Speak Out Now

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The 2026 Midterms: The Best Democracy Money Can Buy

The amount of money poured into the elections by the super-rich keeps growing. This midterm election is no different, with billionaires projected to spend $11.6 billion by election day, the most in U.S. history.

Elon Musk has already spent $366 million of his own money, not only paying for ads but funding paid canvassers who go door to door trying to influence voters to vote for far-right Republicans across the country who are aligned with Trump. The top 50 individual donors have poured more than $2.3 billion into midterms, with Republican-leaning donors giving about $1.54 billion and about $590 million from Democratic-leaning donors.

In total, the Democrats and Republicans are spending close to the same amounts in this election. Of the top ten candidates running for Congress who've spent the most money, nine of them are Democrats. Billionaires have also poured money into different state ballot measures, trying to block those that would raise their taxes to fund social services, and trying to pass ones that benefit their interests.

To the wealthy, democracy just means the freedom to spend their wealth to get the outcomes they want, whether it's on candidates or ballot measures. They may favor Republicans or Democrats in different elections, but either way, they know that both parties will defend their interests.

At the same time, as billionaires try to get things to go their way, the Trump administration has been maneuvering to tilt the elections in its favor. Over the past two years, it has pushed to give the federal government more power to interfere in elections, bypassing the authority of individual states. It has tried to rewrite voting rules by executive order, demanded states' voter data, and pressured state officials to remove voters, threatening states who refuse with prosecution or lost funding. It has gutted the agencies that oversee elections, raided election offices, refused to rule out deploying federal agents on election day, and laid the groundwork to dispute the results. The courts have blocked some of these moves, but the administration keeps pressing forward to get around them.

And recently, the administration has begun using ICE terror as tool to intimidate voters. For example, there has been increased ICE activity in Central California, with over 100 migrant workers detained in Fresno and Bakersfield. This area includes one of the closest Congressional races in the country, and is in a poor, majority Latino district, with many agricultural workers, and over two-thirds of the residents receiving Medicaid — the most of any district in the country. There are reports of ICE going to people's houses, setting up random traffic stops, and going to workplaces.

It is no coincidence that the administration is deploying ICE into immigrant communities before the elections. The Trump administration is deeply unpopular because of its policies, including supporting Israel's genocide of Palestinians, terrorizing immigrant communities, waging war on Iran, driving up the cost of living, cutting $1 trillion from Medicaid over the next decade, catering to billionaires, and jacking up military spending. There have been similar reports of increased ICE activity coming from other states with close races, like Texas and Arizona, and many other states are anticipating similar ICE activity heading into the elections. The Department of Homeland Security has launched a surge in baseless voter-fraud investigations in nine states while also pressuring states to purge voters from the rolls.

What all of this adds up to couldn't be clearer. The Trump administration is doing what it can to intimidate voters and restrict turnout in order to influence the election, and is preparing to possibly contest the election results afterwards if they don't win. And those behind Trump intend to enact even more cuts to our social services, and transfer even more money to billionaires, and the military. They know the population is opposed to these policies and they are trying to intervene in the elections and intimidate us into silence.

The Democrats certainly try to position themselves as an opposition to Trump. And it is easy to see why some people might see a vote for Democrats as a way to vote against the worst of Trump's agenda. But we won't change our situation with just an election. Standing up to their attacks requires more than just voting.

Regardless of how these midterms play out, it will take a much larger social struggle to defend our interests. There is more to democracy than the voting booth. The working class is the majority of the society and it is our work that makes this system run. Workers' democracy includes voting, but it also means organizing in our workplaces, schools and neighborhoods to defend each other from all of their attacks. That's the kind of democracy we need to defend.

We live in the wealthiest country in the world, and it is our labor that has created all of this wealth. We aren't the ones who benefit from this. The super rich — the bosses of the big corporations and banks — keep the wealth and make all the decisions. Working people do the work that makes society run, and we can organize to unite our forces. When we do, we have enormous power to change things and make a better world.

More Seats for Democrats – to Do What?

In Question 3 on the Maryland ballot this year, we're being asked to approve a redistricting plan to give an extra congressional seat to Democrats. Democrats say this is how they have to respond to states like Texas where Republicans have redistricted to give themselves more seats. Moves like this will take us even further away from democracy. We're told that we voters choose politicians to represent us, but this kind of redistricting lets politicians choose their voters instead. The one time regular people had a win against Trump was when Minnesotans skipped work and school in January and their one-day strike ended the ICE occupation of Minneapolis. In Minneapolis they had a Democratic governor and a Democratic mayor, but it was ordinary people who made the difference, while Democrats sat on their hands. We will save ourselves, not the Democrats.

Where Are Families Allowed to Live?

Baltimore City has bought two apartment buildings on North Howard Street to use as transitional housing for families. This would be a big step up from filthy, infested "congregate shelters" – big facilities where people have to sleep in common spaces with little privacy or safety. That's not a suitable environment for any human being, let alone children! Property developers are now complaining that these apartments will somehow harm the area. With rents soaring, how many of us worry we might also need assistance with housing. Instead of stigmatizing people without housing, we should help them heal from the harm they have suffered from people like the developers who make huge profits from outrageous housing costs. Housing is a basic human need that shouldn't be exploited for money!

MN 15 Defendant Speaker Tour

Defend free speech!

Hear from an anti-ICE activist targeted by Trump!

NEW TIME!

Saturday, November 14, 5pm
Red Emmas
3128 Greenmount Ave

Voting Won't Save Us but We Can Use It to Speak Out!

In the November 3rd midterms Marylanders have a unique opportunity to vote differently. This year, the Working Class Party (WCP) will be on the ballot.

Every election, Democrats and Republicans make huge promises to save working people from the savagery of this

society. The WCP makes a different claim: that elections will not save working people from the capitalists and their endless wars and austerity. Instead, working people must organize themselves and take power!

We couldn't agree more! Democrat or Republican, at the end of the day these politicians serve the billionaires and electing them isn't how we'll win a world that treats workers with dignity. It was organizing and strikes that won gains like social security, not politicians.

We can use our vote for parties like the WCP to show those in power we don't trust their politicians and believe workers should be running society. So, vote, but don't bury your anger in the ballot box!

Baltimore School Board Is Undemocratic

A Baltimore City Public School Board Commissioner recently resigned after it was revealed he hadn't disclosed he was executive director of a nonprofit mental health company that contracted with city schools for over $104,000 in taxpayer money.

Last year, the school board approved a further $21 million 3-year contract with this same company, that was now working with Johns Hopkins and Sheppard Pratt. This year, the board cut ties with the company after the now-ex-board member was exposed.

Baltimore City school board commissioners aren't elected, but appointed by the mayor. If elected teachers and parents of city school students, and students themselves could make decisions about how to use school funding, they'd undoubtedly do a much better job!



The Speak Out Now newsletter will be on hiatus for a few weeks.

See you again late November!