

Socialist Equality Party candidate Niles Niemuth on ballot for Michigan's 12th Congressional District

By our reporter
5 September 2018

The Michigan State Board of Elections has certified Socialist Equality Party (SEP) candidate for Congress Niles Niemuth for the November 6 general election ballot. Niles is running in Michigan's 12th congressional district, which covers the Ann Arbor area, Dearborn and the Downriver suburbs of Detroit.

The Michigan Secretary of State has posted a list of general election candidates for the entire state. Out of all the candidates running for the House of Representatives, Niemuth submitted the most petition signatures, garnering the support of more than 5,800 voters. The signatures, nearly double the 3,000 required, were submitted and approved without any objection from potential challengers.

Due to restrictive ballot access laws that require tens of thousands of signatures to achieve official third party status for the SEP, Niemuth will appear on the ballot as an Independent candidate.

The 2018 midterm elections take place amid an unprecedented political crisis in the United States, including bitter factional conflicts within the ruling class. While the Trump administration pursues a fascistic strategy aimed at appealing to far-right nationalism and anti-immigrant chauvinism, the Democrats have centered their opposition to Trump on the basis of a neo-McCarthyite, anti-Russia campaign and the promotion of the military-intelligence apparatus.

In the elections, the Democrats are running an unprecedented number of individuals drawn from the CIA and the military. Typical of these CIA Democrats is Elissa Slotkin, the Democratic candidate in Michigan's 8th Congressional District, who is running ads featuring her long record in the military and CIA.

"We launched our campaign this summer to advance a revolutionary socialist program and perspective for workers and young people in Southeastern Michigan and across the country," Niemuth said. "Polls show that there is enormous and growing interest in socialism, but there is still limited understanding of what socialism is and how it can be achieved."

Niemuth added, "The issues confronting workers and students in the 12th district—low wages and the assault on living standards, ever mounting levels of student debt, the threat of dictatorship and world war—are the issues confronting the working class all over the world. Wherever we go, we encounter enormous opposition to the Democrats and Republicans, opposition to war and militarism, and support for the rights of immigrants."

"We have a very aggressive schedule for the next two months to use the campaign as a platform to present a genuine socialist program to voters across the district," Niles concluded. "Our aim is to mobilize and organize the working class and youth, who are coming into increasingly direct conflict with the entire political establishment and the capitalist system."

Niles will appear on the ballot alongside three other candidates:

- Debbie Dingell is the incumbent Democrat from the 12th district. She a former auto industry lobbyist in Washington, D.C. and a multi-millionaire. Dingell succeeded her husband, John Dingell, Jr., in 2014 after his retirement. Dingell, Jr. was the longest serving Congressman in US history, holding the seat for more than 59 years after succeeding his father, John Dingell, Sr.

- Jeff Jones, the Republican candidate, is running a far-right, Trump-like campaign seeking to appeal to

disillusionment with the Democratic Party, particularly in the heavily deindustrialized working class Downriver communities, which went for Trump in the 2016 presidential election.

- Gary Walkowicz, a lower-level UAW Local 600 official at Ford's Dearborn Truck Plant, is running as a candidate for the Working Class Party, an electoral outfit run by the Spark organization, which presents itself as “left” while opposing any mention of socialism or capitalism. Walkowicz ran for UAW president against Dennis Williams in 2014, promoting illusions in the possibility of pressuring the corrupt union leadership into opposing a series of concessions contracts.

Niemuth’s campaign is the only campaign in the 12th district and throughout the US that offers a way forward for the working class, in opposition to both the Democrats and Republicans.

Visit niles2018.com to donate and get involved in the campaign.

To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

<http://www.wsws.org>