan for field operations, including registering people to vote.
3. EWG recruitment of canvass leads and other leadership roles must include a diverse group, particularly fostering the leadership of black and brown women.

Amendment to [Proposal 7: Making Bernie 2020 a Priority Campaign in the Event of an Endorsement](#) - Clarify Main Goal of Bernie 2020 as a Citywide Priority

Amendment to Clarify Main Goal of Bernie 2020 as a Citywide Priority

Proposed by: Jazz Hooks (Bronx/Upper Manhattan)

Background: The Bernie 2020 proposal discusses the vast potential NYC-DSA could have by participating in the campaign. The CLC should clarify the main goal of our engagement in the Sanders campaign and what that would mean for the field operations. This would also allow us to reflect on how successful we were after the campaign.

For example, should NYC-DSA be involved in this campaign with the goal of ensuring Sanders a victory in NYC, our focus for canvassing would mostly follow that of traditional campaigns. NYC-DSA would generally focus on engaging core areas that showed support for Sanders during the 2016 campaign, as well as areas that had closer margins for Sanders and Clinton. In New York City, a map of these areas would largely overlap with the existing membership of existing members, concentrated in wealthier, whiter and gentrifying areas of the city. Following this approach, therefore, would likely result mostly in increased membership among the existing demographics of the organization.

Should NYC-DSA be involved in this campaign with the goal of recruiting members regardless of Sanders' performance, we could engage in a field operation that deviates much more from the normal rules. NYC-DSA could focus on canvassing in areas with a high density of lower income people & people of color who may not be likely Democratic primary voters but are likely to support the social democratic policies highlighted in Sanders platform.

Amendment: Add to end of first paragraph of introduction either

“The main goal of NYC-DSA’s engagement with the Sanders campaign will be to ensure a Sanders victory in the 2020 New York City primary”

Or

“The main goal of NYC-DSA’s engagement with the Sanders campaign will be to ensure membership growth regardless of the outcome of the 2020 New York City primary”

Amendment to [Proposal 7: Making Bernie 2020 a Priority Campaign in the Event of an Endorsement](#) - Include Tabling at CUNYs

Amendment to Include Tabling at CUNYs

Proposed by: Jazz Hooks (Bronx/Upper Manhattan)

Rationale: City University of New York schools are public, working class institutions that are majority people of color and heavily attended by low income New Yorkers. They will be an important site to engage young New Yorkers who might not be registered to vote and are likely to agree with Sanders social democratic policies. Furthermore, should DSA be a consistent presence at these schools, some students will potentially start their own YDSA chapters there.

Amendment: Under YDSA section, add

“Branches should make every effort to coordinate with local YDSA chapters about tabling in front of local CUNY schools as often as possible. Every geographic branch likely has at least one CUNY school in its territory.”

Amendment to [Proposal 7: Making Bernie 2020 a Priority Campaign in the Event of an Endorsement](#) - Explore Areas of Disagreement with Sanders Campaign

Amendment to Explore Areas of Disagreement with Sanders Campaign

Proposed by: Jazz Hooks (Bronx/Upper Manhattan)

Rationale: The Sanders campaign diverges from the stated goals of NYC-DSA in several important ways. Some examples are Bernie's vote for SESTA/FOSTA, his position on the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions Movement, and his position on #AbolishICE.

Amendment: Add section both encouraging NYC-DSA members with connections to Sanders campaign to explore ways to move Sanders on these positions, and encourage NYC-DSA members who attend any town halls or public forums with Sanders to ask questions about these issues in a way that articulates the important reasons he needs to move on those issues. Furthermore, Steering Committee will release a statement discussing these areas of disagreement.

Amendment to [Proposal 7: Making Bernie 2020 a Priority Campaign in the Event of an Endorsement](#) - Edit to District Voting Language

Proposed by: Jazz Hooks (Bronx/Upper Manhattan)

Amendment: Delete “ How a district voted in that primary is a helpful predictor of its receptiveness to a socialist message.”

Replace with: “How a district voted is a helpful indicator of how it may vote in future democratic primaries”.

Amendment to Proposal 7: Making Bernie 2020 a Priority Campaign in the Event of an Endorsement - Conditions [Tabled]

Proposal 7 Amendment

Submitted by: Tiffany Berruti (B/UM CLC Alternate), Justin Charles (NBK CLC), Madi Mornhinweg (CBK CLC), Ariel Zakarison (NBK CLC), Dan La Botz (CBK CLC) Elijah Stevens (CBK CLC Alternate)

Introduction

DSA has proven itself to be a powerful electoral force throughout the country. In New York City, our Electoral Working Group has proven particularly effective, and has won two major electoral races. Because of this, we have proven ourselves capable of moving politicians to the left-- In fact, Cynthia Nixon announced right before DSA's endorsement meeting that she was a democratic socialist, and her platform on labor issues improved greatly after the Labor Branch put forward recommendations to her campaign. We recognize that some candidates for office may hold views that diverge with DSA's principles. But, if we as NYC-DSA seek to hold our electeds accountable, we should use our influence to push powerful politicians to the Left.

We believe that Bernie Sanders is the best candidate out of any politician that is currently considering running and has a chance to win. However, as Bernie Sanders holds political beliefs that run counter to the stated values of the DSA and the mission of liberation for all oppressed people, in the case of a national DSA endorsement, NYC-DSA must take certain steps to acknowledge these political shortcomings. Examples include Sanders's vote for SESTA/FOSTA, his refusal to endorse the Boycott, Divest, and Sanction (BDS) movement¹¹ which the DSA nationally voted overwhelmingly to endorse, his dismissal of open borders as a "Koch brothers proposal,"¹² and his general support for US imperialism and the "War on Terror."¹³¹⁴¹⁵

Furthermore, the reports of sexual harassment on the Sanders campaign are intensely disturbing.¹⁶ If the DSA claims to be an anti-patriarchal organization, we must take these reports very seriously.

If the DSA is serious about meaningfully engaging those most oppressed by capitalism, we must acknowledge how Bernie's political positions have hurt those we seek to mobilize and fight alongside. As such, we must seek to change those positions.

Part 1: Conditions for making Bernie 2020 a citywide priority

NYC-DSA will make Bernie 2020 a citywide priority conditional upon the Bernie campaign's agreement to do the following. ***For the sake of CLC debate, the authors suggest discussing each of these points individually.***

1. Acknowledge his mistake in voting for SESTA/FOSTA and support full decriminalization of sex work.

¹¹ <https://forward.com/fast-forward/370906/bernie-sanders-says-bds-wont-solve-mideast-impasse/>

¹² <https://www.vox.com/2015/7/28/9014491/bernie-sanders-vox-conversation>

¹³ <https://www.salon.com/2018/04/19/bernie-sanders-may-sing-cardi-bs-praises-but-sex-workers-say-hes-no-ally/>

¹⁴ <https://www.timesofisrael.com/why-bernie-sanders-defending-israel-on-al-jazeera-is-a-big-deal/>

¹⁵ <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2015/oct/11/bernie-sanders-drones-counter-terror>

¹⁶ <https://medium.com/@mashamendieta/be-your-own-hero-because-bernie-is-not-it-c4add2e08029>

2. Fully support the movement to #AbolishICE, including ending the CBP, and an immigration and labor platform that expands asylum, end border militarization, and expands labor opportunities and protections for foreign- and domestic-born workers.
3. Support the BDS movement to end the Israeli occupation of Palestine and an end to US military aid to Israel.
4. Pledge to explicitly take steps to address sexual harassment in his campaign and hold campaign staff accountable, including anti-harassment and workplace culture training, not using non-disclosure agreements or mandatory arbitration clauses in employment agreements, and recognizing a union for campaign workers.

Once these steps have been taken, the NYC-DSA Steering Committee and Media WG will prepare a statement supporting the positions, thanking the Sanders campaign, and move forward with the citywide priority campaign.

Part 2: Outlining a Strategy for Changing Bernie Sanders' Positions

We recognize that establishing conditions for NYC DSA's participation in Bernie Sanders' requires a clear and honest assessment of NYC DSA's political power, as well as serious, committed work to shift Sanders' positions. As such, we need to develop and implement strategies to shift his platform to be more in line with DSA's positions, including, but not limited to:

- Publicly share our conditions as statements from the chapter, explaining our positions and why we want Sanders to align himself with these positions
- Work with DSA members & people we have pre-established relationships with who are/will be working on Sanders's campaign to present these conditions as potential changes to his platform & position
- Train and organize NYC-DSA members to ask Sanders' about his policy stances on these issues at early-stage campaign events.
- Coordinate with other DSA chapters to unify behind these conditional demands
- Hold off on facilitating citywide coordination and providing citywide resources until these conditions are met

Amendment to Proposal 8: Membership Identification Numbers and Standardized Citywide Voting - Eliminating Constitutional Issues

Proposed by: Joe DeManuelle-Hall (Secretary), Andrea Guinn (Queens)

Purpose: As written, this proposal would require changes to NYC-DSA's constitution, which can only be changed by the convention. This amendment eliminates the constitutional issues concerning the election of Steering Committee representatives and branch votes on citywide electoral endorsements, makes a procedural change, and clarifies language concerning working groups:

1. Does two things:
 - a. Clarifies that this proposal won't oversee voting procedures for Working Groups, which often have various committees or sub-groups.
 - b. Removes a constitutional issue. Branch votes for citywide endorsements are required to be in-person (Article VIII, Section 1).
2. Addresses language made irrelevant by change #3
3. Does two things:
 - a. Removes the section that conflicts with the constitution. The constitution allows members to vote in up to two branch Steering Committee elections (Article VII, Section 4).
 - b. Removes language concerning branch registration, which is both set up to primarily carry out the removed language and difficult to track in practice.

Proposed changes:

1) Amend Section II.A. to read:

II.A - Summary of Proposal Section:

- NYC-DSA will define the following elections as citywide internal votes, which will be standardized and maintained by the Steering Committee, even though they take place in each branch:
 - Elections for Citywide Convention
 - Elections for National Convention
 - Elections for Steering Committee Representatives
 - Elections for CLC Representatives
 - Branch Votes Related to Citywide Endorsements
- The following elections will be excluded from this definition:
 - Elections for Organizing Committee Officers (Excluding Steering Committee Representatives)
 - Elections for **positions within** Working Groups **Organizing Committees**
- For citywide internal votes, NYC-DSA will uphold the following standards:
 - Every dues-paying member of DSA who has formally registered with a branch will be eligible to vote in citywide internal votes hosted in that branch. No additional requirement will be placed in order to vote.
 - All citywide internal votes will be conducted online. **The exception to this will be branch votes related to citywide endorsements, which are required to be held in person at a branch meeting.**

2) Amend Section II.D. to read:

II.D - Eligibility for Citywide Internal Votes in NYC-DSA

- Every Dues-Paying Member of the NYC chapter ~~who has registered in NYC~~ is eligible to vote. No other requirements to vote in citywide internal votes will be made ~~other than those otherwise laid out in the Constitution., other than registering with a branch (see II.E):~~

3) Remove Section II.E.:

~~II.E—Branch Level Registration for Citywide Internal Votes~~

- ~~— Each member has the right to sign up for one geographic branch as a voting member, and must be registered with a branch in order to participate in its citywide internal votes. — A member can request to join an additional non-geographic branch at the discretion of that branch, or request to transfer their voting registration from one geographic branch to another geographic branch. Members are able to register with a branch using their NYCDSAID number on any day leading up to elections and during elections, provided that they have not already voted in another branch's election for the same citywide positions or referenda.~~

Amendment to [Proposal 8: Membership Identification Numbers and Standardized Citywide Voting](#) - Remove Membership Identification Numbers

Proposed by: Joe DeManuelle-Hall (Secretary), Andrea Guinn (Queens)

Purpose:

The proposal sets up a parallel system for confirming and tracking membership to the one that already exists. The proposal goes further than the system(s) we already use in ways we should consider adopting. However, it also creates a potentially significant administrative burden for Branch Organizing Committees and the Steering Committee while also not significantly increase security over our current practices.

Proposed change:

1) Remove Section I:

~~I. NYC-DSA Membership Identification Numbers~~

~~I.A. Summary of Proposal Section:~~

- ~~NYC-DSA will create membership identification numbers for each member, which will be used to confirm membership in NYC-DSA and to assist OCs and working groups in engaging members using reliable data while protecting member privacy.~~

~~I.B. Motivations:~~

- ~~**Information Security:** When engaging with membership, OCs and working groups often request member information from the Steering Committee. It is important for chapter leaders to release the minimum amount of information necessary, in order to protect the privacy and identifiability of our membership data. Too often, we are basing our information on programs like Action Network, which contain sensitive information that does not need to be accessed by most OC and working committee membership at most times.~~
- ~~**Verifying Membership Quickly and Efficiently:** We often do not have an easy way to confirm whether attendees are official DSA members. Sometimes attendees themselves do not know if they are members, or whether their dues are current. By developing identification numbers, we could speed up processes like signing in to meetings for members by simply asking for people's ID number instead of a form that repeatedly asks for personal information.~~

~~I.C. Implementation:~~

- ~~The Steering Committee will generate a unique ID (NYCDSAID) for each existing member, and each new member that joins. This ID number will stay with each person for the entirety of their membership, and will be communicated to them by email, and potentially as a printable membership card for easy access.~~
- ~~NYCDSAIDs will be recorded in Action Network, as well as the central spreadsheet of membership that is maintained by the Steering Committee.~~

Amendment to [Proposal 10: Policy Platform for NYC-DSA](#) - [Tabled]

Amendment To Citywide Policy Platform Process Proposal

Submitted by: Nikhil Shimpi (Central Brooklyn), Dan LaBotz (Central Brooklyn), Justin Charles (North Brooklyn), Amber Ruth (Central Brooklyn)

Motivation:

The platform process resolution is a positive step and reflects the efforts of chapter leadership and DSA-NYC WG leaders at the 2018 Convention to have the chapter take policy and research as seriously as we already do political theory. It would benefit from an even more coherent process for members to draft the platform from the ground up.

In the context of the extended time-frame for adoption of a platform, we can design a process that it is both collaborative and which reflects the positions of all members in the final NYC-DSA platform.

Instituting a means for rank-and-file members to evaluate and comment on platform positions online and at forums will avoid an ad-hoc process or black box in which members submit opinions that are selected or rejected by an ad-hoc committee without any input or transparency. The current process, though efficient, resembles to some extent the "engagement" surveys that liberal NGOs employ to solicit support and which are generally inappropriate for a mass membership organization.

A platform process can be a means by which we 1) educate our own members and our periphery on our specific program; 2) make it possible to conduct outreach to grassroots groups; 3) make it possible to explain to the general public what socialists want for New York City; and 4) help to recruit new members.

We can not only show how our participatory process for organizing and building our platform differs from other socialist and progressive organizations but that we're not reliant on the limited pool of left-wing specialists or non-membership-driven organizations like Justice Democrats. For example, as debates over the absence of a Just Transition from a vision for a Green New Deal have shown, they cannot easily claim that they have a member-developed program that is supported by a movement. We should avoid that dynamic no matter how good those specialists and organizations are at devising a program or even legislation. If the platform process is effective, our members will also be able to engage with the broader public on issues that go beyond slogans, be able build their own social media and issue campaigns, and model the organizational and party future we want to create.

Proposal:

The March 2019 Platform Forums on specific issues will be facilitated by issue-specific DSA Working Groups with the assistance of at least 2 different geographic branches and volunteers. Volunteers will be solicited by e-mail from the entire membership. At the election of the subcommittee, they will be open to either the public or to allied groups working on specific issues.

Prior to the forums, members will be able to submit formal written proposals on issues and additional or modified planks; they can request provisional votes made on them at the forums or, at the election of the subcommittee, through online voting involving participants or the general membership.

There will be anonymized comments (i.e., people are identified by initials or pseudonyms) on the proposals submitted

through the December 2018 Google Doc and at Forums that shall be open for our membership to review through e-mail, online posting, or Google Doc within 1-2 weeks after adoption of the resolution.

The ad-hoc committee will make its proposed summaries for “planks” available by e-mail, online posting, and/or Google Doc to members at least one week prior to a vote on their adoption for comment and revision.

To the extent that WGs and others develop more coherent and substantive issue explanations, they will make them available by e-mail, online posting, and/or Google Doc to members at least one week prior to a vote on their adoption for comment and revision.

Amendment to [Proposal 12: Working Group Census](#) - [Tabled]

Amendment submitted by: Dave Urban, B/UM, Matt F., B/UM, Kevin Blum, B/UM, Desiree Fiorillo, B/UM, Nicholas Tomasek, B/UM, Joanna Seddon, B/UM, Elliott Grieco, B/UM

CLC sponsor: Annie Shields, B/UM

This amendment would remove the final section of Proposal 12, which grants the Steering Committee the ability to put Working Groups on probation and dissolve them. The submitters feel that there is no good reason for the Steering Committee to have this power at all; that the given criteria for deciding whether a Working Group should be put on probation are unnecessarily vague; and that the proposal does not establish sufficient accountability around the Steering Committee's decisions. For these reasons, we feel that this section ought to be removed.

Section of proposal to edit:

Outcomes of the Working Group Census:

- First, the Working Group coordinator, the Steering Committee, and the other functional working groups will be in a much stronger position to understand the needs and provide critical support to the various campaigns in NYC-DSA.
- NYC-DSA members will have a fuller picture of NYC-DSA's scope of work. This work can be used to further understand NYC-DSA's role in social and political movements in New York State. The Steering Committee, the CLC, and the membership will be able to use this work to further develop a strategic plan for NYC-DSA.
- Working Groups will be able to learn from one another and evaluate their own strengths and weaknesses through comparisons with other working group activities. Working groups may decide to collaborate on campaigns or shared projects.
- ~~Should the Working Group be operating in a non-democratic way, operating without a clear purpose or vision, or working on campaigns that are at odds with NYC-DSA's goals, the Steering Committee may vote to put the Working Group into a probationary period that will last for six weeks. During this time, the Working Group will continue to meet.~~
 - ~~○ The Working Group leadership could then vote to stop meeting, or to merge with another existing working group.~~
 - ~~○ Should the Working Group decide to continue to meeting, the Working Group leadership would work alongside the Working Group Coordinator and the Steering Committee to address concerns, develop a campaign plan or project, and make a case for why they should continue to meet as an official NYC-DSA Working Group.~~
 - ~~○ At the end of the six-week probationary period, the Steering Committee will vote again and decide if the Working Group is in good standing or if the Working Group should be dissolved.~~
 - ~~○ Should the Steering Committee vote to a dissolve any Working Group, the Working Group may appeal the Steering Committee's decision to the Citywide Leadership Committee.~~

Member Comments

Comment on [Proposal 2: Citywide Priority Campaign to Stop Amazon's HQ2](#)

Author: Maggie (Queens Housing Working Group)

Comment: We need this set up asap so we can form a citywide DSA committee to coordinate & strategize & stop Amazon from coming to NYC. Please treat this as a priority!

Comment on [Proposal 4: Draft Bylaws for NYC-DSA \(Tabled\)](#)

Author: Lane

Comment: The section on caucuses does not clarify what the status of a caucus might be that is both ideological *and* identity based. What I'm saying is, there are zionists in the organization who, despite being really annoying, are right that certain caucuses can't represent them.

Comment on [Proposal 4: Draft Bylaws for NYC-DSA \(Tabled\)](#)

Author: Victor Thompson Mas

Comment: The bylaws proposal (proposal 4) goes beyond codification. Whether some past decisions should be codified should remain an open question and members should have enough time to digest this complex proposal. This proposal also reflects almost all of the problems with the current Constitution and in several cases makes them worse. I've sent even more detailed notes to my branch delegates.

ARTICLE 1: STEERING COMMITTEE

Branch Representatives to the Steering Committee should report to their General Meetings.

Branch Representatives surrogates should be able to vote. Branches should always be represented with voice and vote, including during leaves.

SC documents should not be considered for internal use as a general rule, the general rule should be transparency.

The town hall idea is a superficial way of holding the SC accountable. Why are lobbying and fake models of participation being codified as part of DSA democratic culture? CLC/SC office hours also follow this same premise.

ARTICLE 2: CITYWIDE LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE

The differentiation of the responsibilities of the Convention, the CLC and the SC should be according to the Constitution and needs to be refined there. The CLC can't use the bylaws to either expand or restrict its own power.

The relationship of NYC-DSA to the National is not described anywhere and there are basically no mechanisms for accountability.

There should be similar provisions for proposals and agenda setting for the SC and CLC.

The relationships between the deadlines and timelines for presenting, debating, amending and adopting proposals are not clear in the CLC article.

A clear "reading" system should be adopted.

Members in branches should know which stage of the approval process proposals they are asked to read/comment on are currently at.

The notion that members engage directly with the CLC by lobbying it instead of deciding via branches is a constitutional issue.

At which point do the branches weigh in or should weigh in? Too soon may be premature, too late may be academic.

ARTICLE 3: BRANCHES

The placement of articles is a reflection of a past when branches were not such an important feature of governance and individual member participation. It can also be said they are a reflection of a preference for a top down model of democracy.

Section 1: Requirements for Branches

This is already in the Constitution.

Section 2: Purpose and Responsibilities

The role of branches is a constitutional issue.

The drafting of this article is based on the premise of branches being mostly geographical, but then geographical branches should not be subject to dissolution.

All parts of NYC should be organized in branches. Situations like having Staten Island not organized should be unacceptable. Similar situations such as having parts of the city like The Bronx be amalgamated with Upper Manhattan should also be considered questionable.

Section 3: Membership and Voting

These rules are already in the Constitution

At the same time, there is no need to keep the current ambiguity and possibility for special rules regarding the membership of the geographical branches.

The provision that extends the constitutional prohibition on multiple voting should be in the Constitution.

ARTICLE 3: WORKING GROUPS

(The numbering is wrong)

The definition of issue working groups relates to the constitutional question of whether working groups, the branches or the citywide representative bodies are the ones who take the "lead" in deciding what DSA stands for. This definition is both ambiguous and at the same time settles the question by codifying a model of "leading" that is decentralized and unaccountable. This language is then contradicted by Sections 3 and 8.

The current model of having a WG Coordinator, written reports, campaigns and spokespeople approved centrally doesn't seem to work in practice.

ARTICLE 4: NYC-DSA POLITICAL EDUCATION WORKING GROUP

(The numbering is wrong)

The language here doesn't reflect the bylaws language adopted by the committee.

ARTICLE 6: NYC-DSA CITYWIDE ELECTORAL WORKING GROUP ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

(The numbering is wrong)

Section 1: Purpose and Tasks

The NYC DSA EWG OC shall develop systems and practices to resolve disputes and issues involving electoral work. (Can it take decisions regarding disputes? Between whom?)

The NYC-DSA EWG OC shall make decisions on how to proceed on endorsements and other electoral issues that involve races that cross borough lines or otherwise involve more than one electoral working group. (Shouldn't these be recommendations?)

ARTICLE 7: CAUCUSES

(The numbering is wrong)

Section 1: Definition

Identity based and ideology based caucuses should be distinguished.

This definition is not consistent with current practice regarding ideological caucuses in particular.

Identity based caucuses could have a specific role in governance.

The specific status of the Afrosocialist and Socialists of Color Caucus created by DSA resolution is not reflected by this definition.

ARTICLE 8: GRIEVANCE PROCESS

(The numbering is wrong)

Are the bylaws meant to incorporate every aspect of DSA? If the answer is yes then they shouldn't be numbered this way. Instead of Articles they should be numbered as Bylaw I, II, etc. Some bylaws could be annexed to the bylaws instead.

ARTICLE 9: RED RABBITS/MARSHALS

(The numbering is wrong)

Comment on [Proposal 5: Dues Sharing](#)

Author: James Neimeister

Comment: We need dues sharing, but at present NBK is almost in a position to be giving money back to other branches or the chapter and not the other way as proposed. I'd like to see the branches and the treasurer work together on a plan that ensures branches and working groups have enough funds to get by for at least a few months at a time and that allows the chapter to pool resources toward greater collective goods.

Comment on [Proposal 6: Hiring Staff](#)

Author: jennifer l

Comment: i'm definitely sympathetic to the idea that administrative burdens place limits on our organizing and lead to member burnout, etc., but i'm less convinced that hiring a staffer will significantly mitigate this problem to warrant its costs and outweigh the risks. and i'm not sure administrative burden -- of the sort that can be solved by this proposal -- is the only or even dominant limiting factor on our organizing and capacity-building. and so i guess i am wondering whether there are better solutions in terms of changing the structure and function and, most importantly, the organizing culture of our organization. for instance, i think it's probably the case that there are dozens if not hundreds of members who are not active in the org who would happily volunteer to do a couple of hours of administrative work a week -- which would be a better, if more difficult, solution than hiring a staffer to do said work because it could be a part of a broader commitment to and initiative of membership engagement and leadership development. so, how do we do that? and won't we be less motivated to figure out how we can do that if we try to outsource as much as our administrative work as possible to staffers? i'm not hostile to this proposal, but i just want to make sure we discuss some of the potential risks of hiring a staffer, even if they are not immediately relevant or apparent (as risks, especially long-term risks, rarely are). the maintenance and reproduction of most labor unions and non-profit community organizations of course rely on paid staffers. i'm not saying that hiring one staffer to answer emails will automatically result in the bureaucratization of our chapter, but i am worried that over time separating out administrative work from political work (which i've come to realize is not actually all that possible!) and in general trying to separate out work that can be taken on by a few full-time staffers rather than be shared among many volunteer members could create a small layer of staffers that carries out the reproduction of the organization and that diminishes our collective ownership of and responsibility for the organization. even though community groups and labor unions nominally (and, at some point, in some cases, very genuinely) want members as opposed to staffers to make important strategic and political decisions, whereas staffers would simply carry out and implement these decisions, that is often not the dynamic we see today within these organizations. and it's in most cases a structural not idiosyncratic reason why. this layer of staffers could also over time take on a set of different material interests and different orientation toward the organization and toward the members, and the financial and legal responsibilities of paying full-time staffers could also create organizational material pressures/imperatives related to our funding stream that could at some point have political or strategic implications as often is the case for community orgs and unions (although again i don't want to present these as foregone conclusions but rather as potential risks). one of the most amazing -- and outwardly threatening -- things about our chapter is how much work we get done by volunteer labor and i still believe we can accomplish even more without hiring a staffer.

Comment on [Proposal 6: Hiring Staff](#)

Author: Miriam Bensman

Comment: Hiring a staff person has the potential of allowing to NYCDSA to really step up its game. It doesn't seem at all unreasonable for an organization with about 5,000 members (we've done so before a few times for a year or so, when we had 600 or 1,000 members). It seems we've been increasing our financial capacity to support it.

But I'd offer a few cautions:

- 1) If we hire someone to work part time, they'd be paid to work for DSA, say, 20 hours a week, which many of our members do as volunteers. That could easily create resentment.
- 2) We'd have to be very clear about what the staffperson's responsibilities are, and how specific tasks are assigned, so there aren't resentments about who gets relief from excessive responsibilities, or which projects get staff support.
- 3) we have to be clear to what extent the staff person is a spokesperson and leader, vs. an administrator or daytime task doer. I've seen DSA chapters hire v young members—including college students taking off a year—and experienced organizers who served as chapter chair or NPC members in the past. Sometimes, the leadership treats the staffer as a peer, sometimes as a talented helper, sometimes as the leader.

It's important to talk these issues out before hiring, so both the person we hire and the Steering Committee, CLC and working groups and chapters know what to expect.

Comment on [Proposal 6: Hiring Staff](#)

Author: Tawny Tidwell

Comment: I do not think that hiring a single staff person at a low salary is a good use of NYC DSA's funds. Additionally, if dues were to dip even slightly it appears that this person's position could be put in jeopardy (cut hours, lowered wage); something I hope as a worker-oriented org we would be deeply concerned about.

If NYC DSA has funds to the tune of \$100k, why are we not looking at sharing that wealth with rural organizers and smaller chapters? If significant digital admin work needs to be done, we could pay remote DSA member contractors on an as-needed basis, thereby supporting people ad hoc rather than one person on a poverty wage.

I also noted that Jen James has proposed more even dues-sharing across branches. This seems like a much more positive use of the funds than a single admin person.

Comment on [Proposal 6: Hiring Staff](#)

Author: Tiffany Gong

Comment: We frequently talk about our need to increase the diversity of the membership body of DSA. While we have discussed many tactics for broadening our base in ways that would better engage the working class, we rarely talk about the structural issues within our organization that serve as barriers to entry for many.

How so? The demands of partaking in the organization have become inordinately high, requiring such an intensive commitment of time and energy that we have naturally self selected into an active membership body that skews towards young professionals without families. Our meetings, which usually take place during evenings and weekends, already exclude many service workers or retail workers like myself, who work non-traditional hours. A large part of organizing takes place online, which favors people who have access to computers all day long. And finally, if you make the commitment to take a leadership position, you are expected to set aside a large portion of time for the administrative work that runs along side organizing---a difficult balance to strike if you have both a job and children to care for.

I speak from experience. I have served as the Treasurer for half a year, and on the Steering Committee for a year and half. I have committed, on average, 20 hours a week to DSA work, amounting to a second part time job in addition to my actual job. From many accounts, this is not uncommon amongst other active members, especially those in leadership. Nonetheless, it is an enormous burden of work to expect of an unpaid volunteer. It has already been difficult for me to balance this responsibility with my non-traditional schedule working in retail. As a new mother, it is a responsibility that I will no longer be able to maintain, and I will not be running to resume my role next year.

I hope, that as we grow, we can commit our resources to hiring a staff member to relieve some of the burden of the administrative work put upon members and leaders, allowing a wider range of people from divergent backgrounds to commit themselves. A staff person could take over some of the enormously time consuming tasks currently taken care of by volunteers, ranging from fundraising, answering emails, helping Organizing Committees find meeting spaces, and managing our website.

While this only addresses part of the issue I mentioned above, I believe we should systematically be striving to create better structures for broadening our base of engagement. This summer, we implemented a monthly dues system which currently has over 300 recurring donors, and a monthly income of over \$3000. I believe this gives us room to grow deliberately, and we should be using this income towards building the proper infrastructure for supporting our volunteers. Hiring a staffer would not only help increase our dues revenue to pay for their salary, but also to raise money to rent an office space. Finally, I also hope it will give more space to our members to focus on what they joined DSA to do: organize.

Comment on [Proposal 6: Hiring Staff](#)

Author: Nikhil Shimpi

Comment: I strongly recommend the adoption of this proposal because it will increase our capacity and reflects the difficulty and overwhelming burden of administrative maintenance, involving communications, infosec/data management, printing and other contracting, membership control, and document retention, even within some of the working groups. We've done great things with our resources but to the degree financially possible, we can do more. An administrative officer will also help us build donations and ultimately put us on the same footing as small labor organizations and non-profits.

I would suggest that the hiring decision be for a largely administrative position. Though this would likely involve an ad-hoc process of consultation, the person selected should reflect the support of not just leadership but constituencies through the organization, including WGs, Branches, and caucuses such as Afro-Soc as well as possibly the political tendencies (though the last item poses its own problems).

Comment on [Proposal 7: Making Bernie 2020 a Priority Campaign in the Event of an Endorsement](#)

Author: Elijah Stevens

Comment: As a co-author of an [amendment](#) to the Bernie 2020 campaign proposal advocating for conditions for our citywide prioritization of the campaign, I hope to foster discussion about two key points:

First, the issues that Bernie diverges from DSA on, what we do to recognize or reconcile those issues, and whether or not we consider these issues as core to our struggle for socialism. And second, whether we have the strategies and capacities to influence the positions of candidates before or after we endorse them.

These are critical issues that we should be considering in any campaign, especially electoral campaigns, and the Bernie Sanders' presidential campaign crystallizes the significance and pertinence of these issues. Regardless of whether or not DSA, as a national organization or local chapter, endorses Bernie Sanders' presidential campaign, we should consider these questions for the sake of building strategic, effective political organizing.

It is my belief that, in raising these points and providing conditions for our participation in Sanders' campaign, we will reaffirm our core principles and deepen our commitment to the organizing work we have done in service of those principles. By demanding that Bernie shift his position leftward to align with DSA's, and organizing to make that happen, we will strengthen our dedication to these issues and develop a stronger analysis of the ways in which they are central to our movement. Additionally, both debating and leveraging these conditions will provide us with critical opportunities to assess our political capacities to influence Sanders' politics, identify our strategic weaknesses and improve upon our strengths.

Regarding the first key issue, if DSA endorses Bernie Sanders unconditionally, we will undermine both our core principles on these issues and the significant organizing work that DSA has done around them. Alternatively, if we provide these conditions for our citywide involvement in Sanders' campaign, we will recognize and uphold this organizing work that DSA and coalition partners have done, and channel the energy of these campaigns into targeted efforts to shift Sanders' political stance.

After the passage of SESTA/FOSTA, NYC DSA participated in a large-scale demonstration for International Whores' Day in opposition to the legislation and in support of sex workers and the decriminalization of their labor. This was a major protest, with a significant cross-class, racially diverse base of activists (much more so than DSA's demographic base), led by working-class women, genderqueer, and trans people of color.

In response to increased and widespread detentions, deportations and human rights abuses by ICE, as part of a nationally-endorsed week of action to abolish ICE, DSA chapters across the country organized and participated in actions - including marches, occupations, direct actions, and rallies - to demand not only the abolition of ICE but the abolition of CBP, asylum and citizenship for all, and open borders.

After passing a resolution in support of the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) movement at the 2017 DSA convention, DSA chapters and working groups have taken up BDS campaigns, including NYC DSA's Anti-War Working Groups activism with Deadly Exchange to end US-Israel police partnerships.

And with respect to sexual harassment, DSA not only holds socialist feminist politics at its core in its analysis and actions, but also in our organizing structures through our grievance policies and community agreements.

If we endorse Bernie Sanders without challenging him on any of these issues on which he and his campaign significantly diverge from DSA, we undermine them as fundamental principles. We will be saying that the election of a progressive Democratic president is more important than the issues and analyses that guide us as socialists. But by demanding that Sanders' recognize and support these stances, we will affirm the ongoing work of our comrades involved in these campaigns, achieve critical ideological wins in popularizing our positions, and reaffirm the core nature of these principles in the struggle for socialism.

Regarding the second key issue, it is essential that we have a clear and honest assessment of DSA's ability to influence Bernie Sanders' campaign, and developing strategies around these conditions provides a great opportunity for that assessment. There are a few signs that suggest DSA could have some degree of leverage with Sanders' platform. It was recently announced that DSA members would be joining Sanders' campaign staff, providing potentially valuable channels for presenting our positions and proposals to Sanders and his campaign. We have also seen some degree of movement from Sanders on a few of these issues, including stronger condemnation for anti-BDS legislation, and taking a stronger stance in support of abolishing ICE, when pressed on his stance after nationwide protests, occupations and other actions - including social media campaigns - demanding the abolition of ICE, that DSA played a central role in. Locally, we have seen NYC DSA's ability to move candidates leftward with the Labor Branch proposals to Cynthia Nixon that she adopted in her campaign.

These factors speak to the range of experiences and methods with which DSA can leverage our power to push candidates leftward. My hope is that we can learn from these experiences to concretize strategies to effectively influence candidates' positions and hold endorsed candidates and elected officials accountable to our principles.

Overall though, my assessment is that DSA does not have the political power to shift Bernie Sanders' platform because our positions and organization are relatively unimportant to Sanders and his campaign. Sanders has his own political organization, Our Revolution, which operates independently from DSA. He rarely, if ever, acknowledges DSA, and is able to rally a base of support that is largely unaffiliated with DSA. "We Need Bernie" may have been DSA's campaign slogan in 2016, and may be again - but I'm not sure that he needs DSA.

On the whole, I'm skeptical, though hopeful, about DSA's ability to influence Sanders' position, but I do think it's critical that we discuss and debate these issues openly and honestly, if we are to grow as a movement, reaffirm our core political principles and build our organizing capacities.

Comment on [Proposal 7: Making Bernie 2020 a Priority Campaign in the Event of an Endorsement](#)

Author: Hoda Mitwally

Comment: I am commenting on [Amendment \(3\)](#) to Proposal (7). I support the [Proposal](#), but not the Amendment.

I have many years of involvement in the Palestine solidarity movement, and I recently joined NYC-DSA. My stance is unequivocal: free the land and return its people home, for all of historic Palestine. I also believe it is necessary for Palestinians to rebuild their national movement so they can collectively decide what their vision for a free Palestine would look like.

The question of whether to support Bernie Sanders' presidential campaign in 2020, should he choose to run, is beyond a surface-level examination of what is written into his platform at present. It requires us to look deeper: will his candidacy build mass support among ordinary people, thereby advancing the socialist movement? Can DSA's involvement clarify what kind of left politics we want to see in the US?

I believe the answer to both questions are ""yes."" As such, I do not support Amendment (3)'s proposal to condition NYC-DSA's support for Bernie 2020 on the basis of his endorsement of BDS or ending US military aid to Israel. It is not at all because I disagree with the substantive politics; to the contrary, in fact, and I am proud that the national DSA passed a resolution in full support of BDS and Palestinian self-determination. Rather, I disagree with the notion that the ""purity"" (or lack thereof) of Bernie's platform at present should override the strategic value of DSA's support for Bernie 2020.

First, any improvement of Bernie's position will first require DSA's good-faith entry into the campaign, and using our position to make space for Palestine solidarity activists and Palestinians. The DSA is in a weak position to make demands if it has not first endorsed Bernie and positioned itself as a credible stakeholder. The campaign's key leadership should include DSA members who are knowledgeable about and have deep connections across the terrain of US social movements. These folks should orient the campaign toward the myriad of activists who are working on these issues day in day out, Palestine or otherwise, with the goal of pushing the campaign (and by extension, the public) further left in alignment with where we stand. This is not going to be an easy task; it will require DSA to do intense political education and the resolve to stave off potential push-back from within the campaign.

Some comrades may disagree, because they feel that any hopeful candidate, even card-carrying DSA members, must first show their stripes before earning our endorsement. I understand this principle. But the reality is that Bernie is no stranger to us. Moreover, it is dishonest to write him off as anti-Palestinian. Bernie supports the right to engage in BDS, which is a positive start for us. The US government's decades-long persecution of Palestine activists now manifests through anti-BDS legislation, and Bernie is firmly opposed to these efforts. He is not (yet) convinced of the spirit of BDS, but he will not hinder our ability to keep organizing. We must own this, not as a shortcoming, but as an entry point to educate on what BDS actually is. There's a good chance Bernie doesn't fully understand BDS or why it's important, and we cannot expect him to make the case for it alone. We therefore have a responsibility to demystify our analysis of Palestine, both for the campaign and for the broader movement we are trying to build.

Second, I wish to remind my comrades that BDS is a tactic, a very good one at that, but it is not a movement in of itself. Nor is BDS synonymous with Palestinian self-determination. The DSA needs to meaningfully engage with the US Palestine solidarity community and Palestinians themselves (such as those living here in exile, and those remaining in historic Palestine), on how to best influence the campaign on this issue. They have insights that DSA must hear, and it will reflect poorly on DSA to make a unilateral demand without first engaging with those who have been doing the work

for years.

Note, Palestinians are not politically homogeneous, and they do not have a democratic representative body that we can look to for direction on political questions. Truthfully, no one is in a position to speak on behalf of all Palestinians, and this poses challenges for the solidarity movement at large. Nevertheless, DSA has an obligation to be in communication with as broad of a range as possible of Palestinians and solidarity activists to inform our strategy on Palestine vis-a-vis the campaign.

Ultimately, DSA's support for Bernie in 2020 is not just about the campaign, but the impact it will have on the American public at large. We are at an exciting moment in time, and Bernie 2020 would be our chance to further the socialist vision we want to see in US society, including our commitment to a liberated Palestine. Either we seize it, or we succumb to defeat long before the opportunity is even declared.

Comment on [Proposal 7: Making Bernie 2020 a Priority Campaign in the Event of an Endorsement](#)

Author: Maia Rosenberg

Comment: Though this proposal does a good job of outlining how DSA will organize internally, it mostly ignores that there will be other players in the field. There is no real mention of the groups/orgs DSA might align itself with, or how it might do so. Additionally, it appears to propose that DSA be the main place for volunteers to go, and I can imagine a scenario where this causes issues with the campaign. The framing seems again to be through building DSA membership as opposed to making DSA a useful arm of the campaign to get Sanders elected. Though I don't disagree with attempting to grow the organization, this should not be the primary frame of a DSA Bernie campaign.

Comment on [Proposal 7: Making Bernie 2020 a Priority Campaign in the Event of an Endorsement](#)

Author: Nikhil Shimpi

Comment: It is important for the Bernie 2020 campaign to be a collaborative effort and not merely a substitute for existing campaigns. I don't subscribe to the methods laid out in the amendment for obtaining commitments from the Sanders' campaign because I don't think they're likely to be successful or substitute a laundry list or priorities for strategy. But I also don't think Bernie 2020 is a panacea for building a mass party or movement. To the extent it fails to contend with internal factions and substantive commitments, it can prevent us from being in the forefront of everything from climate activism to--ironically--putting forward a universal program.

Comment on [Proposal 8: Membership Identification Numbers and Standardized Citywide Voting](#)

Author: Zyad Hammad

Comment: I'm a member of the Labor Branch OC, and have heard a number of complaints from Chapter and Branch members about the supplementary voting rights given to Labor Branch members.

I've heard that there are some citywide bylaws or policies which provide Labor Branch members with the ability to vote twice in citywide matters, once at a Labor Branch meeting and once at their respective Geographic Branch meeting.

I hope this comment reaches someone who can 1. ensure that citywide issues will only be given one vote per member, regardless of affiliation with the Labor Branch, and 2. ensure that each branch, including the Labor Branch, is given the same representation in citywide matters.

As things stand I don't find this to be the most pressing issue, but if a simple change in language allows for less factionalism in our organization I will gladly support it.

PS: I support the current NYC-DSA Labor Branch bylaws which determine who is a voting Labor Branch member, and would encourage anyone who takes issue with them to write to labor@socialists.nyc so that the position of Labor Branch Organizing Committee members and general members can be explained (the bylaws were adopted democratically by the branch earlier in 2018). As always, Labor Branch attendance is strongly encouraged for anyone regardless of Branch membership, as we hope the lessons of the Labor Branch can be shared far and wide!

Comment on [Proposal 9: Mutual Aid/Disaster Preparedness Subcommittee](#)

Author: Aaron Eisenberg

Comment: As one of the drafters of this proposal I want to give some background on why we brought it to this body. We tried to put this proposal to CLC first rather than Steering Committee directly because our proposal actively affects each branch directly. It also felt relatively more democratic since branches could then conduct debates on it. The 5 positions that CLC took up for debate are great questions--contentious with clear arguments for and with real questions from comrades that need to be answered for against. They determine the direction we are going. We do not think our proposal is more important than any of these, we recognize that this is not as sexy a proposal as some of the others but we feel it is as necessary as all of them. Overall we think that this CLC session showcases the need for another formal process to exist in order to ratify necessary protocols outside of convention and CLC since the CLC only meets every three months and each time it could be what is most divisive that needs most discussion. We look forward to being part of the discussions for what that could look like and hope we can pass this measure in some other way to have these important protocols in place.

Comment on [Proposal 9: Mutual Aid/Disaster Preparedness Subcommittee](#)

Author: Bennett Gelly

Comment: I strongly support the existence of the Mutual Aid/Disaster Relief group within NYC-DSA. We have witnessed these projects sprouting organically across the country as natural disasters strike and chapters are driven to respond, often receiving tens of thousands of dollars in donations from across the country. While the efforts of these groups have been extremely successful, they require a huge amount of effort. Through hearing from comrades in Chico, Oakland, Spacecoast, Tallahassee, Houston, North Carolina, and South Florida, my biggest takeaway is that DSA has enormous capability to respond, but that these things take time and thought that a sudden disaster does not grant you. In NYC, we have a group of people willing to take on the work of figuring these things out (as much as is possible when so much about a disaster is unknown) well beforehand, with the understanding that we will do best by our communities when we feel prepared.

I understand that the February CLC meeting will be taken up by the discussion of many important proposals, and I appreciate the care with which each of the proposals, selected for the agenda or not, were reviewed. But I am disappointed that such little space has been cleared for the discussion of ramping up NYC-DSA's efforts in mutual aid. This has unfortunately been the case for a long time. While I am not in the MA/DR group personally, I appreciate the work they are doing by building our base through a diverse set of approaches. Through my connections to some of the people organizing MA/DR, I have been surprised and encouraged by the amount of "outside" groups willing to work with DSA on this, groups who have not been engaged with DSA in the past to my knowledge. The MA/DR group is pulling people from all corners of the city into their shared vision of mutual aid as a true display of solidarity with our neighbors, and I think they deserve to have the support of our entire chapter, and all the resources that entails, behind them in this work.

Comment on [Proposal 9: Mutual Aid/Disaster Preparedness Subcommittee](#)

Author: Caroline DeLuca

Comment: Hello, I'm writing as a member of the Mutual Aid Disaster Relief subcommittee. I appreciate the importance of all of the proposals on the table for the CLC to spend time considering, but I'd like to urge the CLC to reconsider delaying the consideration of Proposal 9. In MADR we have been working hard to learn from past experiences of disaster relief and recovery aid organizers, to understand the differing needs and socioeconomic struggles of various neighborhoods, to assess and build internal skills and resources so that we are as equipped as we can be to work in solidarity with the most affected communities in the case of a natural disaster. However, we will be unable to put all this work to effective use without the ability to tap into the communications networks DSA has developed. In an emergency situation, dealing with internal bureaucracy and delays will seriously hinder our efficacy. A disaster could happen at any time, and our being as prepared as possible to take coordinated action could be the difference between life and death for some. Please reconsider delaying this proposal! Solidarity.

Comment on [Proposal 9: Mutual Aid/Disaster Preparedness Subcommittee](#)

Author: Christine Pries

Comment: While I understand that the CLC was presented with a plethora of important proposals and I deeply appreciate the work that goes into sorting through and prioritizing which to discuss, I am very disappointed to see that the Mutual Aid/Disaster Relief (“MA/DR”) proposal was not selected high enough for discussion in the upcoming meeting. Time is so of the essence when it comes to our city being threatened by a natural disaster, and I fear that the time lags between opportunities to bring this proposal to a decision-making body will be too long.

A weak point that we have been warned about by DSA comrades who have recently been involved in disaster relief work around the country stems from the lack of advance planning. “Planning” here means any of a variety of things, and the MA/DR subcommittee has been working hard over the past year+ to start on aspects of planning such as building relationships with groups that we anticipate to be major partners in local relief work, mapping out our skills and resources internally, and more.

However, we now need to formalize facets of this process so we can be proactive rather than reactive. As our CLC proposal addresses, the two things that we absolutely need agreed upon and written down in advance of the next disaster are how to deal with 1) money and 2) intra-NYC-DSA communication.

The avenues in place for NYC-DSA as an organization to address disaster relief work (particularly with respect to distributing money from donations raised in the moment of a crisis and standardized/timely communication to all NYC-DSA members across branches, working groups, etc.) are either non-existent or could end up with so much bureaucracy that the slowness renders the organization unhelpful, if not actively harmful. Our proposal attempts to rectify this.

While we in the MA/DR subcommittee are laying the groundwork to immediately mobilize effectively when disaster strikes and we will be able to get boots on the ground regardless, in the event of a knowable disaster we really need to maximize the potential of this massive citywide organization by being able to put our money where our mouth is as well as have access to the full communication channels.

Comment on [Proposal 9: Mutual Aid/Disaster Preparedness Subcommittee](#)

Author: Daniel Chi Cook

Comment: I have been supporting the efforts of my comrades in the Mutual Aid / Disaster Relief subcommittee for several months and I am pleased to say that being involved in these efforts has not only been really fulfilling, but also has motivated me to deepen my engagement with NYC-DSA as a whole. I know several other comrades for whom this is the same case, either with MA/DR or other mutual aid projects. There is something about mutual aid, and similar types of efforts, that I feel is uplifting and invigorating. I hope that every person in DSA gets chances to experience this. This proposal is a way to create a framework for NYC-DSA to provide mutual aid in times when people need it the most. Efforts like Occupy Sandy proved that anti-capitalist, mutual-aid-based responses can provide much needed relief, surpassing the capabilities of state-based agencies and nonprofits, all while building community cohesion and good will. What can embody our shared socialist vision better than helping our neighbors during times of need? This proposal is a way to involve members of the chapter in meeting the direct needs of the people of this city during a time of crisis. It establishes a simple way for the chapter to demonstrate its commitments to providing aid and support to New Yorkers, and to continue building capacity for that commitment. It gets some of the basic administrative details out of the way beforehand, so that we can be ready when a disaster hits.

From Oakland to Chico to Houston to Tallahassee, in the wake of disasters created or made worse by capitalism, our comrades have responded with inspiring, selfless acts of love, compassion, and solidarity. Most of these efforts were spontaneous--but a recurring lesson is that had even a minimal response protocol been in place beforehand, more could have been done. This proposal establishes such a minimum protocol, easing the cognitive and decision-making loads that the chapter's membership and leadership would have to deal with in a time of emergency, ensuring that we use our time and resources as effectively as possible.

As fires rage in the west and waters rise in the east, as droughts ravage the land and storms menace the coasts, we are called on to hold fast to our solidarity in the face of these existential challenges, and to solidify our bonds with those communities that are most vulnerable to these challenges. I understand that the CLC has a lot on its plate, and I am so grateful that you all are taking the time to consider each of these proposals, and to communicate this process to the chapter. Many items on the bulletin have important ramifications for either the structure or the direction of the chapter and may require contentious debate. However, the MA/DR proposal is an easy win for ensuring that the chapter is creating an alternative future--the future we want. When we respond to disasters and prepare for them on our own terms, rather than waiting for capitalists or the capitalist state to dictate the response, we are creating socialism in our lifetimes.

Comment on [Proposal 9: Mutual Aid/Disaster Preparedness Subcommittee](#)

Author: Ella Merrill

Comment: The Mutual Aid/Disaster Relief subcommittee of the Ecosocialist Working Group officially formed after a political education event we put on in late 2017 with Ashley Dawson on his book *Extreme Cities* where our discussion focused on a concept he entitled “Disaster Communism.” In his book he wrote of the success and failures of Occupy Sandy and presented, much like Rebecca Solnit did in her book *A Paradise Built in Hell* that disasters have the ability to spawn extraordinary opportunity as entire systems are undone and society is left in flux. A group of our members left that moment dedicated to be proactive for the next storm. This group began conducting their own conversations speaking with members of Occupy Sandy on how they had succeeded in filling gaps left by the city and large nonprofits, and where their efforts had fallen short. It went on to speak with and learn from DSA members from across the country who have participated in disaster work from Houston to Puerto Rico and Chico to Oklahoma City, we received the same message from each branch--that they wish they had prepared before a storm and had processes in place so they could be ready rather than reactive.

We believe that as an organization with upwards of 4,000 dues paying members (the largest of any non-union in NYC), NYC-DSA is extremely well-positioned to provide meaningful aid and support to the city in times of disaster. The beauty of mutual aid is that it does not require every participant to have received special training or to carry professional equipment, but it does take preparation, and numbers, and it will require the full use of the social channels that have been established by DSA members for many years. In other words, it will require the full support of the leaders of this organization. We expect hundreds if not thousands of DSA members will want to help when a disaster strikes. As a subcommittee, we are working now to ensure we understand the most effective ways of performing aid in order to support them. We drafted this proposal to avoid bureaucracy when a storm strikes, because we understand that these things take time, but decisions in an emergency often need to happen in the blink of an eye.

We recognize the need to formalize these processes because we have spent the last year thinking specifically about these processes. We saw how the poor handling of the funds to Charlottesville restricted the ability for the funds to do what they were meant to do--help people, and also tarnished DSA's reputation. We propose formalizing our process here so we can have a transparent system set up so when the next expected disaster does strike we can be ready. Whether this proposal is approved or not, the members of this group will strive to build DSA's participation in mutual aid. But we cannot feasibly organize a city-wide effort to the magnitude that we strive for without the listserves, social media networks, and donation streams that NYC-DSA is equipped to provide.

Comment on [Proposal 9: Mutual Aid/Disaster Preparedness Subcommittee](#)

Author: Mike Horwitz

Comment: Hi! I heard that the MA/DR proposal didn't make the CLC's meeting agenda this month, and I was hoping y'all might reconsider adding it. I think it's really important for DSA to be able to provide support and solidarity for people in the most urgent and critical circumstances, and this proposal seems like a start toward building that organizational capability. Thanks!

Comment on [Proposal 9: Mutual Aid/Disaster Preparedness Subcommittee](#)

Author: Mitch Jones

Comment: I am writing in support of the mutual aid/disaster preparedness subcommittee proposal. The committee has spoken with comrades who have participated in disaster work in New York in the wake of superstorm Sandy as well as from Houston, Puerto Rico, and Chico. Each time, the message has been that they wish they had prepared more before a storm and had processes already in place so they could be ready rather than reactive.

We have seen the failures of the state to provide for working people affected by natural disasters and also the predatory disaster capitalism that arises in the wake of these events. With over 3,000 members, NYC-DSA is well-positioned to provide meaningful aid and support to the city in times of disaster and then continue to stand with working people to beat back any attempts by disaster capitalists to profit from the misfortunes of others. Disasters like this are both opportunities to help people, which is an end on its own, but also an opportunity to base-build by engaging directly with impacted communities (likely to be poorer or communities of color) and demonstrating that socialists have real solutions to the mounting crises of the 21st century.

Mutual aid does not require every participant to have received special training or to carry professional equipment, but it does take preparation, and numbers, and it will require the full use of the social channels that have been established by DSA members for many years. We see a need to formalize our plan now so that we are ready to go when disaster strikes (which we know is a matter of when, not if). We also saw how the poor handling of the funds to Charlottesville restricted the ability for the funds to do what they were meant to do--help people, while also tarnishing DSA's reputation. We propose formalizing our process here so we can have a transparent system set up so when the next expected disaster does strike we can be ready. Whether this proposal is approved or not, the members of this group will strive to build DSA's participation in mutual aid. But we cannot feasibly organize a city-wide effort to the magnitude that we strive for without the listserves, social media networks, and donation streams that NYC-DSA is equipped to provide.

Comment on [Proposal 9: Mutual Aid/Disaster Preparedness Subcommittee](#)

Author: Nikhil Shimpi

Comment: The MA/DR proposal on one level simply reflects the need for a means to combat devastation in the context of a natural environment and society that are becoming less predictable and more difficult for people to confront--whether on a psychological or personal level.

But it also reflects our need to develop capacities on the neighborhood level and outside of our middle-class base. We can look to the example of alternative social institutions in the vein of the historic Italian Communist Party or on the right, the Evangelical Church and comparable Islamic institutions in the Global South. We are helping our comrades and people who may be our natural allies while creating intellectual resources and connections with everyone from the City of New York to neighborhood committees, Occupy Sandy alumni, and broad-based and Latinx/Boricua community environmental groups.

As well as tenant organizing, this is a project that is both massive and offers a simple means for building robust perennial institutions as opposed to ad-hoc and temporary campaigns. It will allow us to build support within DSA and the city to enable us to not only face internal but external challenges. It also allows us to building internal capabilities as medics, urban planners and mappers, individuals who can perform muck-and-gut operations, or neighborhood organizers. Whether you look at this within the frame of dual power, prefiguration, base-building, or transforming our capacity, it is one of the many projects to which we should lend support on the city level for the benefit of NYC-DSA and the entire community.

Comment on [Proposal 9: Mutual Aid/Disaster Preparedness Subcommittee](#)

Author: Rachel Fifi-Culp

Comment: I joined DSA specifically to work on disaster recovery through the lens of mutual aid. I'm originally from New Orleans, and lived for most of my life in Houston before moving to NYC. Disaster capitalism is increasingly becoming part of leftist dialogue formally, but it's been a part of community organizing in these locations for awhile. Houston DSA went to extreme lengths to run an operation after Harvey, and while I wasn't involved in the DSA at that time, I was involved in other community organizing efforts. The size of the DSA is an extreme asset to organizing community mutual aid. The mutual aid group recognizes the need to formalize these processes because we have spent the last year thinking specifically about these processes. We propose formalizing our process here so we can have a transparent system set up so when the next expected disaster does strike we can be ready. There's no chance right wing groups do not form organizational structures to respond to disaster. You've already seen the Cajun navy, but more monetary relief will likely spring up as well. Silence from the organized left at strong opportunities for the spread of democratic socialism is self defeating.

Comment on [Proposal 9: Mutual Aid/Disaster Preparedness Subcommittee](#)

Author: SB

Comment: Very few things we can do at this point other than protecting ourselves. This is all a complement to your centralized social democracy. We are not the enemy.

Comment on [Proposal 10: Policy Platform for NYC-DSA](#)

Author: Miriam Bensman

Comment: I think it would be valuable to develop a broad statement of our policy platform, and state our perspectives on how we to address various issues as socialists. It would give visibility to our commitment to many issues we care about and our WGs are fighting for, but which aren't our priority campaigns.

By contrast, I think we should NOT develop our own version of [Where We Stand](#). I think national organizations should have only one, national statement of political philosophy.

Comment on [Proposal 12: Working Group Census](#)

Author: Cheyenna Weber

Comment: Surveys of working groups should include demographic information. Where working groups are primarily led by people whose identities align with dominant social groups (white, male, affluent, college educated, Christian, able-bodied, cis, straight), efforts should be made by CLC leaders (this can be delegated) to address this directly with the working group. The goal isn't to kick anybody out of leadership or to fundamentally disrupt operations, but to build capacity of working groups to become more inclusive of the diversity of identities that make up NYC's working class.

Comment on [Proposal 12: Working Group Census](#)

Author: Nikhil Shimpi

Comment: The proposal seems broad for one that recapitulates reports that that could be performed in less exacting ways. It also includes vague standards about the sufficiency of working groups that could limit non-typical or long-term campaign work.

Updates could involve the working group (WG) reports that appear to have been partially abandoned as well as consistent and more general communication with WGs. The Red Letter could also be a public source for information.

Finally, the standards for identifying working groups that are not following democratic standards or acting without clear purpose or vision or at odds with NYC-DSA's goal are vague in that they do not identify whether WG/citywide bylaws, constitution, or CLC resolutions set forth the applicable principles.

The types of work that groups adopt reflect the type of issues and projects available to them and the standard does not reflect that reality. There is finally a possibility that a largely top-down organizing plan will fail to properly reflect the energy among rank-and-file members and what we have the capacity to support.

Comment on [Proposal 12: Working Group Census](#)

Author: Bronx/Upper Manhattan Political Education Working Group

Comment: We are writing to express our concerns about Proposal 12, Working Group Census, particularly the final section of this proposal, which gives the Steering Committee the power to put Working Groups on probation and dissolve them. We urge the CLC to reject this proposal unless all language granting this power or similar powers to the Steering Committee is removed.

First and foremost, we see no good reason for the Steering Committee to have this power. A citywide Working Group Census to encourage coordination, collaboration and self-assessment could be a very positive thing. But we believe giving the Steering Committee the power to discipline and dissolve Working Groups would make the census seem less an opportunity for better collaboration than a top-down managerial performance review, which hinders rather than encourages cooperation. If there are problems with a Working Group's structure, focus or work, we feel the appropriate response would be to engage the group's members in comradely discussion about these problems. To the argument that dissolving non-"functional" Working Groups would free up members' time and resources for more productive campaigns, we reply that, if the Steering Committee were to exercise such a level of control over what kinds of work chapter members can do, this would be more likely to drive people away from the organization than to push them into more productive work.

Furthermore, the criteria for deciding whether a Working Group should be put on probation seem very vague. Surely we can all agree that it's bad if a Working Group is "operating in a non-democratic way," but it's less clear that we would all agree on what constitutes a non-democratic way of operating. We worry that the vagueness of these criteria could inadvertently make the Working Group Census into a political tool in disputes within the chapter. (This is not to say that current Steering Committee or any particular individual would do this, but we feel it's generally bad form to open ourselves to such possibilities without a demonstrated need, if only because it creates an unnecessary risk.)

Finally, we feel that the proposal does not establish sufficient accountability around the Steering Committee's decisions. If the Steering Committee were empowered to discipline or dissolve Working Groups, the Steering Committee should also be explicitly required to make that decision public along with its reasoning (making allowances for members' privacy). We also feel that, if the Steering Committee were to vote to dissolve a Working Group, the Working Group should be able to appeal that decision not only to the CLC but to the local membership; for this purpose, the Steering Committee should be required to set up a special meeting, open to all local members, where the Steering Committee and the Working Group could each present their case, and the membership could vote to accept or reverse the Steering Committee's decision.

We value NYC-DSA's multi-tendency nature and its members' freedom to conceive, organize and carry out their own projects and campaigns; those campaigns flourish or fail based on the organizers' ability to bring their comrades on board. We feel that this approach benefits an organization committed to democracy, and we see no reason to burden it with disciplinary constraints lacking necessity and due diligence. Citywide coordination and citywide priorities are fine things, but they should not adversely impact the membership's ability to self-organize.

In solidarity,
The Bronx/Upper Manhattan Political Education Working Group