



**Democratic
Socialists of
America
Los Angeles**

LETTER OF CENSURE

Nithya Raman

DSA-LA member and Los Angeles City Councilmember

This letter was delivered to Nithya Raman on Saturday February 3rd, 2024.

Elected officials endorsed by DSA-LA are expected to co-govern with the chapter to realize the Democratic Socialist Program (DSP), which includes a commitment to overcoming imperialist capitalism and the exploitation of working people across the world. Councilmember Raman failed to uphold this commitment in seeking and accepting an endorsement from Democrats for Israel-Los Angeles (DFI-LA), an organization that unequivocally supports Israel in its campaign of settler colonialism and violence against the Palestinian people, an organization that has continued to oppose calls for a ceasefire. This most recent action continues a pattern in which the Councilmember has avoided embracing and organizing alongside the movement, while accepting support from its enemies. It demonstrates a willingness to benefit from the chapter's endorsement and resources without being bound by the accompanying responsibility to stand with the workers of the world. Accordingly, DSA-LA's membership has voted to censure Councilmember Raman.

To seek the endorsement of an organization that unequivocally supports Israel as it wages genocide is out of alignment with the socialist goal of uplifting the international working class. Since October, Israel's campaign for collective punishment upon the people of Gaza has murdered 26,000 Palestinians and injured more than 63,000. The devastation of this campaign extends further, with approximately 1.7 million Gazans internally displaced and more than 360,000 homes rendered uninhabitable. Judge Xue Hanqin of the UN's International Court of Justice concluded that, "as a result of the Israeli military actions, the very existence of the Palestinian people in Gaza is at stake."

Councilmember Raman's actions have undermined the work of DSA-LA's Palestine Solidarity Working Group, Political Education Committee, and DSA organizers broadly. Moreover, these actions have driven a wedge between this chapter and allied Palestinian liberation groups spending significant time and energy pressuring elected officials to end U.S. funding of Israeli colonial violence.



Censuring DSA-LA's first member elected to Los Angeles City Council was a difficult process involving extensive reflection and discussion on our path forward as a chapter, and ultimately four votes were brought to the membership. DSA-LA members voted to:

- maintain Councilmember Raman's endorsement;
- censure the councilmember;
- shift strategy to reveal the far-right funders of her opponent; and
- campaign to pass a permanent ceasefire resolution through the Los Angeles City Council.

DSA-LA's decision to maintain Councilmember Raman's endorsement signifies the membership's desire for Raman's realignment to the Democratic Socialist Program. This censure is a part of that conversation. DSA-LA members' decision to censure Councilmember Raman, despite many of them having both campaigned and voted for her, demonstrates this chapter's remarkable commitment to DSA's liberatory values.

As the US bankrolls the Israeli military, Los Angeles serves as a hub for the military industrial complex, so a call for a permanent ceasefire from the City of Los Angeles would be exceptionally influential. The elected leaders of our city are uniquely positioned to stand up for victims of war crimes; therefore, **DSA-LA calls upon Councilmember Raman to vocally support and organize alongside the broader movement for a permanent ceasefire resolution.**

Furthermore, we call upon Raman to reject the DFI-LA endorsement, and instead engage in meaningful conversations and organizing with DSA members, young progressive Jewish organizations, Palestinian organizations, and Muslim organizations seeking a permanent ceasefire.

The chapter will continue to harness common ground with Councilmember Raman and work together towards building a Los Angeles that truly works for everyone. Transforming Los Angeles into a city that benefits the many requires immense power, and the only way to build that power is by building a coalition that is of, by, and for the working class.

-- The 2024 DSA-LA Steering Committee, on behalf of DSA-LA