

# DSA Green New Deal Campaign Report to the 2021 National Convention



Submitted to the National Political Committee of DSA by the Green New Deal Campaign Committee for consideration at the August 2021 convention.

The purpose of this report is (1) to provide the membership of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) with an overview of campaign objectives, organization, and activities; (2) to provide the Convention with a report of how campaign committees and volunteers carried out tasks; and (3) to inform the convention of the successes and shortcomings of the campaign to assist in more effective future planning. To that end, we have included key recommendations throughout the report and in the report's conclusion.

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## Overview

DSA’s Ecosocialist Working Group (WG) was formed at the 2017 convention to channel interest in climate organizing in DSA, after convention delegates voted the climate crisis among the top 4 interests, but it was not established as a priority campaign. Organizers had a strong sense that the growing severity of the climate crisis would soon make it central to US politics. It was just as clear that liberal environmental policies on offer from the Democratic Party fell far short of what was necessary, and might even spark popular backlash from sectors of our society who have much to lose from ecological disasters – but potentially the most to gain from a working class ecological politics organized to take on the capitalist class that is responsible for the crisis.

Over the next two years, organizers in the WG held regular calls and created communication structures to share information about local ecosocialist organizing efforts across DSA chapters, and to begin planning the basis for a future DSA national priority campaign around the climate crisis by the next convention. This included a public power research committee that helped lay a foundation for future DSA public power campaigns. This work was facilitated by a 7-person Steering Committee (SC), elected by membership of the WG, which is open to all DSA members. This SC functioned primarily as an administrative body.

After the major breakthrough in US climate politics sparked by Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez’s advancement of a “Green New Deal” resolution shortly after her election in 2018, a strong consensus emerged in the WG that this frame could serve as an effective organizing banner for transforming the whole economy against the climate crisis – but one whose contents would need to be defined, and contested by the power of mass organization.

In February 2019, after a multi-month deliberative process with comrades in many chapters, the WG released 7 [guiding principles for a Green New Deal](#), which were subsequently endorsed by numerous chapters the national organization, and every informal 'ideological' caucus in DSA:

1. Decarbonize the economy fully by 2030.
2. Democratize control over major energy systems and resources.
3. Center the working class in a just transition to an economy of societal and ecological care.
4. Decommodify survival by guaranteeing living wages, healthcare, childcare, housing, food, water, energy, public transit, a healthy environment, and other necessities for all.
5. Reinvent our communities to serve people and planet, not profit.
6. Demilitarize, decolonize, and strive for a future of international solidarity and cooperation.
7. Redistribute resources from the worst polluters with just and progressive taxes on the rich, on big corporations, and on dirty industry.

These principles were established with the understanding that the radical Green New Deal we need cannot be introduced in a single bill or resolution—it can only emerge from the grassroots struggles of working people and social movements, and will likely take massive coordination over the course of the next decade to win crucial pieces of it.

At the 2019 DSA National Convention, [Resolution #34](#) "Ecosocialist Green New Deal Priority" was passed unanimously (with [one amendment](#)). The resolution established a national priority campaign for a Green New Deal based on the aforementioned principles, to be directed by a Green New Deal Campaign Committee (GNDCC) within the Ecosocialist Working Group (WG). The GNDCC would be responsible for developing the campaign's organizing strategy.

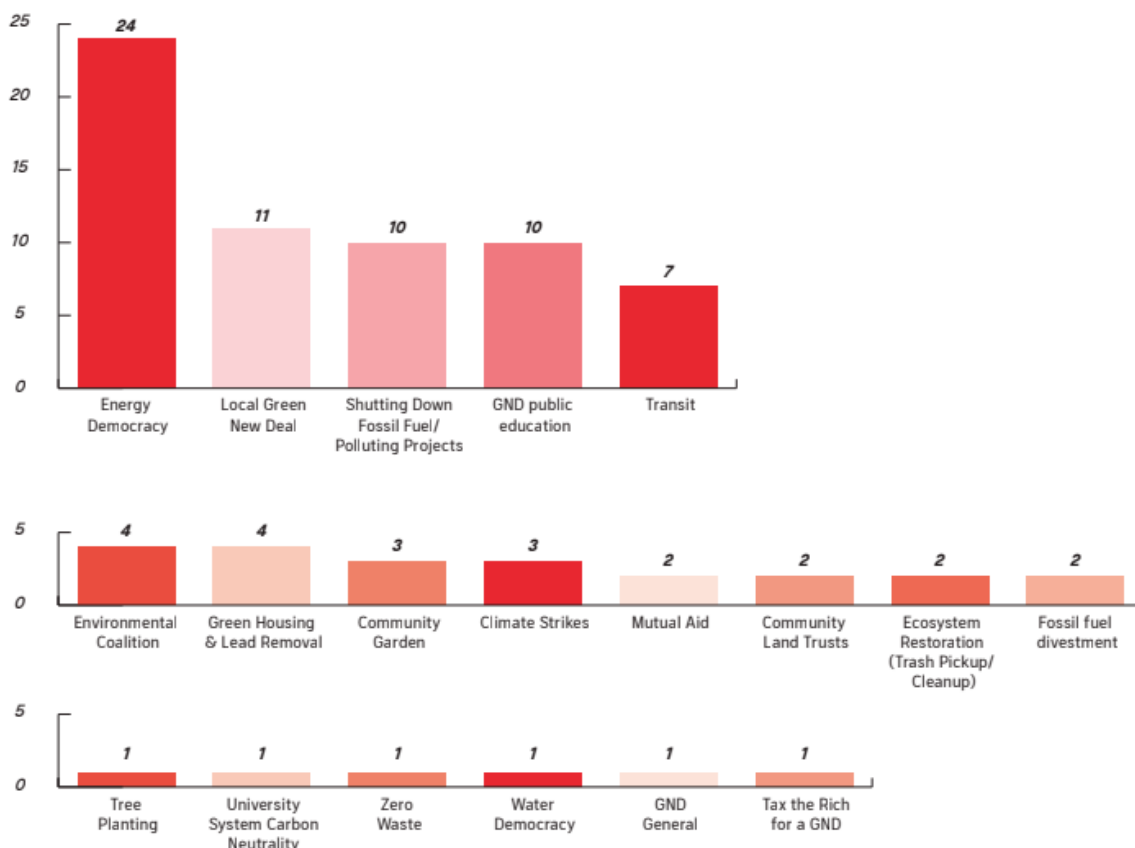
After the 2019 convention, the WG Steering Committee established the GNDCC and recruited organizers to serve in the five seats; throughout that process, we communicated with the membership of the WG, soliciting feedback and ensuring democratic buy-in and accountability. The GNDCC convened in December 2019 and thereafter met weekly, as well as maintaining close coordination with the Ecosocialist WG's SC, via one shared member who served as a liaison between the two bodies.

## Laying the Groundwork

### Ecosocialist WG survey

One of our first projects in Fall 2019 was to conduct a [survey of chapter-level working groups and campaign committees](#) relevant to ecosocialist and Green New Deal work to gauge their interests, capacities, and needs. **We strongly recommend that this type of survey be standardized across other national formations, and implemented with support from national staff and the NPC.**

The table shows the most prevalent ecosocialist/ GND campaigns in DSA chapters at that time.



In addition, the survey yielded insights regarding the relationship between DSA and the broader political landscape. We found that there was a DSA member in every US congressional district –at least 12 members per district and a few districts have over 1000 members. A substantial majority (87%) of DSA members had at least one Democratic member of congress to target and only 13% of members were represented exclusively by Republicans in the house and senate. DSA was not necessarily strong in every state with full Democratic Party control at the state level. About 46% of DSA members lived in states with either divided government or full Republican control, which made state-level campaigns more challenging for this portion of the membership. States with high levels of DSA membership tended to overlap with states with high levels of unionization. The South is an exception: Texas, Georgia, North Carolina, and Virginia are all states with fairly low levels of unionization but at least 1000 DSA members each.

Throughout this period, we also reached out to organizers in other national bodies, namely the Medicare for All campaign and Democratic Socialist Labor Commission, to gauge how other DSA campaigns have operated, and possible points of collaboration.

## Bernie 2020

Shortly after the convention, the WG Steering Committee [affirmed the Bernie Sanders campaign's Green New Deal platform](#) as a major political breakthrough toward DSA's GND Principles. Throughout the 2020

presidential primary, the national GND campaign coordinated with the DSA for Bernie campaign on messaging and materials that emphasized Bernie's climate platform, particularly the ambitious goals of 100% renewable electricity by 2030, public ownership of the energy grid, a federal jobs guarantee, and just transition for fossil fuel workers, and calls to shift resources from the US military to major global climate aid.

We amplified these as core distinctions between the Sanders campaign and those of other 2020 candidates running as "progressives" in the primary, particularly Elizabeth Warren, who was competing to be seen as a "climate candidate." For example, Sanders' call for public ownership of energy systems contrasted with Warren's support for market-based advancement of renewable energy, as well as his call for demilitarization toward global climate justice, vs. Warren's proposal to "green the military". This helped embolden members of the Sunrise Movement and a number of other progressive environmental organizations to endorse and commit to organizing for the Sanders campaign.

We knew that we would still eventually need to define a particular GND organizing strategy for DSA's campaign. But as long as the Bernie campaign was viable, we decided that the most strategic way to advance our goals was to organize for his election, work that continued until the end of Sanders' run for president.

## Building Consensus

When the Bernie campaign ended and the pandemic hit, DSA chapters and national formations alike struggled to reorient to a frightening and rapidly shifting context, in which many of our comrades, families, and communities were directly affected by Covid and/or severe economic distress. GNDCC scrambled to develop organizing plans that would be responsive to the conditions of the economic shutdown. (See ["Rapid Response to Crisis"](#) below.)

When rapid response efforts did not bear much fruit, we decided the best way to assess the basis of our national campaign would be to convene organizers from as many chapters as possible by the fall to discuss GND strategy going forward.

Beginning in May, 2020 and throughout the summer, we did extensive chapter outreach – including hundreds of one-on-one conversations – in preparation for a two-day **GND Strategy Summit** in September, consisting of representatives from over 60 chapters. The purpose of the Summit was to assess existing chapter capacity and their ongoing work and organizing needs to determine our collective capability to build a national GND campaign. In that process we sought to build internal alignment and mobilization around a coordinated, strategic, national campaign.

The aforementioned [Fall 2019 Survey](#) of DSA ecosocialist formations provided the basis of our chapter engagement. Through intentional outreach (including 1:1 contact with relevant chapter formations and/or leadership) we established that 64 DSA chapters had active ecosocialist committees or local formations. During our meetings, we asked local leaders: What relevant work are chapters already doing? What demands would they organize around? What resources and skills do they have? What resources and skills do they need? What tactics motivate their chapters? What are common demands and tactics that can be nationally coordinated?

We also created a research team of over a dozen volunteers in the WG, who synthesized a [Research Report](#) to orient summit participants around a common sense of the political conditions around the climate crisis, including analysis of the US economy, labor movement, organizing landscape, and government. The report also laid out a range of possible core organizing demands for a national GND campaign.

The agenda for the summit consisted of two 6-hour sessions over the course of the weekend, with discussion framed around potential targets, tactics, timelines, key moments, and allies for each demand, and considerations of DSA chapter capacity and opportunities for coordinated regional and national strategies in either of the main election outcomes. Most of the discussion happened in breakout groups where the 80+ participants were distributed into 4 regional groups facilitated by DSA staff field organizers: West, Midwest/Central, Northeast, and South. NPC's guidance on considering November 2020 election outcomes was helpful in scenario planning exercises.

In Summit discussions, we found public power is a widely popular goal in chapters, but we also discussed how our research revealed there are major obstacles to a national campaign around public power with a federal demand, given the decentralized nature of energy regulation, markets, and utilities in the US. While chapters continued to coordinate informally, we set a goal of convening public power organizers to develop an organizing guide for chapters, laying out a clear theory of change from municipal campaigns to contesting state and federal level goals. NYC DSA's Public Renewables campaign has since modeled this at state level. Summit discussion also surfaced a widely shared interest, with more promise for nationally-coordinated work, in a labor-focused Green New Deal campaign. This orientation laid the groundwork for eventually focusing on the PRO Act as the first phase of a multi-phase Green New Deal campaign.

## Post-Election

After the Summit, as the US careened into the chaos of the 2020 Presidential election, we put together a GND strategy team of around 20 experienced members to realize the results of the Summit. As the team collaboratively developed strategy for a 1 to 2 year campaign, we responded to a widespread desire across DSA chapters to mobilize immediately after the election to push back on establishment Democrat triumphalism without clear commitments to a popular agenda to meet people's needs in crisis.

We organized a "[Fight For Our Lives](#)" nationally-coordinated action on December 12, with over 20 chapters demanding that the Biden administration fight for the working class to address the COVID and climate crises with demands for economic relief and the PRO Act coordinated with the DSA Medicare for All campaign. Each chapter chose specific local targets relating to local conditions, the emerging contours of a Biden administration, or both. For example, Houston DSA targeted local congresswoman Lizzie Fletcher for a just transition and green jobs; Chicago DSA target Rahm Emanuel, rumored for an ambassador post in the new administration, and who as mayor hollowed out the capacity of safety-net hospitals now stretched thin in the pandemic; Atlanta DSA canvassed hard for a People's Bailout and for local energy utility commission candidate Daniel Blackman; and [Metro DC DSA protested](#), with puppets, around the Beltway offices of incoming Biden elites. The timing of this was risky, since this coincided with a second spike of COVID cases, and many chapters had not organized in-person actions for many months, but participating chapters felt the urgency of the demands made the actions worth the risk of coordinating in-person actions.

Meanwhile, the GND strategy team developed campaign goals with short, medium, and long term demands: the PRO Act, a Green Bailout, and a Federal Jobs Guarantee, respectively. Our immediate focus was to develop an organizing plan for the “first 100 Days” of the Biden administration, widely understood to be a critical period for a new presidential administration’s priorities, while making it vulnerable to coordinated outside pressure.

	PRO Act	Green Bailout	Jobs Guarantee
First 100 days	<i>build the labor movement, expand the right to unionize &amp; organize in the workplace, and rectify labor defeats</i>	<i>democratically-designed Green New Deal projects in communities across USA, in every state and territory, <b>bailing out the people, not the 1%</b></i>	
Year One			<i>promise of a good, unionized job, following through on <b>DSA’s 2019 GND resolution, the Civil Rights movement and Economic Bill of Rights</b></i>
Year Two			

## Orientation to Coalitions

A recurring question from DSA members has been how DSA GND organizing should engage with other organizations in coalitions, nationally or in local chapters. During and after the September GNDCC summit, this arose specifically in regard to the [Green New Deal Network \(GNDN\)](#), a recently formed coalition of 15 nonprofit organizations that ranged from groups that had already collaborated with DSA nationally on efforts like independent coordination for the Bernie 2020 campaign, such as the Sunrise Movement, to grassroots networks like the Climate Justice Alliance, to more established progressive and environmental organizations such as MoveOn, Indivisible, Sierra Club, and Greenpeace, organizing around a set of policies called the THRIVE Agenda.

These organizations vary greatly in their organizing approaches from the national to local level, and organizers across DSA chapters have had a wide range of experiences in working with them in local coalitions — many collaborative and constructive, some less so. In conversations with DSA chapter leaders, a clear consensus emerged that organizing demands and tactics in collaboration with foundation-funded nonprofits were often ultimately limited by the interests of funders, and that what is often termed the “non-profit industrial complex” (NPIC) has been damaging to prospects for radical mass organizing. While constructive and intentional collaboration can be possible, and desirable in some cases, many organizations that may share DSA’s stated goals may still avoid organizing tactics that are too confrontational to capitalists to keep their funding, and to save themselves from being associated with the still scary “S-word”.

But in the long-run, DSA has to get bigger and more cohesive as a multiracial working class mass organization before we can present a real alternative to the NPIC. The environmental justice/GND movement is not big enough for us to risk antagonizing others aligned with our near-term goals; it's not conducive to our work, and ultimately DSA may end up villainized as too radical, unable to work well with others, and uncompromising, in ways that do not support our own organizing efforts.

At this stage, we concluded that it makes most sense not to pursue direct coalition with these organizations, but to work alongside them, parallel on the path to a greener future. Thus, rather than entering a formal relationship with current nonprofit coalitions, we should put out messaging that emphasizes that DSA's theory of change—independent political power free of foundations and the Democratic Party establishment—is working, and other orgs should do the same. Then we will see who comes to us.

When possible in strategic campaigns, we believe DSA should aim to work with organizations that have membership models, clear structures for democratic decision-making, and staff who are unionized and able to shape the conditions of their work—not just being led by managers or professional activists who are unaccountable to workers or members. Most labor unions meet these conditions; many nonprofit organizations do not.

However, under certain conditions it may be strategic to work with organizations that do not meet these conditions. Whatever the structure or model of particular organizations in a coalition, we should engage only when we are able to shape the direction of the coalition as respected partners, and maintain our own power with a clearly defined range of action that demonstrably contributes to achieving coalition goals.

We should also be aware that there may be considerable overlap between DSA members and many staff and volunteer leaders in other organizations, which may make them more receptive to working toward common goals. Local chapters of organizations may also vary widely from community to community, so local DSA chapters may find it favorable to work with them even if it may be less viable for DSA nationally to work directly with their national counterparts.

Specifically, our orientation to national organizations and coalitions consists of:

- Developing relationships with aligned organizers in existing nonprofit coalitions, to keep track of what is happening and work towards an inside-outside strategy, demonstrating our power with an independent “left flank” that can help to polarize them against organizations that are more conciliatory to the Democratic establishment.
- Collaborating on national coalition efforts around aligned and clearly defined goals.
- Supporting DSA chapters in developing working relationships with local formations of national organizations, such as Sunrise hubs, and developing clear suggested guidelines for DSA chapters to engage in local coalitions, such as demands to promote.
- Suggesting that when local organizers attend coalition meetings, they do so as DSA representatives, build trust and respect, and attempt to bring them further left and in motion to build working class bases for strategic organizing demands.
- Lastly, with the understanding that our goal is a post-capitalist society, bringing that messaging to coalition actions.



## Rapid Response to Crises

A recurring question for ecosocialist organizers in DSA has been how best to respond as an organization to climate-related disasters. Since 2017, chapters have experimented with various tactics for disaster relief, from Gulf South chapters dealing with hurricanes, to California and Pacific Northwest chapters responding to wildfires. The Ecosocialist WG has frequently amplified such efforts from national platforms on social media, and promoted fundraising efforts for mutual aid and disaster relief. Through this kind of organizing, DSA chapters are getting better equipped to develop mutual aid networks, and share what tactics work to particular ends in different conditions. **We consistently heard local organizers say the best thing the national organization can do for chapters dealing with natural disasters is to politicize the failures of the state in climate-related crises. We recommend that national formations take up this kind of preparation in order to equip DSA to respond to the inevitable disasters and crises that lie ahead.**

## Cancel Bills

From the start of the Covid crises in March, 2020, we engaged in intensive and frequent discussions exploring potential responses within ecosocialist and Green New Deal priorities that could relieve working class suffering and build power. In May we launched #CancelBills, a congressional pressure campaign for full cancellation of rent, utility, and mortgage bills, — and associated debt — through the COVID-19 crisis. The campaign, launched at the beginning of GNDCC's existence and in the turmoil of Covid's onset and the end of the Bernie campaign, focused on comms and social media strategy with a distributed [toolkit](#) intended to politicize energy and utility profit-taking and coalesce with DSA chapter [energy democracy struggles](#) and fights around [rent and housing relief](#). The campaign demanded: immediate cancellation of rent, mortgage, and utility payments; a federal, mandatory moratorium on utility shut-offs for two years; and establishment of a Federal Utility Relief Fund to cover utility costs for the duration of this crisis.



## Texas Freeze

In February 2021, a winter storm and capitalist neglect combined to create a humanitarian crisis in Texas, with millions of people losing power and water. We were prepared to respond immediately due to years of organizing public power campaigns. We brought members on the ground in Texas together with DSA ecosocialist organizers around the country and produced a rapid response campaign, [Power for Texas](#), to politicize the crisis



around the failures of a privatized grid system, with public power as a solution. Using communications

and logistical capacity developed in other chapters, we created a website in English and Spanish with agitational material and resources and links to support local disaster relief efforts, and we organized a mass call with over 1,000 participants (and, since then, [over 5k views](#)) featuring directly impacted DSA organizers from several Texas chapters along with journalist Kate Aronoff. Together we explained the structural causes of the crisis and what to do about it, along with highlighting the mutual aid response that Texas DSA chapters were coordinating. **We think this effort, joining members in on-the-ground crisis with members across the country who have capacity to politicize and organize, can serve as a model for national DSA crisis response for future climate-related disasters, or perhaps for urgent crises that arise in relation to the prioritized work of other national DSA formations.**

### **Recommendations**

- Plan ahead for more follow-through on ad hoc projects like this. After this mass call, we sent resources to all attendees. With more capacity, we could have done more to follow up with ongoing asks to keep pressuring and escalating against relevant political targets.
- Much of the work on this project was done by NYC DSA comms organizers. We need to spread those skills to more chapters through experience and training.
- As a result, this effort did not build lasting chapter structure—ideally, we would have distributed lists and materials to chapters that would be prepared to use them on an ongoing basis. Chapters that coordinate more in regional or statewide formations may be in a better position to make ongoing use of materials produced in one-off national efforts like this.

## **Political Education**

A core part of the 2019 GND priority resolution was to popularize the demand for an ecosocialist GND through outward-facing education, media, outreach, and other efforts aligned with our Guiding Principles. We have consistently put out educational programs and materials that connect the latest environmental science, climate-related disasters, and related movements to broader struggles against capitalism to our overall struggle for democratic ecosocialism and a GND, using DSA social media platforms and other communication resources to amplify local and national work.

## **Ecosocialist Webinars**

Over the past two years, our educational efforts have typically taken the form of webinar presentations or panel discussions with guest speakers, organized by members of the Ecosocialist WG or co-sponsored with other organizations. These have usually been in the format of Zoom webinars livestreamed simultaneously to Facebook or YouTube. Ecosocialism 101 events included discussion of DSA's principles for a Green New Deal. We aimed for a frequency of public-facing education events at least one every two months, a goal we sometimes exceeded.

Since 2019, these events have included:

- 4/18/2019 - [Resurgence of Public Ownership: A Transatlantic Exchange](#) - organized with The Democracy Collaborative and We Own It, featuring researchers & organizers Thomas Hanna, Andrew Cumbers, Cat Hobbs, and Johanna Bozuwa.

- 9/28/2019 - [The Green New Deal, Net-Zero Carbon, & The Crucial Role of Public Ownership](#) - organized by Trade Unions for Energy Democracy, featuring Johanna Bozuwa, Thea Riofrancos with labor organizers from US, UK, & Australia ([video](#))
- 3/26/2020 - [How to Beat Coronavirus Capitalism](#) - featuring Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, Astra Taylor, and Naomi Klein, sponsored by Haymarket Books, The Leap, Debt Collective
- 4/10/2020 - [A Planet to Win: Why We Need a Green New Deal](#) - featuring book co-authors with DC City Council candidate Janeese Lewis George
- 7/4/2020 - [Toward a Green New Future](#) - a panel at the Socialism 2020 conference featuring Daniel Aldana Cohen, Thea Riofrancos, and Sydney Ghazarian
- 7/14/2020 - [Fossil Fuel Power Mapping](#) - a webinar with the corporate power-mapping organization LittleSis, focusing on the utility company Exelon.
- 9/10/2020 - [A Green New Deal for Safe Public Schools](#) - moderated by Daniel Aldana Cohen, with organizers & elected Jollene Levid, Hannah Allison, Nikil Saval, and Jabari Brisport
- 10/16 - 12/7/2020 - [A People's Green New Deal](#) - a series of virtual teach-in organized by Science for the People, with panels on internationalism, Indigenous solidarity, art & design, agroecology, energy democracy, and workers' rights, featuring organizers and researchers, including multiple DSA members
- 10/29/2020 - [Ecosocialist Solutions to Capitalist Crises](#) - featuring authors Thea Riofrancos and Andreas Malm, with Haymarket Books
- 2/13/2021 - [Ecosocialism 101: a Green New Deal & Beyond!](#) Organized by Ecosocialist WG steering members Matt Haugen and Ashik Siddique
- 2/23/2021 - [Rediscovering Earth, Reclaiming Our Lives: a conversation with Kim Stanley Robinson](#) - organized with the DSA Fund, featuring the science fiction writer Kim Stanley Robinson with philosopher Anders Dunker
- 3/21/2021 - [Workers & the Green New Deal Today](#) - a conversation featuring writers Naomi Klein and Kate Aronoff with labor organizers Keon Liberato, Joshua Mata, and Uma Tadepalli. Organized by the Democratic Socialist Labor Commission (DSLCL) and Emergency Workplace Organizing (EWOC).
- 3/27/2021 - [Ecosocialismo: Envisioning Latin America's Green New Deal](#) - featuring scholars & activists from US, Brazil, and Puerto Rico, co-sponsored by NACLA Report with CLACS at NYU, Dissent Magazine, the Socio-Spatial Climate Collaborative at UPenn & Jacobin.
- 6/9/2021 - ["The Big Scary 'S' Word" & Climate Change](#) - organized with the DSA Fund, Dissent magazine, Verso, Haymarket, Lux magazine, and In These Times, with filmmaker Yael Bridge, and panelists Marquita Bradshaw, Rep. Ruth Buffalo, Rep. Jeanné Kapela, and DSA organizers Javier Miranda, Thea Riofrancos, and Ashik Siddique.

These events were typically attended live by several hundred participants, with many more viewing recordings later. Whenever possible, we cross-posted Facebook livestreams with the Facebook pages of DSA chapters and co-sponsoring organizations. We have also frequently promoted relevant webinars and educational events organized by DSA chapters.

Going forward, we hope to coordinate more closely with DSA's National Political Education Committee on programs, update [available resources](#) for chapters on ecosocialism and a Green New Deal, and more consistently promote these events publicly and directly to DSA chapters in coordination with national staff, for broader participation from our whole membership, as well as from nonmembers.

## Labor, Climate, & a Jobs Guarantee

In April 2021, we collaborated on a three-part popular education series of discussions on [Labor a Jobs Guarantee](#), to highlight the potential of a jobs guarantee toward economic, racial justice and climate justice, explore political tensions in various JG proposals, and most importantly, to create and build links between those advocating for a jobs guarantee and those organizing for a strong, mass, working-class, labor movement.

The series was co-organized by Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung NYC (RLS-NYC), United Electrical, Radio & Machine Workers of America (UE), and Global Institute for Sustainable Prosperity (GISP). The first weeks focused on education and link-building around how a JG proposal could advance racial and climate justice. The second week focused on what it would take for organized labor to organize to win a JG that builds working class power, following the framework of UE's [Them and Us Unionism](#). The third week facilitated small group discussions, to draw out and hone in on some of the particulars necessary for a JG to be truly transformational to building the working class mass movement necessary to achieving a GND. Based on the discussions during the webinar series, RLS will be producing popular education materials on what a labor-focused jobs guarantee should entail.

## The Red Deal

In an amendment to the 2019 Convention's Resolution #34, DSA endorsed the Red Deal, an Indigenous socialist vision for climate justice and decolonization, and tasked the GNDCC with initiating a more direct working relationship between DSA and The Red Nation. As resolved in the Red Deal amendment, the GNDCC designated a person to serve as a main point of contact with comrades in The Red Nation, and at various points, additional contacts on the National Political Committee (NPC), National Political Education Committee (NPEC), and International Committee (IC) have helped coordinate statements and events.

In Fall 2019, DSA comrades in New Mexico [represented DSA](#) at The Red Nation's Native Liberation Conference in Albuquerque. GNDCC had intended to organize a DSA delegation to The Red Nation convening in New Mexico that was planned for summer 2020, but this was cancelled due to the pandemic.

DSA's National Political Committee approved statements of solidarity which were published by comrades in The Red Nation, or co-written by members of the Ecosocialist WG, including:

- November 5, 2019: [DSA Red Deal Statement of Endorsement](#)
- November 11, 2019: [#ThisIsACoup #NoCoupInBolivia](#)
- March 2, 2020: [DSA Stands in Solidarity with the Wet'suwet'en Nation](#)

A number of DSA-sponsored events featured members of The Red Nation, including:

- On July 4, 2020 at the [Socialism 2020 conference](#) co-sponsored by DSA, a panel on "Reparations for Slavery and Settler Colonialism" featured Dina Gilio-Whitaker, co-author of "All the Real Indians Died Off" and member of The Red Nation.
- On November 21 and December 4, 2020, the Ecosocialist WG co-sponsored virtual teach-ins on a ["People's Green New Deal"](#) with *Science for the People* and The Red Nation, including panels on "Envisioning an Internationalist Green New Deal" and "Indigenous Knowledge and the Red Deal",

featuring Brian Ward, a member of Red Nation- Great Lakes and DSA Madison, and Thomas Klemm, a citizen of the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi nation.

- On December 17, 2020, the Ecosocialist WG [co-sponsored an webinar](#) with the DSA Internationalism Committee and National Political Education Committee, "[Indigenous Resistance in a World on Fire](#)," featuring Nick Estes of The Red Nation with other Indigenous organizers from the US, Brazil, and Bolivia.

Since DSA endorsed the Red Deal in 2019, The Red Nation has developed impressive communications platforms through a frequently published podcast and a wide-reaching social media presence, which we often amplify from DSA GND social media accounts. This year they have published a book, [The Red Deal: Indigenous Action to Save Our Earth](#), around which comrades in a number of DSA chapters have organized reading groups.

Going forward, GNDCC can continue to seek opportunities to collaborate with members of The Red Nation, especially around political education, in conjunction with DSA's NPEC, IC, or other national formations when the subject matter is relevant.

## PRO Act Campaign

As a result of our strategy planning process, in late January 2021, we moved to planning the PRO Act Campaign as a joint project with the Democratic Socialist Labor Commission (DSLCL). In February 2020, we sought and [NPC passed a resolution](#) making the PRO Act Campaign "the organization's highest external priority" from February to May Day.

The strategic intent of the campaign was to join climate organizing with labor struggle in order to energize working class support and power for ecosocialist demands in the long term. Our [theory of power](#) (see Appendix) recognizes we can win transformative reforms like the Green New Deal only with a radicalized and organized working class. Biden had made climate one of his key priorities in office and had already re-entered the Paris Agreement and cancelled the Keystone pipeline. Biden also considers himself to be aligned in some ways with labor unions. The new administration's emphasis on climate and labor, along with more socialists in Congress, created openings for DSA to push for key legislative priorities. There was also a desire, among labor and the left, to not repeat 2008, when Obama was allowed to back down on his promises, leading to the Republican wave in 2010. The PRO (Protecting the Right to Organize) Act – the most transformative labor legislation in generations – was actually included in administration priorities and the DSLCL had begun to look at organizing behind a push for that legislation. These are the broad reasons we launched a push for the First 100 Days of the new administration to pass the PRO Act. The original New Deal was won through militant labor organizing – rebuilding this capacity is crucial to the theory of power our campaign has developed for a radical Green New Deal.

On March 7, under the campaign slogan "Workers and the World, Unite!", we publicly launched the campaign with a [national webinar with over 1,500 attendees](#) on Zoom and Facebook that featured



Representative Jamaal Bowman, Naomi Klein, Sara Nelson, and DSA organizers (more information on this and other campaign events in the “Communications” section below).

On March 9th, the PRO Act passed the House of Representatives so we focused on targeting the five senators (in Arizona, Maine, Virginia, and West Virginia) who had yet to sign on to the bill, primarily through phone banks (including bilingual phone banks), text banks, and media. To date, we have made just **over 1 million calls** and **over 1.27 million text contacts** [document access available to DSA leaders upon request]. Additionally, our campaign has fostered state-wide DSA organizing in several states, collaboration between DSA chapters and organized labor at both the local and state level in several of our target states. We have done extensive internal organizing and training as part of this campaign.

This is an unprecedented campaign—nothing on this scale and level of national coordination has been done before in DSA. We can say with confidence, based on feedback directly from chapters, that this campaign has built and energized smaller chapters, re-engaged and energized larger chapters de-mobilized in part by the pandemic and the end of Bernie 2020, and built durable organizing connections between national formations and between national and chapters.

## Coalition

Following approval from NPC, DSA has been represented on the steering committee of a national coalition to pass the PRO Act called ‘[Worker Power Coalition](#).’ The coalition was initiated by The International Union of Painters and Allied Trades (IUPAT), and the steering committee has grown to additionally include Communication Workers of America (CWA), Sunrise Movement, Working Families Party (WFP), and DSA. The coalition is made up of unions, union locals, and progressive organizations. While the coalition had been operating for a few months prior, it officially launched on 7/22/2021. The coalition is in the final stages of incorporating as a board that can fundraise, and unions have already pledged well over \$1 million dollars to the initiative. Worker Power Coalition is focused on the PRO Act campaign, with the primary focus being in key states (VA and AZ). With its steering member representative, DSA will have an official vote on the direction of the coalition, campaign, and related spending. The coalition has 1 staffer.

The coalition has served as a springboard for relationship-building between DSA chapters and union locals, with many collaborating on PRO Act townhalls, phone banks, rallies, strike support, direct actions, and ongoing campaigning. The coalition has also served as a space for sharing political intel, power mapping memos, and resources such as phone banking lists and messaging guides. Some coalition partners also promoted our phone banks and actions to their members. To align themselves with DSA’s PRO Act campaign timeline, the coalition made the PRO Act a primary demand for May Day, and joined in planning actions, phone banks, and events. Since May Day, the coalition has collaborated on many activities such as a phone banking week of action, worker delegations to Senate offices, strike support, townhalls, and op-eds. Importantly, DSA’s participation in this coalition has improved our presence, relationships, and influence in the US labor movement. For instance, since our Green New Deal campaign began working with IUPAT, IUPAT has joined the Blue-Green Alliance and started working with and endorsing Green New Deal legislation introduced by DSA Congress members.

## Tactics and Support for Chapter Organizing

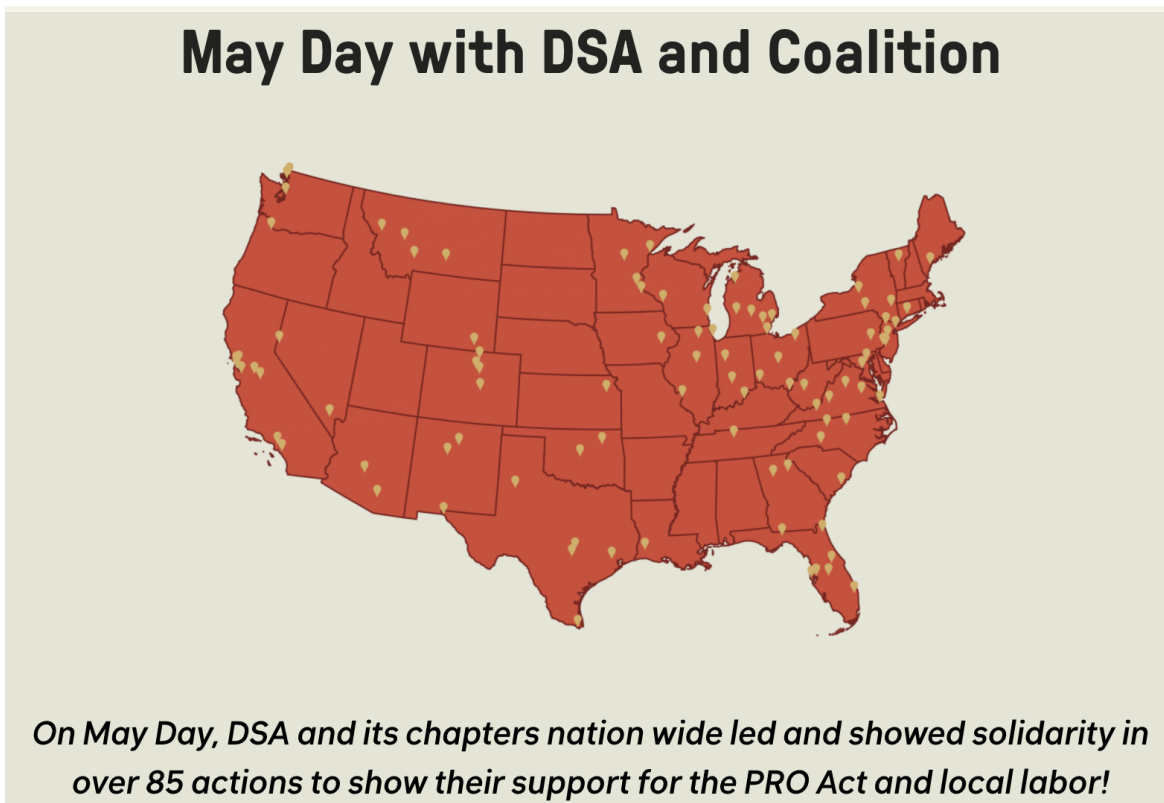
We assembled a thorough [chapter guide with toolkits](#) to support various strategies for organizing for the PRO Act, for DSA union members to organize their locals, non-union DSA members to involve their coworkers, DSA chapters to plug into phone banks, participate in social media campaigns, organize town halls and educational events with labor unions and movement allies, plan actions, and turn up the heat on political targets.

### Trainings

Along with staff organizers and members of the Growth & Development Committee (GDC), we organized hourlong weekly trainings around campaign skills for the duration of the PRO Act campaign phase through organizing town halls and educational events throughout April, and actions on May Day. Each training was attended by 20-80 chapter organizing leads. Training topics included: building a strategic campaign, organizing with unions and co-workers, coalition building, direct action training, media & communications, and power mapping.

The goal of these trainings was to develop skills around specific components of the PRO Act campaign, but also to develop skills and capacity within chapters are transferable to other chapter-level organizing efforts. Going forward, we hope to standardize materials like these and help institutionalize these organizer trainings with relevant DSA national bodies, so they are easily accessible to all chapters and occur on a regular basis to help develop members as effective organizers across DSA.

### May Day Actions



We organized over 85 DSA chapter events on May Day, with particularly large rallies throughout Virginia and Arizona to pressure Senators Mark Warner, Kyrsten Sinema, and Mark Kelly to support the Protect the Right to Organize (PRO) Act, outside their homes or offices. Many of the chapter events were organized with participation from organizers with local labor unions, as well as immigrant rights groups and locals of progressive organizations like Sunrise Movement and Our Revolution.

These events coincided with the onset of more widespread COVID vaccinations, and for many chapters, these were the first in-person public events scheduled since the beginning of the pandemic and economic shutdown, which contributed to the excitement for these coordinated actions. Weeks of building interest through strong communications and organizer trainings helped organize strong participation in these actions.

## Phonebanks

Our PRO Act phonebanks grew from the experience of New York state chapters' work on the Tax The Rich campaign. The immense work of NYS comrades meant we weren't starting from scratch entirely, and that we had an existing DSA knowledge base in ThruTalk for both phonebankers and for administrative work. Those best practices informed the early scripts (what we would be saying on the phone), targeting models (how we ascertained who to call), and metrics collection and record-keeping (how we'd track if our campaign was working successfully). We prioritized a week of action first, convening a team of roughly a dozen comrades for this purpose, with the original goal of 500,000 dials in the week from March 21 to 28. Our team began in earnest roughly 3 weeks to a month before the targeted week of action, building signups, tracking recruitment, training the trainers who would go on to lead phonebank shifts, and ensuring geographic, racial and gender diversity among those phonebank shift leads.

The primary ask of our phonebanks was for residents to leave a voicemail, in their own words, at the office of one of the five Democrat senators (including both Arizona senators) who were not original co-sponsors of the PRO Act urging them to get on board. DSA volunteers called residents of those four states, spoke to them about labor militancy and climate change, then patched the call through to voicemail. Volunteers were able to listen into residents' calls and impassioned statements to their elected officials, which resulted in deep and powerful stories. Volunteers often shared stories in the debriefs held in the last 15 minutes before a shift ended. Many of these voters had not done anything like that before, were overall very positive about their patch-through experience, and spoke to the centrality of unions in making a better, fairer, greener planet. On several occasions we completely filled the voicemails at a number of senatorial offices around their states, providing volunteers with a tangible sense of the impact of our work. During the phonebank shifts and on the Slack, a sense of camaraderie developed among volunteers across DSA chapters that many said they had not felt since the height of the Bernie 2020 campaign, with buzz growing as participants shared their experiences online.

To achieve the half-a-million dials in one week goal, we needed to work backwards from a topline and develop intermediary performance metrics so we could course-correct during the week if we got off track. We adopted NYS Tax The Rich campaign's benchmark of roughly 35,000 dials made in a shift, which meant that we would need about 16 shifts in that week (twice daily, with three on weekends). The back-to-back nature of those shifts were a little gruelling but were required by the multiple timezones of our campaign (East Coast and Arizona), the phone-answering habits of respondents based on personal work schedules, and the legal and system requirements of ThruTalk. A single volunteer could have roughly 30 substantive calls over a 2.5 hour shift, and with our targeted pick-up rate we looked to have a



total of 4000 shift signups across the 16 shifts (average of 250 sign ups per shift). Volunteer activation was challenging in that week of action but with dedicated effort we were able to pull it off. Our original assumption of a 50% “flake-rate” (those who’d signed up to attend but didn’t make it when the shift started) was too low—closer to two-thirds of volunteers did not attend the shifts they said they would. A confirms team (to reach out a day or so before the shift) and a flake-chase team (for the first 20 minutes of a shift) helped somewhat with this work, and with greater capacity on our field team and a longer lead-in from team formation to our week of action would have helped us grow those teams. However, we underestimated both the length of a call it would take to move a voter to patch through, and the total number of dials we could make in a shift without sacrificing the quality of our lists and ensuring a steady stream of organizing conversations.

Overall, we had 842 volunteers during the week of action for a total of 1,191 shifts completed, hailing from 184 chapters and at-large. A running leaderboard of “top ten” chapters helped chapters in big cities jostle and compete, while “most dials per member in good standing” leaderboards allowed the campaign to highlight the phenomenal effort of smaller chapters, particularly those in our target states. Of those volunteers, there were 242 who lived in target states, 184 who were bilingual in English and Spanish, and 176 who shared that they were union. We hit our 500,000 goal on the 28th, at the end of the week of action, during a shift that was bottomlined by Boston DSA and at which candidates for local office spoke. In total we made 504,916 dials, which yielded 13,615 organizing conversations with target state residents (a 2.7% rate roughly typical for this work). 1,923 transfers were made (266 for King; 663 for Warner; 86 for Manchin; 297 for Sinema; 611 for Kelly) and 71% of those voicemails were from target state residents who were not in a union, demonstrating DSA’s ability to reach constituents that existing unions in target states aren’t able to contact. We trained 58 field leads, prioritizing BIPOC comrades who expressed interest in the campaign. Of these field leads, 7 (or 12%) are bilingual and 23 (or 40%) are BIPOC, and 24 of those trained leads actually led one or more shifts (with similar linguistic and racial balance). Many, many comrades put in the work to make that week of action a success, from keeping engagement up in Slack and other digital organizing spaces, to keeping the software running smoothly, to tweaking the scripts and targeting models over the course of the week.

**Campaigns at the national level that are considering phonebanking at this scale are encouraged to reach out to members of the PRO Act Steering Committee and the Field Team for more granular information on each of the details here.** While it was ambitious to set these goals, we found it much easier to sustain the engagement of volunteers through a compact, time-bound week of action. We were able to make a further 500,000 dials, for a total of 1 million, with less frequent phonebanking shifts held in the months of April and May. Turnout per shift was lower, and while the peaks of effort needed by lead organizers to pull those off were lower, the overall expenditure of organizing focus was higher because of the diffuse nature of our second half. We did achieve two important subsidiary goals in the second half however, viz., to empower chapters to recruit and run their own phonebanks, and to supplement the phonebanks with textbanks to accommodate comrades with schedules or aptitudes that made phonebanking difficult. Even so, a targeted, high-intensity/short-duration push worked very well for this. **Both Democratic senators who “flipped” on the PRO Act, Angus King and Joe Manchin, cited (publicly or in private) the DSA phonebanks and the resulting contact they received from their constituents as key factors in their decision.**

## Communications

Our “Comms” crew comprised of a core team of 10-20 people has met weekly from before the launch to the present, designing every public facing aspect of our comms, pitched and earned media, social media, graphic design, illustration, video, and web development work, with the support of national comms staff. It’s worth noting that the comms infrastructure that was built to help win the PRO Act has continued to operate into the second and current phase of the GND campaign (which added a new demand: Green New Deal for Public Schools), thus enabling continuity in messaging across campaign phases. We also had very valuable constant support from Chris Kotalik and national DSA comms staff, especially with press coverage.

Our team created talking points, a social media toolkit, a campaign logo (with unique color palette and font), multiple videos ([campaign launch video](#), [May Day video](#), [Sinema target ad](#), getting tens of thousands of views on social media) and a trove of graphics (phonebank, event, and action flyers, illustrations and Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook). All of these were designed to be used by chapters, and customized as needed to inflect local campaigns and conditions. All, except for linked videos, can be found in the chapter toolkit: [Chapter Guide - DSA PRO Act Campaign](#).

We helped with social media publicity and graphic design to promote our Launch mass call March 7, featuring Jamaal Bowman, Sara Nelson, Naomi Klein, and GNDCC & DSLC organizers, 12k views and DSA’s largest mass call ever for the live event ([Workers & the World, Unite! DSA for PRO Act Campaign Launch Call w/ Naomi Klein, Sara Nelson & Jamaal Bowman](#)) and our May Day mass call April 24, almost 2k views ([It’s MAYDAY for the PRO Act](#)). In mass calls and videos, we prioritized as speakers DSA organizers who are Black, Indigenous, people of color, and immigrants.

We designed an entirely new website, with periodically updated content, including e.g. a map of May Day chapter actions: [PRO Act for a Green New Deal - Workers and the World Unite](#).

As a result of our efforts and the campaign’s overall success, we achieved impressive media coverage, both earned and pitched:

- Kate Aronoff situates our campaign as indication of a [new climate-labor alliance](#)
- Dharna Noor covered the March 7 launch event [PRO Act as essential to win a Green New Deal](#)
- DSA and IUPAT organizer Ryan Keckeris [laid out for Sarah Jones](#) how the PRO Act is essential for the labor movement and democracy
- Dan Denvir spoke with DSA members Jonah Furman and Alex Press about the [state of the US labor movement today](#)—and why the PRO Act is necessary to revive it (he talked to [IUPAT vice president Jimmy Williams](#) in a separate interview).
- GNDCC members Sydney Ghazarian and Ashik Siddique wrote an essay for *Dissent* [To Win a Green New Deal, We Must Pass the PRO Act](#).
- Four GNDCC organizers (Sydney, Ashik, Gustavo and Thea) appeared on a collaborative podcast, co-hosted by The Dig and Justice Democrats’ Bloc Party, on DSA’s PRO Act Campaign: [Organizing DSA's PRO Act Campaign - The Dig](#). Sydney and Ashik also appeared on an episode of the [Delete Your Account podcast](#).
- Mindy Isser, DSA and comms team member, wrote a piece for *The Nation* on why the PRO Act is good for women workers [Working Women Need the PRO Act](#)
- Earned reporting from *The Intercept*’s Ryan Grim [Sen. Mark Kelly Is Emerging as an Obstacle to](#)

[the PRO Act theintercept.com](https://theintercept.com)

- GNDCC organizers Syd and Thea appeared on [The Young Turks' "The Conversation"](#) to discuss DSA's PRO Act Campaign, garnering 7.5k views
- Earned media on our campaign in *Jacobin* [Socialists and Organized Labor Are Uniting to Change Pro-Boss Labor Laws](#)
- Several comms team members helped create "Freelancers for the Pro Act" as a social media presence and active nucleus organizing freelancers to counter anti-union narratives. This group created a [@freelancers4pro](#) twitter account, a website ([Freelancers For The PRO Act](#)), generated earned media in [The New Republic](#), and were featured on [podcasts](#) and at an AFL town hall on the subject [The PRO Act and Freelancers Town Hall](#)

## Summary of Outcomes

This campaign was a massive, nation-wide effort and it cannot be fully described in a couple of pages. Evaluation of the campaign and related metrics is ongoing and the campaign is not over!

At the time of this writing, we can report:

- **PRO Act total phonebanking numbers:**
  - 1,491 total active volunteers
  - 2,436 total phonebank shifts
  - 6,000+ total phonebank signups, from 184 chapters including At-Large, in 49 states & PR
  - 1 million phone calls, 30k conversations, 5k patch-throughs
- 102 DSA chapters participated in campaign actions
- Over 4000+ volunteers joined the PRO Act Slack
  - Up to a third were identified as non-DSA members. Their contacts were collected by staff and GDC for a recruitment and absorption plan to DSA
- Referred ~100 workers we contacted through phonebanks to DSA's Emergency Workplace Organizing Committee (EWOC)
- Flipped two senators on public position re: PRO Act, due to organizing in chapters and contacts made in Maine and West Virginia
- Fundraised over \$32,000 in online crowdfunding, to offset DSA campaign costs
- Developed Spoke, dialer, data, technical capacity within our organization (no external consultants needed)
- We've moved national labor unions and AFL-CIO to mobilize their members and invest much more resources in lobbying for the PRO Act than before DSA's campaign began
- Sustained efforts continue to pressure remaining target Senators on the full bill, and significant elements of the PRO Act are included in Senate Democrats' budget reconciliation bill being negotiated as of this writing
- Ongoing regional coordination continues among DSA chapters in Virginia & Arizona, to keep pressuring remaining target Senators Mark Warner, Mark Kelly, & Kyrsten Sinema

We hope that the major campaign component developed in this phase, independent phone-banking capacity, can be institutionalized in DSA for further use in other nationally prioritized work. It was an especially effective tactic after a year of shutdowns of in-person organizing due to the pandemic, and organizers across many chapters were grateful to have something to plug members into that required relatively little of their own effort. While some chapters were remarkably effective at driving their

members' participation in phonebanks, both in overall numbers of volunteer shifts, and in participation as a share of chapter membership, the national efforts to drive turnout also engaged many at-large DSA members and members of chapters who otherwise have had limited participation in their chapter organizing. As DSA's Growth & Development efforts continue to grow, we can consider ladders of engagement for such members toward further organizing efforts in their chapters. Ideally, nationally coordinated tactics like this, around focused and time-limited strategic goals, can serve as connective tissue for our membership to sharpen outward-facing organizing skills and feel a sense of agency, common purpose, and the collective strength of DSA as an organization.

Top DSA Chapters by Number of Shifts volunteering for the PRO Act Campaign						
	DSA Chapter	Number of volunteers	Number of shifts	Total members	Share of members who volunteered	Avg. shifts per volunteer
1	Metro DC	77	142	3,928	1.96%	1.8
2	NYC	77	122	10,941	0.70%	1.6
3	Philadelphia	52	100	2,226	2.34%	1.9
4	Boston	58	89	3,341	1.74%	1.5
5	Chicago IL	48	79	4,097	1.17%	1.6
6	Las Vegas	43	79	597	7.20%	1.8
7	Los Angeles	44	63	6,307	0.70%	1.4
8	Portland OR	39	62	2,938	1.33%	1.6
9	Austin	23	48	2,077	1.11%	2.1
10	San Diego	16	45	1,207	1.33%	2.8
11	Seattle WA	29	44	2,533	1.14%	1.5
12	Piedmont NC	21	38	948	2.22%	1.8
13	Metro Cincinnati	18	36	708	2.54%	2.0
14	Kansas City MO	8	36	556	1.44%	4.5
15	Phoenix AZ	11	34	919	1.20%	3.1
16	Jacksonville FL	11	32	236	4.66%	2.9
17	Atlanta	18	27	1,635	1.10%	1.5
18	West Suburban IL	11	27	805	1.37%	2.5
19	Orange County	6	27	687	0.87%	4.5
20	San Francisco	16	24	1,777	0.90%	1.5

Top Chapters by Shifts per 100 Members for the PRO Act Campaign				
	DSA Chapter	Share of members who volunteered	Shifts per 100 members	Total Members
1	North Central WV	11.3%	22.6	53
2	Topeka KS	6.1%	15.2	33
3	Jacksonville FL	4.7%	13.6	236
4	Las Vegas	7.2%	13.2	597
5	Polk County FL	6.9%	12.7	102
6	Lubbock	8.3%	12.5	48
7	Merced & Mariposa	8.3%	12.5	48
8	New River Valley	4.2%	9.9	71
9	PA Wilds	9.5%	9.5	21
10	Anchorage	5.4%	9.2	130
11	Stanislaus	4.6%	9.2	65
12	Winston-Salem	5.6%	9.2	142
13	Space Coast FL	2.7%	7.3	110
14	Athens Area GA	1.9%	7.1	154
15	Amarillo	3.6%	7.1	28
16	Tampa Bay FL	4.8%	6.7	315
17	Kansas City MO	1.4%	6.5	556
18	Palm Beach County FL	1.3%	6.4	236
19	Greater Lafayette	4.1%	6.2	97
20	Syracuse NY	2.5%	6.2	275

## Organizational Challenges

### Structure of Ecosocialist WG

When the GND campaign was proposed as a national priority in 2019, our resolution specified a degree of independence from NPC, meant to reserve decision-making power over the campaign within the Ecosocialist WG, and rely largely on the capacity of WG members to coordinate campaign work. Over the course of 2020, we found that in practice this set up a number of logistical barriers in communications and campaign support, especially in contacting chapter leads. In fact coordinating our work more closely with NPC allowed closer integration with staff and field organizers, as well as with other national priority formations like the Democratic Socialist Labor Commission (DSLCL), which set us up for success by the time we were ready to carry out the PRO Act campaign.

The structure of leadership of the Ecosocialist WG, with an internal division between the WG Steering Committee and the GNDCC, led to unneeded redundancy and lack of clarity around roles. While members of both bodies worked well together, the SC felt obligated to attend to a lot of internal structure and

processes which were not clearly tied to GND campaign work, and had limited participation from other members of the WG, which led to SC members feeling overstretched. The responsibilities of the SC have been largely administrative, which is unlike forms of organizing where an organizer can ebb and flow their involvement as their availability changes. Being an SC member had required a commitment to consistent involvement and showing up to meetings to facilitate the ongoing maintenance of the working group. Examples of the SC responsibilities include: verifying DSA membership, adding members to our Slack and email list, scheduling, planning, and hosting working group meetings, fielding requests from the membership to amplify chapter organizing efforts, writing reports to the National Political Committee on working group activities, facilitating working group or campaign teams like communications and mobilizing, initiating the bylaws amendment period, and coordinating with the Green New Deal Campaign Committee (GNDCC) to plan and implement the GND campaign, its various teams and strategy.

Over the past four years, the SC has not had the consistent level of commitment required from some committee members, which has resulted in an undue burden on the committed members and a reduced capacity to plan working group meetings and conform to the requirements of already cumbersome and outdated bylaws. The WG has since made changes to leadership selection processes to better vet, onboard and support new SC members to make sure they are set up to succeed. In collaboration with the GNDCC over the past year, the SC has also made efforts to **shift the focus of this working group to intentionally facilitating organizing capacity in and collaboration between chapters**, rather than running it like a quasi-chapter in its own right, with significant proceduralism and bureaucracy, which in practice is both ineffective and onerous, and has favored the participation of a relatively small number of self-selecting members of the WG over the many more DSA members who have actively engaged in campaign organizing without formally engaging in WG structures. Compared to our previous efforts to develop WG organizers around maintaining WG functions without the structure of a national campaign, our efforts through the focused goals of the GND campaign have been much more effective at developing a “middle layer” of DSA organizers between chapters and national structure.

In our resolution #12 to continue GND organizing at this year’s convention, we are thus proposing to resolve these issues by formally transition the Ecosocialist WG into a Green New Deal Campaign Commission, combining the Ecosocialist WG SC and GNDCC into one expanded leadership body, with subcommittees and processes maintained as needed to fulfill campaign objectives. Specifically, we propose to move toward a structure that formally engages chapter representatives, building on what has proved effective in organizing a high degree of chapter participation since last year’s GND summit, and establish processes for meeting regularly with representatives to collectively shape and move forward our campaign work. Our goal is not to silo campaign work in one working group, but to organize an effective campaign for all of DSA.

## Coaching & Training

In the PRO Act phase of the campaign, we set an ambitious goal of assigning volunteer “coaches” who could maintain regular contact with all chapter leads on the campaign. It was an ongoing challenge to maintain enough cadre for this, and these roles were maintained as distinct from “training” team leads who coordinated weekly campaign skills trainings. Going forward, we expect to make this more sustainable by combining “coaching” and “training” roles and linking them to ongoing group check-ins that regularly engage chapter leads.

Throughout all our work since 2019, Garrick Ruiz has been invaluable in the development of our strategy, and in supporting our work at critical stages of the campaign's development, as have other DSA national staff and field organizers at stages of heightened campaign activity. Staff field organizers have been very helpful in coordinating chapter outreach and guiding chapter organizers at stages of campaign escalation, but this is an important volunteer capacity we hope to develop for phases when broader staff support is directed to other purposes.

## Goals for 2021-2023

Over the next two years, we plan to continue pursuing tactics in line with our theory of power (below) for the near and medium term, starting with prioritizing climate infrastructure legislation as a key terrain of socialist organizing through fall 2021, in which our most immediate goal is organizing for a Green New Deal for Public Schools, as introduced this summer by Rep. Jamaal Bowman, along with organized teachers and education workers.

The GNDCC will organize to demand a green stimulus oriented by the principles of democratic public ownership and public investment, and designed to benefit workers and communities—not “green” capitalists—working with DSA allies in Congress, and aligned labor unions and movement organizations, to organize around non-reformist reforms like public ownership of the energy system, the construction of millions of units of green social housing, federal support for massive expansions in green public transit, and a Green New Deal for public schools—and insert socialist politics into a policy process still dominated by centrist politicians and their donors.

This political program will align with DSA's many chapter-level public power and GND campaigns, the GNDCC's “green public bailout” phase of our campaign plan, and a future campaign phase demanding a federal jobs guarantee. In addition, given the overlapping policy areas they relate to, these legislative pushes will enable more intentional collaboration between GNDCC and other DSA national bodies. Lastly, the PRO Act work is continuing under the ambit of the climate infrastructure fight. As of this writing, Democrats in Congress have included key elements of the PRO Act within the budget reconciliation bill being negotiated over summer 2021, with support from President Biden—but we know we, socialists and labor organizers, will continue to have to fight to win our strategic demands.

Given the history of deep rifts between environmentalists and organized labor (especially building trades) in the US over the past decades since the rise of neoliberalism, and the longer history of anticommunism in the labor movement, we cannot understate the importance of building stronger alliances between labor unions and socialists toward Green New Deal goals. Our work with IUPAT and the PRO Act coalition is an important benchmark to this end. It is crucial for us to keep deepening these relationships in the years ahead, and hopefully expanding our coalitions with unions in more strategic sectors, as well as focusing on base-building to organize in communities that have the most to gain from winning our demands.

Against the deepening climate and economic crises we face within the borders of the United States, DSA has a crucial role to play. Together, we have a world to win.

# Appendix

## Our Theory of Power

available at [bit.ly/GNDCCToP](https://bit.ly/GNDCCToP)

### I. The Challenge

*Men make their own history, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under self-selected circumstances, but under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past.*

Democrats have achieved control of the U.S. Senate and Biden has been sworn into office. This shifts the balance of possibilities for the Green New Deal, from a scenario in which it was totally foreclosed to one in which there is a narrow shot at winning some of its legislative building blocks. The sense of political relief, however, does not alter the basic facts of the current conjuncture. In the wake of not only disappointing but, given rightward shifts in many working class communities, concerning general election results and a primary season that astronomically raised only to tragically dash the hopes of U.S. Leftists, Marx's words ring truer than ever. Just as any good organizer knows we have to meet people where they are at, any good strategist knows that they have to work in the historical context in which they find themselves. And our current context is not auspicious for building power from below, given the dismantling of popular institutions and organizations over prior decades, foremost among them labor unions. Yet we can't afford either inaction, or a strategy on the timescale of many decades: the climate crisis and the crisis of economic precarity and immiseration continue unabated, with inequality and global warming accelerating by the day.

We know that there are no shortcuts to winning power and systemic transformation. But we also know that change occurs in uneven and sometimes unexpected temporalities; periods of relative quiescence can harbor the building of relationships and organizing infrastructure, as well as political education and training, that enable seemingly sudden bursts of grassroots activity (to wit, the mass uprising in response to the murder of George Floyd). Indeed, while all recent achievements on the Left required tremendous organizational energy, all of them defied prior expectations of what was possible: socialist electoral victories at all levels of government; Bernie's performance in California and Nevada, buoyed by working class Latino communities; the aforementioned mass uprising, which was the largest, most racially and geographically diverse protest for racial justice in U.S. history; a wave of teachers and nurses strikes, including in supposed conservative strongholds and "right-to-work" states.

The key question is how to replicate such victories in a sustained and coordinated fashion, targeting the climate-capitalism nexus through the lens of a radical Green New Deal and making substantial progress in under a decade. Such a horizon requires popular activity in all arenas: ballot boxes, streets, workplaces, neighborhoods, and more.

### II. The Conjuncture



For the next four years, we will organize for a Green New Deal in the context of a neoliberal Democratic administration over which the Left has limited power or influence. The following four years will be more of the same *if we are lucky*; the prospect of Trump 2.0 is a serious possibility. Of course, if we are very lucky, we will see a primary challenge to Biden or Harris from their Left, but the possibilities of such a challenge being successful seem limited. In the House, there is a slim Democratic majority with an expanded Squad (presenting a real opportunity for popularizing socialism and embarking on the tactics discussed below); the unfolding Senate results likely ensure a Democratic trifecta—but with a narrow mandate for transformative change, and hemmed in by the party’s dominant, neoliberal wing. Republicans control a majority of state legislatures. Twenty-three states are controlled by Republican trifectas.

On the economic front, the pandemic provided an opportunity for tech firms and tech billionaires to massively increase their market power and wealth, respectively—and, concomitantly, for the deepening precarity and gigification of essential workers. Lacking the organizations and institutions in which to articulate itself as “class-for-itself,” the working class remains fractured along the cross-cutting lines of occupation, geography, race, gender, and citizenship. Along with the downwardly mobile and/or indebted lower echelons of the “professional managerial class” (PMC), which is effectively joining the ranks of the working class, they form the constituency for left-wing economic populism—although the Bernie campaign, in both its victories (e.g., Nevada) and its failures (e.g., South Carolina), revealed that such a constituency will not emerge as a political force without *strategic, targeted, and relational organizing* that commences well in advance of the electoral cycle, and in turn builds on past electoral campaigns. Additionally, the existence of a broad, multiracial, and complex working class (working class and fragments of the PMC) constituency for economic populism provides a clear opening for reactionary variants of economic nationalism. It remains to be seen whether the GOP could coalesce around such a program—and/or whether figures within the GOP could articulate it without threatening the interests of their donors or the systemic interests of Capital.

Meanwhile, fossil capital has taken a severe hit, with bleak prospects for prices and demands, tightening regulations in the EU (and likely under a Biden administration), and institutional investors “de-risking” their portfolios. Green capital is ascendent, yet still very much reliant on regulatory incentives and public subsidies.

### III. What is to Be Done

The following tactics, arenas, and organizational forms encompass a set of **complementary and inter-related elements** that in turn constitute an overarching theory of power. This theory of power ought to guide our ecosocialist praxis in the near and medium term.

- **Win “nonreformist” or “structural” reforms”:** Materially consequential, highly visible, and explicitly politicized victories that simultaneously (1) improve the conditions of working class life; (2) build socialist political power in government; and (3) heighten the capacities of self-organization among working class and downwardly mobile and/or precarious fractions of the PMC. Capital relies increasingly on the state. To weaken capital, building workplace or tenant militancy alone is insufficient. We must contest for political power in the arena of the state, which in turn generates and spills into struggles in other areas of life.
- **Build core elements of a party apparatus:** Prioritize building independent organizing infrastructure that remains in DSA and does not rely on liberal, foundation-funded NGOs, or their staffers or consultants. Legislative campaigns should build DSA as a working class institution

that can contest for state power without relying on external partners. Develop fundraising capacity for GND campaigning. Build an organization that can co-govern with the socialists it elects to office.

- **Win class struggle elections:** Elections of DSA candidates to local government have already been critical to advancing GND-related goals in chapters with well-developed electoral capacity, such as Chicago and NYC. Other chapters like Maine and Portland DSA have won significant GND-related ballot measures. Since the political power of socialism emanates from the participation of masses of people, we need *numbers*. Widespread and systematic contact with the working class through carefully planned large-scale field work and follow-up build DSA and expand our capacity to mobilize. The greatest national breakthroughs in climate politics since 2018 have been shaped by DSA-aligned Congress candidates like AOC and Rashida Tlaib, and expanded “Squad” members Cori Bush and Jamaal Bowman will keep building the national profile of universalist GND policies this year. Continuing to build our electoral capacity from the lowest levels of government will build a long-term bench of candidates who can contest higher office with direct organized input from DSA’s membership. As the [NEC strategy document](#) lays out, “chapters should view elected officials as a vehicle for organizing campaigns, and vice versa.”
- **Orient to federal politics:** To stop planetary catastrophe in the time we have left, the capacity of the federal government is necessary. Where federal action is not yet feasible, the next most strategic level of government is likely at the state level due to the ability of states to preempt laws passed at the city level. And, even at the most local level, contesting for power in legislatures teaches members how to contest for power in other arenas like the work place, the community, and the private sector and thus contributes to the broader democratization of state, society, and economy. Therefore, we see local/state/federal electoral terrains as potentially mutually constitutive arenas for consolidating socialist political power and concomitant policy victories—but such a synergy across political scales is rooted in the overarching goal of winning power at the federal level.
- **Prioritize labor solidarity and class struggle as workers:** Union density is approaching historic lows. But the current level of unionization of the workforce is actually comparable to that in the US at the beginning of the 1930s—and an upswing of militant labor activity, along with massive public pressure for economic relief throughout the Great Depression, raised expectations on the government and won major concessions from the ruling class throughout the Roosevelt administration. There are no shortcuts to labor power, especially amid intensifying unemployment and worker precarity. Rebuilding, growing, and radicalizing the labor movement into a fighting force, to shape the terms of a just transition for all workers and a caring economy for all, is critical to winning a Green New Deal this decade. This is particularly important given that Bernie is not the President and the Left does not have a majority in Congress. Worker organization can (and has) served as a parallel, oppositional force capable of wielding power against capitalist interests and winning concessions from the state. In particular, our campaign should focus on (1) expanding and radicalizing organized labor, by campaigning with the PRO Act in coordination with DSA union members and empowering DSA union members to engage in GND political education in their unions (2) building and strengthening national networks of rank and file union members in sectors like the building trades, transportation, and education (3) implementing popular education and worker organizer trainings for DSA members and allies—union, non-union, and unemployed workers—focused on the intersection of labor and climate as well as our campaign priorities. This multi-pronged approach mirrors the multi-tactic labor strategy adopted at the 2019 Convention, focusing on both expanding organized labor (“organize the unorganized”) and

radicalizing organized labor (“rank and file”) with the goal of empowering ecosocialist leadership in the labor movement.

- **Create counter-hegemonic socialist media:** The corporate media was a critical factor in kneecapping the Sanders presidential campaign in the U.S. in 2016 and 2020, and kneecapping Corbyn’s Labour bid for national leadership in 2019. Tech companies’ manipulation of news on social media undoubtedly played a role in this, and can only be expected to further filter, silo, and neutralize the distribution of information that threatens the ruling class going forward. Alternative media created by socialists and progressive fellow travelers has grown dramatically in recent years, and has facilitated the growth of left politics—but these outlets are largely led by people who are extremely online and remain disconnected from an organized base, which leaves it vulnerable to undisciplined attempts to intervene in procedural politics that are driven by moral catharsis rather than material power and organized relationships. DSA must engage mass media platforms that can reliably transmit our democratically determined priorities, and continue to package our materials for mass consumption on social media, especially amplifying the perspectives of workers and organizers who can convey an expansive sense of the “frontlines” of the climate crisis, the benefits of a GND especially for working class BIPOC & young people, and mass organizing strategies to win GND victories.
- **Develop a concerted program of political education:** A GND was overwhelmingly voted as a DSA national priority in 2019, but much remains to be done to develop real consensus across the organization about what it entails and how to organize to make it possible—and to develop a national political education program that can reach our whole membership. We must create easily digestible material that lays out how the climate crisis shapes the entire political terrain for our society this decade, a radical vision for a GND, and what working class organizing priorities must be for a GND in the near term. These materials should be well understood by all DSA members as part of basic political education within our organization, and be easily accessible for workers. We must work to develop structures across DSA that facilitate political education around our democratically prioritized goals.
- **Recruit and train organizers:** Organizer development is still uneven across DSA’s membership, and falls largely to chapters to develop effective organizers through local campaigns. Organizational capacity directly depends on the number of leaders or cadre in a chapter. The Green New Deal Campaign must recruit Black socialists, Indigenous socialists, and socialists of color to be leaders in our struggle to organize a working class majority across racial divides. Many members who are drawn to ecosocialism have already been primed for climate concern by their education, professional work experience, or nonprofit-led activism they have participated in—which can be useful entry points, but can limit the scope of organizing efforts if not further developed through lessons learned from campaign organizing experience that is oriented toward building working class power, and developing new working class organizers, especially BIPOC.
- **Coordinate to rapidly respond to crisis:** DSA has not done the legwork for rapid response and mobilization either on a national scale or in many local contexts. Develop capacity for street mobilization and direct action that put pressure on the state by targeting specific actors and agitating around crises of climate and disinvestment.
- **Integrate an internationalist perspective in all areas of our work:** Although this document is firmly focused on the horizon of building socialist power at the federal level—itsself a monumental task—as ecosocialists we are committed to an internationalist perspective on the climate crisis and on the underlying system of global capitalism of which it is a symptom. That being said, internationalism is not just about politics at the “international” scale: for ecosocialist work, it is about orienting towards global climate justice, anti-imperialism, and global economic

redistribution in every facet of our campaigns, while simultaneously developing substantive relationships with socialist movements across the Global North and South. For example, using frameworks such as “divest/ invest,” rooted in the Black radical tradition and the Movement for Black Lives, means demanding the defunding of police and militarism that has destroyed so many lives beyond (and at) our borders; or, in another policy area, demanding public goods over privatized consumption is a key means of reducing the extractive resource use of the Global North, and all the dispossession and contamination in the Global South such extraction causes.

As should be apparent by now, **these tactics, arenas, and organizational forms are fundamentally inter-related**: winning structural reforms makes it easier to elect socialists, by tangibly demonstrating the material effects of insurgent campaigns for elected office; deepening political education enables better socialist analysis and framing in our media work; electing socialists facilitates the work of recruiting and training organizers, many of whom might get their first experiences with organizing volunteering for an insurgent campaign; rebuilding and radicalizing the labor movement, and renewing its organic connection to the socialist Left, helps win non-reformist reforms. **These complementary elements comprise the overarching theory of power that ought to guide our ecosocialist praxis in the near and medium term.**

