

*The un-millionaire presidential campaign*

# FSP's answer to a rigged political system

by Andrea Bauer

2011 will probably register in history, as it did on *Time* magazine's cover, as the year of the protester. Unionists confounded in the past by leaders' conservatism asserted themselves. Populations under the heel of dictators made revolutions. "Occupy" became the rallying cry for a generation — and more. People stunned by events of recent years shook off their lethargy and took to the streets.

Therefore, the every-four-years scam that is the U.S. presidential election comes just in time — for the ruling class. This is how change gets made, they tell us. Be pragmatic. Vote.

The problem, as always, is who's worth voting for. If they were movie characters, the Republican contenders — an unappetizing mix of racists, women's equality haters, corporate rascals, and know-nothings — would be too over the top to be believed.

As for President Obama, even some of his staunchest supporters turn pale at the thought of a second term. Corporate bailouts, bone-cutting austerity, continuing war, expansion of the police state, no relief for besieged immigrants: this was nobody's idea of hope and change.

Workers and the poor can't afford to lose the momentum gained with such sacrifice at

the Wisconsin Capitol, Zuccotti Park, the waterfront in Longview, Wash., and elsewhere. This is no time to invest in an electoral game we can't win. It is the time to keep discussing real solutions and building radical grass-roots movements.

And that is why the Freedom Socialist Party (FSP) is putting forward New York City FSP Organizer Stephen Durham for president and feminist immigrant rights advocate Christina López for vice president in an energetic, national write-in campaign.



Elliott Stoller

Dave Schmauch

**Left: Freedom Socialist Party vice-presidential candidate Christina López (front) protests Obama's immigration policies as he speaks in Seattle. Right: presidential candidate Stephen Durham (facing) talks with anti-war demonstrators at an April 9, 2011, rally in New York City's Union Square.**

**Why a write-in campaign?** Today, more people identify as independent than as either Republican or Democrat. But they have no representation, thanks mainly to rules that severely hamper

the ability of minor parties to get on the ballot — the most restrictive access laws of any major capitalist country with democratic pretensions.

Each state has its own laws, even for federal elections. This presents a complex obstacle course of signature-gathering, filing fees, and peculiar requirements. Some states bar ballot access to a party sharing one word in common with an already registered party. Some stipulate that any candidate other than a Democrat or Republican be identified only as "Independent," rather than with his or her party affilia-

tion. Others require that 5 percent of the state's voters register with a minor party before its candidates can be on the ballot.

Having run for local and state offices in New York, California, Oregon, and Washington state, the FSP is all too familiar with the hurdles. Despite the barriers, though, FSP candidates have had a real political impact.

The numbers tell part of the story. In Seattle City Council races, Yolanda Alaniz won 28,000 votes, or 18 percent, in the 1991 general election, and Linda Averill gained 16,500 votes in the 2005 primary. She also won 11,100 votes in the primary for City Council in 2003 — despite having to take the Seattle Public Disclosure Commission to court to protect the privacy of donors to a socialist campaign who could be open to harassment.

Last year, looking ahead, FSP knew that ballot obstacles precluded a traditional campaign at the national level. However, given the tremendous opportunity a presidential campaign would offer for reaching out across the country to like-minded thinkers and activists, FSP decided on an unorthodox approach.

Thus, the un-millionaire campaign was born: a write-in effort to protest both the austerity program and the anti-democratic nature of the electoral process itself.

In California, however, where the Peace and Freedom Party electoral alliance already has ballot status, the FSP will compete to be PFP's presidential candidate on the state's ballots in November.

### **The candidates and what they stand for.**

Both Stephen Durham and Christina López are informed, committed champions of the working class with decades of involvement in social justice and labor struggles.

Using the party's 10-point program as a jumping-off point, they will run on a platform calling for an ambitious agenda of creating publicly funded jobs, taxing corporate wealth, expanding public services, restoring basic civil liberties, closing U.S. military bases, and defending the most exploited and oppressed.

**Bring the rising radical spirit to the ballot.** In 2012, the most meaningful vote you could cast is a protest vote.

A vote against the tsunami of social service cutbacks and the Republican and Democratic charade is also a vote *for* something: for full employment, quality public education, equality of rights and opportunity, environmental sanity, solidarity among workers internationally, and the full flowering of human potential.

We urge you to join the un-millionaire campaign and cast off the shackles of the two-party system! □

*For more information or to get involved, visit [www.socialism.com](http://www.socialism.com), call 206-985-4621, or email [VoteSocialism@gmail.com](mailto:VoteSocialism@gmail.com).*

*Also, follow us on Twitter @VoteSocialism, and check out our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/VoteSocialism2012](http://www.facebook.com/VoteSocialism2012).*

## **NATIONAL CAMPAIGN OFFICES**

### **Baltimore**

Email [fspbaltimore@hotmail.com](mailto:fspbaltimore@hotmail.com)

### **Los Angeles**

Tel 323-732-6416. Email [fspla@earthlink.net](mailto:fspla@earthlink.net)

### **Newark, N.J.**

Tel 973-643-0499.

### **New York City**

Tel 212-222-0633. Email [fsp@nyct.net](mailto:fsp@nyct.net)

### **Port Angeles, Wash.**

Tel 360-452-7534. Email [lfthanks@yahoo.com](mailto:lfthanks@yahoo.com)

### **Portland, Ore.**

Tel 503-240-4462. Email [fsp@igc.org](mailto:fsp@igc.org)

### **San Francisco**

Tel 415-864-1278. Email [bafsp@earthlink.net](mailto:bafsp@earthlink.net)

### **Seattle**

Tel 206-722-2453. Email [FSPseattle@mindspring.com](mailto:FSPseattle@mindspring.com)

Paid for by:

**Freedom Socialist 2012 Presidential Campaign Committee**

4710 University Way N.E. Suite 100, Seattle, WA 98105

