

SOCIALIST WATCH 2022

An Analysis of Socialist Candidates in the 2022 Midterm Election



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By Justin Haskins, Jack McPherrin, and Chris Talgo

The list included in this *Policy Brief* shows the election victories and losses for a selection of socialist and far-left progressive candidates running for office during the 2022 midterm election. The list was created by a team of researchers from the Socialism Research Center (SRC) at The Heartland Institute, a national free-market think tank.

How We Define ‘Socialist’ and ‘Progressive’ Candidates

This list includes candidates for U.S. House, U.S. Senate, and state-level public offices endorsed by Our Revolution, the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), and / or the Progressive Democrats of America (PDA). All three of these organizations openly advocate for overtly socialist policies and causes.

Our Revolution is a nonprofit organization advocating for the policy agenda of Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT), a self-described socialist. Our Revolution supports socialist policies such as single-payer health care and the Green New Deal as core elements of its policy agenda.¹

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DSA is the largest socialist organization (not a political party) in the United States. According to DSA’s website, “We are activists committed to democracy as not simply one of our political values but our means of restructuring society... We call this vision democratic socialism—a vision of a more free, democratic, and humane society. We are socialists because we reject an international economic order sustained by private profit, alienated labor, race and gender discrimination, environmental destruction, and brutality and violence in defense of the status quo.”²

PDA is a nonprofit organization founded in 2004 to transform the Democratic Party and America by promoting far-left policies throughout the United States.³ PDA supports, among other policies, a national government-managed health care system (Medicare for All), progressive taxes, abolishing immigration enforcement and granting full citizenship to all undocumented persons in the United States, canceling all student loan debt, increasing the minimum wage, supporting labor unions, and transitioning to a fossil fuel-free energy system.

Important Highlights

The biggest takeaway from our research is that the far-left progressive and socialist wings of the Democratic Party continue to gain significant ground at both the federal and state levels of government, following similar trends in the 2018 and 2020 elections.

Our full list includes 132 elections in 26 states. We tracked 78 state-level positions, 50 U.S. House seats, and four U.S. Senate seats.⁴ We discovered socialist or progressive candidates won 120 of those races and lost only 12, resulting in a win percentage of 91 percent for socialist candidates.

If uncontested races and losses are excluded, socialist or far-left progressive candidates won by an average of more than 30 percentage points. This clearly indicates socialist and progressive groups targeted districts they assumed Democrats would win in the general election, rather than sponsoring candidates and investing resources in elections that would be more difficult to win during the general election. In the 12 races socialist candidates lost, their margin of

defeat (-9.8 percent) was more than three times less than the aforementioned margin of victory.

The SRC conducted similar analyses in 2018 and 2020, and the results in the 2022 election show a similar trend. In 2018, we identified 86 progressive and socialist candidates. They won fewer than 40 percent of their races, with slim margins of victory in several highly contested races.⁵ In 2020, we identified 266 progressive and socialist candidates, approximately three times the amount as in 2018. These candidates won more than 90 percent of their races with an average margin of victory of more than 25 percentage points, an astounding increase over a two-year period.⁶

Though we identified fewer candidates in 2022, the socialist win percentage remained steady, at more than 90 percent, and the average margin of victory increased by more than five percentage points. This clearly indicates that socialists continue to reap great rewards at the ballot box, and that socialist organizations are pragmatically targeting Democratic bastions to replace “establishment” Democrats with radical socialists.

Candidate Name (First)	Candidate Name (Last)	State	Office	Win or Loss in 2020
Oscar	De Los Santos	AZ	Arizona House	Won
Raul	Grijalva	AZ	U.S. House	Won
Sandra	Kennedy	AZ	AZ Corporation Commissioner	Lost
Lauren	Kuby	AZ	AZ Corporation Commissioner	Lost
Nanette	Barragan	CA	U.S. House	Won
Judy	Chu	CA	U.S. House	Won
Mark	Desaulnier	CA	U.S. House	Won
Jimmy	Gomez	CA	U.S. House	Won
Jared	Huffman	CA	U.S. House	Won
Fatima	Iqbal-Zubair	CA	California Assembly	Lost
Ro	Khanna	CA	U.S. House	Won
Barbara	Lee	CA	U.S. House	Won
Ted	Lieu	CA	U.S. House	Won
Derek	Marshall	CA	U.S. House	Lost
Grace	Napolitano	CA	U.S. House	Won
Katie	Porter	CA	U.S. House	Won

Candidate Name (First)	Candidate Name (Last)	State	Office	Win or Loss in 2020
Mark	Takano	CA	U.S. House	Won
Maxine	Waters	CA	U.S. House	Won
Monica	Duran	CO	Colorado House	Won
Elisabeth	Epps	CO	Colorado House	Won
Serena	Gonzales-Gutierrez	CO	Colorado House	Won
Iman	Jodeh	CO	Colorado House	Won
Javier	Mabrey	CO	Colorado House	Won
Joe	Neguse	CO	U.S. House	Won
Emily	Sirota	CO	Colorado House	Won
Mike	Weissman	CO	Colorado House	Won
Steven	Woodrow	CO	Colorado House	Won
Saud	Anwar	CT	Connecticut Senate	Won
Jorge	Cabrera	CT	Connecticut Senate	Won
Brandon	Chafee	CT	Connecticut House	Won
Christine	Cohen	CT	Connecticut Senate	Won
Mike	D'Agostino	CT	Connecticut House	Won
Bob	Duff	CT	Connecticut Senate	Won
Joshua	Elliot	CT	Connecticut House	Won
Mae	Flexer	CT	Connecticut Senate	Won
Jaime	Foster	CT	Connecticut House	Won
Henry	Genga	CT	Connecticut House	Won
Bob	Godfrey	CT	Connecticut House	Won
Gregory	Haddad	CT	Connecticut House	Won
Josh	Hall	CT	Connecticut House	Won
Anne	Hughes	CT	Connecticut House	Won
Susan	Johnson	CT	Connecticut House	Won
Julie	Kushner	CT	Connecticut Senate	Won
Matthew	Lesser	CT	Connecticut Senate	Won
Martin	Looney	CT	Connecticut Senate	Won
Rick	Lopes	CT	Connecticut Senate	Won
David	Michel	CT	Connecticut House	Won
Amy	Morrin Bello	CT	Connecticut House	Won
Norm	Needleman	CT	Connecticut Senate	Won
Catherine	Osten	CT	Connecticut Senate	Won
Quentin	Phipps	CT	Connecticut House	Won
Robyn	Porter	CT	Connecticut House	Won

Candidate Name (First)	Candidate Name (Last)	State	Office	Win or Loss in 2020
Matt	Ritter	CT	Connecticut House	Won
Kara	Rochelle	CT	Connecticut House	Won
Manny	Sanchez	CT	Connecticut House	Won
Gary	Turco	CT	Connecticut House	Won
EdWon	Vargas	CT	Connecticut House	Won
Mary	Welander	CT	Connecticut House	Won
Baird	Welch-Collins	CT	Connecticut House	Lost
Gary	Wonfield	CT	Connecticut Senate	Won
Michael	Wonkler	CT	Connecticut House	Won
Maxwell	Frost	FL	U.S. House	Won
Raphael	Warnock	GA	U.S. Senate	Won
Danny	Davis	IL	U.S. House	Won
Chuy	Garcia	IL	U.S. House	Won
Alexi	Giannoulas	IL	Illinois Secretary of State	Won
Jonathan	Jackson	IL	U.S. House	Won
Maria	Peterson	IL	Illinois Senate	Lost
Delia	Ramirez	IL	U.S. House	Won
Jan	Schakowsky	IL	U.S. House	Won
Rachel	Ventura	IL	Illinois Senate	Won
Andre	Carson	IN	U.S. House	Won
Jim	McGovern	MA	U.S. House	Won
Ayanna	Pressley	MA	U.S. House	Won
Erika	Uyterhoeven	MA	Massachusetts House	Won
Jamie	Raskin	MD	U.S. House	Won
Benjamin	Collings	ME	Maine House	Won
Troy	Jackson	ME	Maine Senate	Won
Grayson	Lookner	ME	Maine House	Won
Chloe	Maxmin	ME	Maine Senate	Won
Mike	Sylvester	ME	Maine House	Won
Debbie	Dingell	MI	U.S. House	Won
Rashida	Tlaib	MI	U.S. House	Won
Keith	Ellison	MN	Minnesota Attorney General	Won
Ilhan	Omar	MN	U.S. House	Won
Cori	Bush	MO	U.S. House	Won
Alma	Adams	NC	U.S. House	Won
Vanessa	Agudelo	NY	New York Assembly	Won

Candidate Name (First)	Candidate Name (Last)	State	Office	Win or Loss in 2020
Jamaal	Bowman	NY	U.S. House	Won
Kristen	Gonzalez	NY	New York Senate	Won
Robert	Jackson	NY	New York Senate	Won
Josh	Riley	NY	U.S. House	Lost
J. Gustavo	Rivera	NY	New York Senate	Won
Sarahana	Shrestha	NY	New York Assembly	Won
Nydia	Velazquez	NY	U.S. House	Won
Alexandria	Ocasio-Cortez	NY	U.S. House	Won
Gary	Josephson	OH	U.S. House	Lost
Earl	Blumenauer	OR	U.S. House	Won
Val	Hoyle	OR	U.S. House	Won
Jamie	McLeod-Skinner	OR	U.S. House	Lost
Andrea	Salinas	OR	U.S. House	Won
John	Fetterman	PA	U.S. Senate	Won
Elizabeth	Fiedler	PA	Pennsylvania House	Won
Rick	Krajewski	PA	Pennsylvania House	Won
Summer	Lee	PA	U.S. House	Won
David	Cicilline	RI	U.S. House	Won
Terry	Alexander	SC	South Carolina House	Won
Justin	Bamberg	SC	South Carolina House	Won
Wendell	Gilliard	SC	South Carolina House	Won
Leon	Howard	SC	South Carolina House	Won
Krystle	Matthews	SC	U.S. Senate	Lost
Michael	Rivers	SC	South Carolina House	Won
Ivory	Thigpen	SC	South Carolina House	Won
Steven	Cohen	TN	U.S. House	Won
Gloria	Johnson	TN	Tennessee House	Won
Greg	Casar	TX	U.S. House	Won
Jasmine	Crockett	TX	U.S. House	Won
Lloyd	Doggett	TX	U.S. House	Won
Michelle	Vallejo	TX	U.S. House	Lost
Becca	Balint	VT	U.S. House	Won
Doug	Hoffer	VT	Vermont State Auditor	Won
Emilie	Kornheiser	VT	Vermont House	Won
Peter	Welch	VT	U.S. House	Won
David	Zuckerman	VT	Vermont Lt. Governor	Won

Candidate Name (First)	Candidate Name (Last)	State	Office	Win or Loss in 2020
Pramila	Jayapal	WA	U.S. House	Won
Samba	Baldeh	WI	Wisconsin House	Won
Mandela	Barnes	WI	U.S. Senate	Lost
Marisabel	Cabrera	WI	Wisconsin House	Won
Ryan	Clancy	WI	Wisconsin House	Won
Darrin	Madison	WI	Wisconsin House	Won
Mark	Pocan	WI	U.S. House	Won
Sara	Rodriguez	WI	Wisconsin Lt. Governor	Won

Endnotes

- 1 Our Revolution, “Our Issues,” ourrevolution.com, accessed November 15, 2022, <https://ourrevolution.com/services>
- 2 Democratic Socialists of America, “About Us,” dsausa.org, accessed November 15, 2022, <https://www.dsausa.org/about-us>
- 3 Progressive Democrats of America, “Our Issues,” pdamerica.org, accessed November 15, 2022, <https://pdamerica.org/our-issues>
- 4 It should be noted that we have counted Raphael Warnock’s (D-GA) race against Herschel Walker as a socialist victory, as Warnock finished higher than Walker. However, this race will not officially be concluded until the December 2020 run-off election.
- 5 Justin Haskins, “How Did Socialists Perform in 2018 Midterm Elections? Better Than You Might Think,” Stopping Socialism, December 1, 2018, <https://stoppingsocialism.com/2018/12/how-did-socialists-perform-in-2018-midterm-elections-better-than-you-might-think>
- 6 Justin Haskins and Chris Talgo, “Socialist Watch 2020: An Analysis of Candidates Endorsed by Far-Left Organizations,” The Heartland Institute, Policy Brief, November 2020, <https://www.heartland.org/publications-resources/publications/policy-brief-socialist-watch-2020-an-analysis-of-candidates--endorsed-by-far-left-organizations>

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About the Authors

Justin Haskins is the director of the Socialism Research Center at The Heartland Institute, a national free-market think tank, and a widely published writer and political commentator. He also serves as Heartland's editorial director and as the editor-in-chief of StoppingSocialism.com, one of the world's largest and most influential publications devoted to challenging socialism.

Haskins writes frequently for FoxNews.com and works as a contributor for *The Hill*, *Newsweek*, and *Townhall*. He has appeared on television and radio more than 250 times, on shows like *Tucker Carlson Tonight*, *Fox & Friends*, and the *Glenn Beck Program*.

Haskins is the author of the Amazon best-selling book *Socialism Is Evil: The Moral Case Against Marx's Radical Dream* (2018), and was the first contributor to Glenn Beck's *Arguing with Socialists* (2020), a New York Times best-selling book. Haskins is also the co-author, with Beck, of *The Great Reset: Joe Biden and the Rise of Twenty-First Century Fascism* (2022), which appeared on numerous bestselling books lists, including those of the *New York Times*, *USA Today*, and *Wall Street Journal*.

Haskins has been published more than 800 times in major digital and print publications, including *The Wall Street Journal*, *New York Post*, *Forbes*, *Newsweek*, and *National Review*, among many others. His writing has also been featured or discussed by *The Rush Limbaugh Show*, *Glenn Beck Radio Program*, *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Drudge Report*, The Heritage Foundation, the White House, and *Newsmax*.

Haskins is author or co-author of several Heartland *Policy Briefs*, all of which received significant media attention, including "The American Health Care Plan" (2021), "Estimating the Income Tax Hikes Required to Pay for Bernie Sanders' Medicare-for-All Plan" (2019), and "Debunking the Scandinavian Socialism Myth: An Evaluation of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden" (2019).

Haskins has also co-authored numerous national surveys conducted by Rasmussen Reports, one of America's leading pollsters.

Haskins graduated from the University of Richmond (Richmond, VA) in 2010. In 2011, Justin earned his M.A. in government with specializations in international relations and American government from Regent University (Virginia Beach, VA), and in 2015 he earned a second M.A., this time in journalism, from Regent. Haskins was inducted into the Philadelphia Society in 2018.

Jack McPherrin is The Heartland Institute's research editor, as well as a research fellow within Heartland's Socialism Research Center (SRC). As research editor, Jack sources, manages, and edits all Heartland research publications, and regularly writes op-eds for publication at several prominent media outlets and websites, including the *Epoch Times*, *Washington Times*, the *Western Journal*, *American Greatness*, *Center Square*, *Townhall*, *American Thinker*, and *RedState*, among others. As an SRC research fellow, Jack authors his own research publications; he focuses most heavily upon Environmental, Social, and Governance scores (ESG), authoritarianism, and international affairs. Jack also manages content and contributes writing for the SRC's website, StoppingSocialism.com.

Jack holds a Master of Arts in International Affairs from Loyola University-Chicago, and a Bachelor of Arts in Economics and History from Boston College. Prior to his tenure at Heartland and the completion of his graduate degree, Jack worked in the private sector in Chicago, where he still resides.

Chris Talgo is a senior editor with The Heartland Institute and a research fellow for Heartland's Stopping Socialism Project. Talgo joined Heartland in August 2017. He edits a variety of Heartland publications, including newsletters, op-eds, reports, and *Research & Commentaries*. Talgo also writes op-eds, articles for *Health Care News* and *Environmental and Climate News*, and hosts podcasts.

Prior to working at The Heartland Institute, Talgo taught U.S. history and American government for five years in Bluffton, South Carolina. He served on the Town of Bluffton Accommodations Tax Committee and was elected precinct delegate for his voting district. He is an avid reader of history and social science, and he enjoys watching and playing sports. He regularly competes in 5k and 10k runs.