

freedom socialist party

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OPEN LETTER ON THE AUGUST 18, 2009 KING COUNTY PRIMARY ELECTION

August 4, 2009

Dear Friend,

With the economy in crisis, unemployment in Washington State at 9.3%, and poor and working people forking over \$4.7 trillion to bail out the financial sector, you'd think we might have something substantial to vote on in this month's primary.

Not so. The ballot is full of candidates who, while advocating dumping the mayor, still uphold the system that produces the social crises that are tearing the country apart. The single referendum concerns whether to force customers to pay for disposable shopping bags.

Protest is the only logical policy in this election.

Write-in Socialist Workers Party candidates Mary Martin for Seattle Mayor and Edwin Fruit for Seattle City Council, Position 6

The Democrats continue to provide tons of irrefutable evidence that they are the tools of big business, just as much as the Republicans. That is why we cannot recommend a vote for candidates of either party, no matter how progressive they sound. Both parties and their candidates support the existing economic system which is THE roadblock to a better society. "Independent" candidates who are not expressly pro-labor and anti-capitalist are independent in name only. One has to know who the enemies of working people's interests are in order to fight effectively for our rights

Nationally the Democrat-controlled Congress dumped the pro-labor Free Choice Act that would have given workers more power to unionize. The state legislature, also dominated by the Democrats, cut 7,000 public employee jobs, plans to drive the working poor off the Basic Health plan by steeply increasing monthly dues, and bows and scrapes before Boeing. King County and the City of Seattle are forcing their employees to take unpaid furlough days while the workload backs up (union healthcare plans are next on the hatchet block). Meanwhile, Democrat Party luminaries Mayor Nickels and Governor Gregoire take turns chasing the homeless Nickelsville encampment off various parcels of vacant public land. Enough already!

Unfortunately, no anti-capitalists will appear on the printed ballot for this election, so we recommend you write in two Socialist Workers Party (SWP) candidates – Mary Martin for Seattle Mayor and Edwin Fruit for Seattle City Council, Position 6. The SWP is strong on socialist basics such as calling for workers to take power, guaranteed lifetime healthcare for all, and U.S. out of Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan. However, we are disappointed that the SWP has *nothing* to say on local issues and is running a nearly invisible campaign. Nonetheless, it's important to register a protest vote, especially now when workingclass alternatives are so desperately needed.

Vote to reject Referendum 1 – Seattle bag tax

This ballot measure places a 20-cent fee on disposable, carry-home bags (both plastic and paper) at grocery, drug and convenience stores. It does not affect big box stores like Wal-Mart and Target. We oppose this measure because it gouges the poor, the elderly and the homeless with yet another inequitable tax that will make Safeway, QFC and other mega-corporations even richer. The Freedom Socialist Party joins groups like the Central Area Motivation Program (CAMP) in recommending a **no** vote on this referendum. The key to saving the environment is making industrial polluters pay, not beleaguered grocery shoppers.

ALERT: Anti-gay measure *may* be on the November General Election ballot

The state's brand new domestic partnership legislation may face repeal. The law is designed to give lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgenders and some senior couples many of the same rights as married people. Rightwing religious groups gathered 138,000 signatures on their referendum to overturn it. The names are being checked now for accuracy by the Secretary of State. We should know in two or three weeks if they gathered at least 120,577 valid signatures to place the referendum before the electorate. Please contact me if you'd like to help defeat this bigoted measure should it qualify for the November ballot.

In solidarity,
Chris Smith
Seattle Organizer
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PS: FSP will have a literature table at this year's Hempfest, August 15 and 16 at Myrtle Edwards Park. If you'd like to help staff the booth, please contact me at the above phone number or email address.