



Speak Out Now

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Elections Aren't Enough – Democrats Won't Defend Us

Since Trump's election, the Democrats have tried to appear as an opposition to Trump and the Republicans. But it was the Democrat's defense of the billionaires at the expense of working people that helped bring Trump to power. And now, after last week's elections, the Democrats are trying to paint their election victories as another blow against Trump. But this isn't true.

The Democrats won the elections for governor in New Jersey and Virginia. They won California's redistricting ballot measure, Proposition 50, which gave the Democrats new electoral maps that dilute the votes of prior Republican-dominated districts to favor the Democrats. And in New York City, Democrat Zohran Mamdani was elected mayor after running a popular campaign promising lower rent, free buses, cheaper groceries, and affordable childcare while calling himself a Democratic Socialist.

For the most part, the Democrats won because many people wanted a way to vote against Trump and voice their opposition to his policies. They are already trying to use these moderate victories to further channel people's anger into the 2026 midterm elections, when they promise they will finally be able to put a stop to Trump's agenda. The reality is, the Democrats certainly oppose many of Trump's policies in words, but they defend the same class of billionaires and have the same priorities. Just look at the end to the recent government shutdown, where Democrats dragged out negotiations for weeks, only to cave at the last minute with no guarantees on extending health insurance subsidies, the one thing they said they were defending.

By passing Prop 50 in California, now the Democrats will have more power in the state to pass more of the same policies they've passed for decades. They refuse to tax the wealthiest to pay for affordable housing, education, or healthcare. Instead, they continuously cut funding for education, for health care subsidies for the poor, and they criminalize the homeless population. Despite Newsom's posture against Trump using federal troops in Los Angeles, Newsom was the one who called out the National Guard against protestors back in 2020 during large protests against the murder of George Floyd. And now we're supposed to feel relieved that the Democrats have redrawn the electoral map to favor themselves? This won't help working people.

And there's the election of Mamdani, who has made some appealing promises to the working class of New York.

Who wouldn't want affordable housing, childcare and free buses in the most expensive city in the country? Despite all of the opposition from Republicans, the Democratic Party leadership, and most of the wealthy elite who dominate the city of Wall Street, Mamdani still won, with the highest voter turnout in 56 years. Certainly Mamdani's promises are a welcome relief compared to the usual message from politicians. But this wouldn't be the first time a politician has made big promises only to carry out business as usual once in office. What will make this time any different?

Ultimately, for many of Mamdani's promises to be carried out, it is going to come down to what the working class of New York City is willing to fight for. There will be a lot of opposition to his promises coming from both parties and the super-rich of New York City. Mamdani and his cabinet alone are not enough to stand up to this. It will depend on the masses of working-class New Yorkers and their ability to organize to defend their interests themselves.

The Democrats want us to believe that they have all the power to make the changes we need if we simply vote them in. The reality is, they have never done that. Every time they've been in office, especially at the state and federal level, they carry out business as usual and defend this system and its priorities. The Democrats have also cut social programs to favor the wealthy, targeted immigrants, sent federal troops to put down protests, given trillions of dollars to banks and corporations, skyrocketed military spending, and much more. They too, like the Republicans, prioritize the interests of corporations and their profits at the expense of the rest of us, even as the cost of living keeps skyrocketing. Ultimately, they may condemn Trump's authoritarianism and claim they can stop it, but they defend the same system that allows it to grow in the first place.

So the way forward can't just be waiting for the next election and hoping Democrats will save us. We've been down that road too many times. Real power comes from ordinary people organizing ourselves — at work, in schools, in our neighborhoods, and standing together and refusing to accept these attacks. We can't rely on either party to fight for us. We have to build that power ourselves. Only then can we stop the attacks from Trump and the Democrats, who both defend this system. And only then can we fight for a future where our lives and needs actually come first.

Speak Out Now at Highland

A workplace newsletter for AHS workers

November 12th, 2025

Budget Cuts? Why Not Chop From the Top!

At the last desktop leadership chat, executives stated “all options are on the table” when asked if budget cuts may lead to layoffs. If all options are truly on the table, how about cutting executive pay?

At the same meeting, CEO James Jackson stated last year's budget deficit was \$800,000 - about the same amount as his salary that year.

The math adds up - instead of cutting essential workers and services, let's chop from the top!

Open Enrollment Panic Week Concludes

The brief open enrollment period for health insurance ended last week, leaving many workers unsure if they selected the best plan for themselves and their families. But why is open enrollment such a confusing and stressful time?

We have many plans to choose from, with different premiums, deductibles, and out-of-pocket maximums. In addition there are HSAs, FSAs, long term care insurance, and more! With all these choices, it seems like we should be able to make careful plans for the future. However, as healthcare workers we know that health is unpredictable and impossible to know a year in advance.

No one wants to spend too much on premiums for insurance we never use. But we also don't want to get sick or hurt and be left with a big bill for choosing the wrong plan.

Planning for our healthcare should not be this hard, especially for workers who dedicate their careers to taking care of others. Instead of a week-long panic about making the wrong choice, we should have healthcare that is free, high-quality, and accessible to everyone.

I need a health care plan that covers the depression and anxiety caused by trying to understand my health care plan.



Why Only One CT at Night?

Highland night shift nurses often find themselves asking why the hospital operates two CT scanners during the day, but only one at night. Highland recently achieved designation as a stroke center, meaning even more patients are coming through the doors at all hours needing emergency CT scans. Stroke nurses know that “time is brain,” and the faster the patient can get a CT scan, the more likely we can treat them for a stroke.

Highland also remains Oakland's only Level One Trauma Center, receiving patients from car crashes, falls, and accidents 24 hours a day. These patients also need emergency CT scans to look for injuries that might require emergency intervention.

Meanwhile, sick patients who are already in the hospital often have changes in their condition that require emergency CT scans to diagnose.

No one wants to wait in a line for a CT scan when seconds count! If we have two scanners, why only staff one at night? It is obviously not better for the patients, but is a shameful way to provide less service than we are capable of. This is just another example of management prioritizing saving a few bucks over the lives of our patients.

Power Failure at Highland

Last week the power was out in the ACT for about 40 minutes. Thankfully the most necessary machines stayed on, and power was not down for long. But some important equipment, we learned, was not connected to a generator - will management learn from this lesson and be prepared for potentially longer power outages in the future?

Speak Out Socialists Public Meeting

WE WILL NOT PAY

FOR THEIR CRISIS!

Clara Mattei (Professor of Economics at The University of Tulsa) will discuss how the chaos of Trump's policies serve as a cover for the increase of wealth being transferred from the working class to the rich.

Join us for a presentation and discussion!

SUNDAY, NOV 16 @ 4PM

DOORS OPEN 3:45PM (\$5 DONATION)

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