



Speak Out Now

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mail@speakoutsocialists.org

speakoutsocialists.org

(510) 343-9105

The Change We Need Won't Come from the Ballot Box

As of this writing, the election results are not clear, but once again billions of dollars have poured into campaigns across the country for this year's election circus. A record \$7 billion has been spent on state-level candidates and ballot measures. This election took place as this system continues to throw our lives into chaos, with a pandemic that still kills thousands every week, an ongoing environmental catastrophe, economic chaos, and increasing conflicts around the globe. And little more than empty promises and open threats have been thrown at us from both parties.

A majority of Republican candidates for Congress and statewide offices have moved further to the right, and continue to support Trump and his denial of the 2020 election results. Their campaigns promise to continue to pass legislation criminalizing abortion, attacking LGBTQ rights, scapegoating immigrants, banning books, restricting voting rights, and more. Several candidates have copied Trump's strategy, threatening they would only accept the election results if they win. And many of them are seeking positions that would only make it easier to possibly overturn election results in the future.

In these circumstances, it is not surprising that many people feel enormous pressure to vote against Republicans in various close races.

But this doesn't mean the Democrats represent something we want. The Democrats mainly point to the fact that they are not Republicans. They even spent \$53 million to fund the campaigns of six far-right Republican candidates in the primaries, hoping it would be easier for Democrats to defeat them in the general election.

A major concern of working people is inflation and the enormous impact it has had on workers' incomes, while corporations make record profits. But what have the Democrats done about this? They have even made things worse for most people. The Biden administration has stated openly that their strategy for inflation is to continue to raise interest rates, and try

to create a recession, likely causing layoffs and wage cuts. In other words, their only solution to inflation is to make workers pay for this out-of-control economy.

Two years of Biden's administration has been mainly unfulfilled promises. They've done nothing about climate disruption except to encourage oil companies to produce more oil as they make record profits. While many Republicans openly threaten immigrants, the Biden administration has been busy deporting immigrants in record numbers, and spending tens of billions to further militarize the border. The Democrats have increased the military budget to record levels, spending about \$800 billion this year. And they continue to escalate military tensions with China, only making a massive war more likely.

The Democrats have tried to turn the midterm elections into a desperate plea to voters to protect abortion access, promising to pass national legislation to reinstate *Roe v. Wade* once the midterms are over. But they likely won't have the votes to pass any legislation if it were even proposed. Plus, they stood back and did nothing as abortion access was chipped away across the country, even when they had a supermajority under Obama. Their desperate attempt may get some extra votes, but it is not the way we will win access to free abortion without restrictions.

Elections are a competition between teams of politicians, with enormous sums of money, to decide who will do the bidding of the banks and corporations. Both defend a system based on the exploitation of the vast majority of people. And neither party defends the interests of working people.

All major social change in this country has been won through social movements, through strikes and massive street protests. We are the majority, and we must count on ourselves. We produce everything and make everything run. Only when we organize and mobilize our forces can we use our power to defend our interests, and fight for the future we deserve.