

MEMO Published June 20, 2025 • 3 minute read

The Radical DSA and the New York City Mayor's Race



Next week, New York City Democrats will choose their nominee in the race for mayor. While we take no position on who Democrats should vote for, we are deeply alarmed by one of the leading candidates: Zohran Mamdani. Leaving aside Mamdani's positions that some believe border on antisemitism, it is his proud affiliation with the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) that worries us most.

The DSA has published its platform, which we read. Even a casual glance reveals ideas so extreme, so profoundly anathema to the vast majority of voters, that they sound like they were cooked up in the offices of a Trump-aligned ad maker. Here's just a sampling:

Abolish prisons and police and free all prisoners

- “Defund the police ... [and cut] budgets annually towards zero”

- “Decertify police unions”
- “Disarm law enforcement officers”
- “Close local jails” and “free all people from involuntary confinement”

Provide free housing, college, water, gas, food, etc.

- “Housing for all” and “universal rent control”
- “Guarantee publicly available water, energy, transit, food, and other necessities for all, free of charge”
- “Free and democratic public college and, where viable, free private college for all”

Require public ownership of most real estate, insurance, banks, and telecom

- “Social ownership of all major industry and infrastructure”
- “The nationalization of businesses like railroads, utilities, and critical manufacturing and technology companies”
- “Nationalize and bring under public ownership institutions of monetary policy, insurance, real estate, and finance”

Ban private health care

- “Public ownership and funding of our healthcare system, including hospitals and other healthcare providers, pharmaceutical research and production, and other medical research and production facilities”
- “End or limit counterproductive [patent and copyright] protections”

Guarantee four-day, high-paying jobs for all

- “A four-day, 32-hour work week with no reduction in wages or benefits” plus a “a guarantee [of] a job with union wages and benefits to everyone who wants one”

Eliminate all fossil fuel use, discovery and production

- “Nationalize fossil fuel producers to phase them out as quickly as necessary—no new fossil fuel projects can be authorized or built”

Massively cut the military and withdraw from the world

- “Dramatically slash US military spending to a level sufficient for a genuine national defense, not the projection of power outside the country”
- “Close all US foreign military bases”
- “Immediately withdraw from NATO”
- “Abolish USAID, NED, (and) Voice of America”

Open all US borders

- “Demilitarize the border and end all immigrant detention and abolish ICE”
- “End all deportations and enforcement actions, immigration detention, private prison contracts, and deputization of local police forces”

Terminate America’s constitutional democracy

- “Abolish the US Senate”
- “Extension of voting rights to non-citizens”
- “A second constitutional convention to write the founding documents of a new socialist democracy”

These are not policies that would move the country a few clicks to the left or shift the “Overton Window.” Rather, they are a call to completely reorder American society in ways that are self-evidently bizarre, dangerous, and deeply unwise.

If a DSA member like Mamdani were to win the Democratic nomination for New York City mayor—or, worse, win the general election in November—it would be terrible for the city. Do New Yorkers really want socialist city-run grocery stores?

Worse yet, a Mamdani win for such a high-profile office would be a devastating blow in the fight to defeat Trumpism. It does not take much imagination or political acumen to see how the DSA ideas could be weaponized against Democrats everywhere. Republican attack ads in swing districts attaching moderate Democratic candidates to Mamdani and the DSA practically write themselves.

So, we urge New York Democratic voters to think carefully before selecting Mamdani at any level of the rank-choice system they will use to select their nominee next week. Read the DSA platform and ask yourself if this is the vision you want for your city. And consider whether you want to saddle Democrats nationwide with the radical views of a group that should be confined to the irrelevant fringe of American politics.