

## **Central Connecticut DSA State/Municipal Candidate Questionnaire 2021**

**Candidate Name:**

**Elected Office:**

**Submission Date:**

Thank you for applying for an endorsement with the Central Connecticut chapter of the Democratic Socialists of America. If you have any questions about this document or the endorsement process feel free to email us at \_\_\_\_\_. And please return the completed questionnaire by \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_ 2021.

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## **DSA and Democratic Socialism**

1. Are you a member of DSA? If not, would you join?
2. What is your theory of social change?
3. How does the campaign you are planning and the elected position you are considering relate to your theory of social change? How do you see electoral politics advancing socialism?
4. Do you identify as a socialist? What does socialism mean to you? Are you willing to run publicly as a socialist?
5. Will you be willing to run with other DSA-endorsed candidates as a slate? Are you open to working with DSA when developing your platform?
6. How does your candidacy represent the district you intend to run in, along with Central CT DSA?
7. Will you pledge not to take any campaign contributions from for-profit corporate PACs, affiliated super PACs and dark money, as well as, real estate developers and speculators, corporate lobbyists, and fossil fuel executives?
8. Will you pledge not to take any campaign contributions or endorsements from organizations in the carceral system (such as law enforcement unions)?
9. Will you agree to have the Central CT DSA examine your campaign finance records?
10. Will you allow the DSA Electoral Working Group to create campaign materials to distribute during its work on your campaign?
11. DSA has a large and active volunteer base. Will you support DSA training our own volunteers, running our own canvasses, and campaigning openly as DSA members?
12. What paid staff and/or consultants have you hired?

13. Who will be running your campaign? If nobody, would you be willing to have DSA embeds as your campaign manager, Field Director, and other positions as they become available?

14. Will you allow DSA to collaborate with you on your field plan and program? Will you allow DSA to keep copies of all data we collect through voter contact?

15. What voter contact program are you using for your campaign?

16. [LARGER CAMPAIGNS] In past campaigns, DSA has had teams of member-organizers who work directly with campaign staff on areas including field, communications, fundraising, data, and legal compliance. Will you agree to this arrangement and guarantee that your staff will build direct relationships with members of our campaign team?

## Goals of Your Campaign

1. What is your estimated number of votes needed to win? What is expected overall turnout & have you run before and if so how many votes did you get?
2. What is the central message of your campaign? And what are your top policy priorities?
3. What are the issues that will distinguish you from other candidates?
4. How will your campaign appeal to working class voters and those disaffected with the political process?
5. What party lines will you be seeking for the general election? Have you applied for the endorsement of the Working Families Party? Have you sought the endorsement of your Democratic Town Committee?
6. How much money will you need to successfully compete in this race and what is your plan to raise it?
7. What relationships do you have in your district that could form a base of support, through activism, organizing, work or personal networks?
8. What additional endorsements are you going to seek & how will you seek their endorsement? Including but not limited to elected officials, political organizations, unions and community leaders.
9. How do you see yourself acting as a movement candidate? What does that mean to you?

## Goals in Office

1. If elected, you'll be one of a few representatives who support a Democratic Socialist vision for our city/town/state. How will you work with other democratic socialists and allies in the City Council and other bodies (such as the Connecticut General Assembly, or a board of alders) to form a unified and effective democratic socialist movement in the Connecticut/Municipal government?
2. Beyond contributing significantly to capacity in field, fundraising and other aspects of the campaign, would you be open to having DSA members as staff in policy positions and/or to collaborating with our working groups on policy?
3. What would the role of constituent services staff in your district be?
4. Do you think there is a role for district staff in creating a climate for radical political change?
5. Will you agree to appear periodically at monthly DSA branch meetings in your district?
6. Will you join a Democratic Socialist caucus in the municipal legislature/Connecticut General Assembly? If none exists, would you be interested in starting one?
7. [NOT FOR MUNICIPALS] What committees [on the Connecticut General Assembly] would you want to join?
8. [NOT FOR MUNICIPALS] Who do you think you will support as Leader/Speaker of the Municipal Legislative body/Connecticut General Assembly?

## Housing Justice

1. Do you believe housing is a human right and should be guaranteed to all?
2. What are your proposals for creating deeply and permanently affordable housing for all [Connecticut/Municipality]?
3. What do you see as the causes of gentrification and displacement? How will you address them as a Council Member/State Legislator?
4. Would you support an immediate moratorium on the sale or lease of all city/town or state-owned land to for-profit developers? Would you require that any housing built on public land be 100% permanently affordable to low- and extremely-low income CT residents? How would you determine the affordability levels of housing built on public land?
5. What is your assessment of the commercial rent crisis in Connecticut? How would you address it?
6. What is your assessment of the Town/City/State's current land use approval process? How would you advocate changing it?
7. Do you support imposing affordability requirements on as-of-right (or local equivalent) development? \*As-of-right roughly means any development that requires no special permit or input from local planning/zoning commission
8. What role do you think land zoned for manufacturing use should play in Connecticut's/[Your Municipality] economic ecosystem? Would you seek to increase or decrease land zoned for manufacturing? Why?
9. How would you seek to end racist and economically discriminatory and undemocratic rezonings?
10. What is/has been the most important land use fight in your district? What position did you or would you advocate for?
11. [MUNICIPAL] How would you identify and obtain funds to rectify the chronic underfunding of maintenance and capital repairs in [CT/[Municipality] HA buildings? Will you commit to ending the sale or leasing of CT/[Municipality] HA land and air rights? [Do you support the

Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program] \*Is there a CT equivalent? \*? What would you do to increase tenants' democratic control?

12. Do you support the expansion of programs that allow formerly incarcerated people to access public housing?

13. What reforms would you advocate in all agencies that touch on land use decision-making to remove the influence of the real estate industry from agency decision making?

14. How will you protect public parks and green spaces from privatization by developers and conservancies?

15. How would you support tenant unions through legislation?

16. Will you work with [Central CT]-DSA to develop a socialist land use platform?

## **Expanding and Deepening Our Democracy**

1. How would you seek to increase democratic involvement and representation within your district? Do you support participatory budgeting?
2. How do you view the role of the Council/State Legislature, particularly in comparison to the Mayor/First-Selectman/Governor, Comptroller, and Attorney General?
3. What are your thoughts on community boards and their role in city governance? Do you want to change how the boards are selected and/or operate? If so, how? What interests or communities would you try to represent with your appointments?
4. What are your thoughts on DTCs and their role in city/town governance? Do you want to change how the DTCs are selected and/or operate? If so, how? What interests or communities would you try to represent with your appointments?
5. What are your thoughts on nonpartisan city/town elections?
6. Do you support the following: (For any you don't support, please explain why)
  - i. Increasing/including the public matching funds ratio for Connecticut elections?
  - ii. Requiring all Council Members/State Legislators to participate in Participatory Budgeting and expanding funding for the program?
  - iii. Offering all City/State residents the right to vote in City/State elections, regardless of immigration status or prior felony conviction?
7. Do you support Ranked Choice Voting?
8. Do you support sortition? For example, processes like Citizens' Assemblies and Citizen Juries?

## Labor

1. What is your relationship to unions and the labor movement in [City/Town/Connecticut]? If you have been in any unions please list.
2. What would you do to support the rights of workers to form unions, and to expand unionization in [City/Town/Connecticut]?
3. What minimum salary do you promise to pay your staffers? How does this reflect your ideas of what a living wage should be, and who should have access to the political system? Will you agree to pay any hired canvassers a minimum of \$15 an hour?
4. **[If statewide]** Will you recognize a staff collective bargaining agreement (CBA) if created?
5. Will you support the Connecticut legislature's ongoing efforts to respond to the Supreme Court's *Janus v. AFSCME* case?
6. How can we ensure fair conditions for people working in Connecticut's gig economy?
7. Will you support any striking workers in Connecticut, even if their actions violate legal restrictions? Can you describe any situations in which you would not support a strike?
8. Do you support the following: (For any you don't support, please explain why)
  - i. Raising the local CT wage beyond \$15 and eliminating any sub-minimum wage exceptions (e.g. tipped wage, SSDI, and for those incarcerated)? What do you think the minimum wage should be?
  - ii. State legislation on fair scheduling?
  - iii. City/Town/State legislation to require paid vacation for all workers?
  - iv. Banning unpaid internships?
  - v. Will you support your staff if they want to unionize?
  - vi. Workers' Standards Boards?
  - vii. Just cause employment?
  - viii. Unionized Worker Cooperatives and Employee Ownership?
  - ix. Labor Education to Create a Climate Corps for a Green New Deal?

x. Sectoral bargaining?

xi. The PRO Act?

## **Decarceration**

1. What is your view on the role of police in **[CT Schools / Municipality's Schools]** Public Schools?
2. What steps would you support taking to end the "school-to-prison pipeline"?
3. Do you support reducing the **[CT State Police / Municipality PD]**PD budget? If so, by how much? If not, why?
4. What role should police play in regard to the homeless?
5. Would you support a hiring freeze and reductions in the **[CT State Police / Municipality PD]**PD force?
6. Do you see an armed police force as a primary or a necessary institution to foster public safety? If not, what concrete policies or programs would you like to see as an alternative? How would you hope to begin moving towards them?
8. Do you support a "duty to intervene" law, to require police to intervene if they see another officer harming or risking the safety of a member of the public, with a failure to intervene as a fireable offense?
9. How would you ensure that any **[CT State Police / Municipality PD]** misconduct settlements are not paid for by the state / municipality's resources outside those already allotted to the police department?
10. Do you support attrition of **[CT State Police / Municipality PD]** through aggressive investigation and firings of officers found to have participated in any unprovoked brutality?
11. Would you support making covering name and badge number during any civilian interaction a fireable offense?
12. Do you consider yourself a prison abolitionist? If so, how will that affect the way you legislate in the **[State Legislature / Municipality Council]**?

13. What roles, measures and legislation will you take in your role as **[legislator/councilor/executive position]** to improve the medical wellbeing and health of incarcerated people?

15. Do you support the following: (For any you don't support, please explain why)

- i. Not building any new jails, prisons, or detention centers in Connecticut?
- ii. Closing Northern Correctional Institution in Somers?
- iii. Ending solitary confinement statewide?
- iv. Fight to disarm and defund campus police on Connecticut public college campuses
- v. Significantly reducing the number of people in CT prisons (beyond the criminal justice reforms already passed)?
- vi. Ending or dramatically curtailing the practice of cash bail entirely?
- vii. Creating a State bail voucher program to ensure that no one is held in a CT jail for lack of funds?
- viii. A ban on the use of facial recognition software by law enforcement agencies?
- ix. A ban on partnerships and data sharing with private surveillance companies and tools, such as Amazon Ring?
- x. A ban / pre-emptive ban on the use of predictive policing algorithms?
- xi. An elected,empowered, independent Civilian Complaint Review Board?
- xii. Can we achieve police accountability through the Civilian Complaint Review Board? If so, how? If not, how can we hold police accountable?
- xiii. Will you work with Central CT-DSA to develop a platform for decarceration and community safety and work to implement those goals while in office?

## **Socialist Feminism**

1. Are you a feminist/ally of feminism?
2. What does feminism mean to you?
3. What would you do to address high rates of violence against transgender women, particularly trans women of color?
4. What would you do in office to address the problem of sexual harassment and assault against women in precarious situations, whether in housing, immigration, or low-wage work, that imperils their livelihood, homes, or presence in this country?
5. What consumer protections should be in place to counteract the pink tax?
6. Do you support the following: (For any you don't support, please explain why)
  - i. Funding free preschool, childcare and maternity/paternity leave?
  - ii. Ending "religious exemptions" to bans on discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity?
  - iii. Decriminalizing sex work

## **Trans & Queer Liberation**

1. In what way does our medical and health care system fail queer and trans people and how may we improve it to support them?
2. How can we better protect queer and trans people from housing discrimination?
3. Do you support adding intersex status to existing non discrimination language?
  - i. Do you believe in ending “corrective surgeries” for intersex people until they’ve reached they can consent to any such medical procedure?
4. Do you support increased funding of LGBTQ+ community centers and programs that provide resources and services to members of the LGBTQ+ community?
5. Do you support lowering the age of informed consent to transition?
6. Do you support and stand with our transgender athletes?
7. Do you support removing various financial and bureaucratic barriers to making a successful transition? (ei. the prohibitively high price of changing your name)

## Healthcare Justice

1. How would you guarantee poor and working-class people have access to comprehensive health care services that are free at the point of care, such as reproductive care, mental health, dental, vision, and primary care?
2. How would you guarantee poor and working class people have access to reproductive care?
3. Would you support building safe injection sites? If so, where? How would you implement a harm reduction programming in CT/Your Municipality?
4. Will you oppose the expansion of policing and incarceration into CT hospitals, including the currently proposed jail beds?
5. If it is possible for your town, would you be in support of placing municipal workers on the ct partnership plan?
6. Do you support the following: (For any you don't support, please explain why):
  - i. Health care as a human right for all people
  - ii. Fully-funding public hospitals/community health centers and preventing the closing of any public health care institutions?
  - iii. Residents of Connecticut (Connecticuties/Nutmeggers) rights to reproductive health care, including abortion without restriction and on demand?

## Education

1. Would you support [Your municipality] and [CT] increasing funding to public schools by [\$4 billion], most of which is owed to districts with high percentages of Black, Brown and low-income students?
2. What is your stance on uneven PTA fundraising across schools? How would you address this problem?
3. How will you fight to desegregate the City's school system?
4. Do you support regionalization of Connecticut schools to integrate students of different race and socioeconomic backgrounds?
5. Should "School Resource Officers" (i.e. cops in schools) exist? If no, what should they be replaced with?
6. Do you support the following: (For any you don't support, please explain why)
  - i. Having free tuition for schools in the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU) & UConn systems?
  - ii. Funding CSCU & UConn to raise wages & benefits for adjuncts?
  - iii. A ban on local funding (including tax advantages on income and property) for universities that allow admissions based on "legacy" and similar criteria?
  - iv. Limits on the expansion of charter schools in Connecticut?
  - v. A citywide/statewide prohibition on exclusionary school discipline (i.e. suspensions and expulsions)?
  - vi. Enacting a comprehensive redistricting of public schools to ensure racial integration?
  - vii. Fighting for the funding owed to CT public schools by Connecticut?
  - viii. Will you work with Central CT-DSA to develop a socialist education platform?
  - ix. Creating and supporting teacher-powered schools (i.e., teacher-run schools, similar to worker cooperatives)?
  - x. Should private schools be made public & taxed as for-profit entities?

## Economic Justice

1. Due to lack of affordable options, many households in Connecticut do not have internet access. What should the State be doing to guarantee that all residents have low-cost, high-speed internet access, without increasing the market dominance and consolidation of a handful of internet service providers?

2. Would you support increased transparency for all economic development deals entered into by the State, including:

i. Banning non-disclosure agreements in economic development negotiations

ii. Implementing a “database of deals” to track the economic development budget, and company-specific reporting on relevant data re. jobs created and other promised returns on public investment?

iii. Better delimitation of the geographic areas eligible for incentives?

3. Do you support the following: (For any you don’t support, please explain why)

i. Progressively raising the state’s income tax for higher tax brackets?

ii. Taxing Big Pharma?

iii. Taxing Big Tech?

iv. Taxes on passive investment earnings in wealthy households?

v. Introduce a CEO pay ratio tax

vi. End the unequal taxation of cars

vii. Stop the rollbacks of wealth taxes like the estate tax

viii. Common ownership of natural resources of Connecticut and any technologies or innovations developed with public funding as well as expansion of employee stock ownership plans, co-determination, worker cooperatives, community ownership, municipalization, and nationalization/socialization?

ix. A cap on total subsidies and tax breaks corporations can receive from the municipality/state?

4. How can City/State help close the racial wealth gap in Connecticut? How can municipal government help create more and better jobs for people of color?

5. Do you support efforts to found a public bank for the state that would prioritize neighborhood-led development and investments that benefit poor and working class Connecticut residents?

6. Do you support postal banking -- the provision of low-cost, consumer-driven financial services via the Postal Service?

## Immigrant Justice

1. What existing connections do you have with immigrant-led groups?
  - i. Are there specific immigrant communities in your district whose needs you plan to address in office? What are key issues for these communities?
  - ii. How do you plan to use your office to provide constituent services to immigrants in your district?
2. What is your plan for language access on your campaign?
3. What steps do you think are necessary to establish stronger Sanctuary State protections in Connecticut?
4. What steps do you think are necessary to end police occupation, which disproportionately targets black and brown working-class people, including many undocumented immigrants, and puts immigrants at immediate risk by virtue of fingerprinting, the data for which is automatically shared with DHS?
5. Do you support the following: (For any you don't support, please explain why)
  - i. Legislation prohibiting the use of municipal/state resources, personnel or funds to assist in the enforcement of federal immigration law, such as traffic enforcement for ICE vehicles?
  - ii. Legislation extending voting rights in municipal/state elections to immigrant Connecticut residents?
  - iii. Legislation strengthening the enforcement of worker misclassification laws, particularly around contractors, along with funding for a low-wage immigrant worker defense fund?
  - iv. Increased, and permanent funding in the Connecticut budget for public defense, in both immigration and criminal proceedings?
  - v. Increased city funding for social services accessible to all residents, regardless of citizenship status, to counteract the impacts of Trump's "public charge rule" and immigrants' exclusion from COVID-19 federal aid?
  - vi. Increased funding and resources for municipal/state agencies, hospitals and communities to develop policies and training for staff on know-your-rights information,

both for the immigrant populations they serve and for themselves to exercise their rights to prevent ICE access & arrests?

## Environmental Justice and Transportation

1. Do you endorse [DSA's Ecosocialist Green New Deal Guiding Principles](#)?
2. Would you commit to developing an ecosocialist platform for your campaign in close consultation with Central Connecticut-DSA's Ecosocialist Working Group and its allies?
3. As it relates to transportation, do you support the following (For any you don't support, please explain why):
  - i. Prioritizing public transportation
  - ii. A fully funded and expanded bus service throughout the state?
  - iii. Modernizing and expanding rail service?
  - iv. Build social housing near transit hubs and encourage transit-oriented development
  - v. Fund sustainable urbanism and complete streets projects
  - vi. Electrifying the state's fleet of buses, trains and cars
  - vii. Require carbon to be priced as part of any state environmental impact evaluation
  - viii. Eliminate fares for all public transit
3. Will you advance the goal of a publicly owned, democratically controlled energy system for Connecticut in office?
4. Will you support unionization for all new green jobs and a just transition for fossil fuel industry workers, protecting them by providing them with job transition programs, retraining and income security?
5. What is your stance on powering Connecticut with Canadian hydropower?
6. Do you support fully funding the look up governor's new transportation plan and reducing or eliminating fares? What role do you believe the Municipal/State Government can have in achieving this?
8. What are your primary modes of transportation? How will you commute to work at the council?
9. How do you plan to achieve zero waste by 2030?

## **Foreign Policy**

1. What does think local, act locally mean to you?
2. [MUNICIPALS ONLY] Would you be interested in creating a sister-cities program in your municipality? With what towns and or cities and why?
3. Do you support the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement? If not, why?

## **Personal Section**

1. What is your educational background?
2. Where do you get your news?
3. What organizations are you affiliated with?
4. What projects have you led in your community?
5. What experiences, roles and forms of leadership are you most proud of?
6. Of the past 3 Primary and General Elections, how many have you voted in?
7. What is your connection to the district and municipality you are running in?
8. Are you prepared to ask the members and leaders of your community for their support?
9. How much time are you planning to put into your campaign on a weekly basis?
10. What's your favorite non-electoral hobby?
11. Where does the best pizza come from - and what is your ideal topping order?