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USA

Democratic Socialist Mamdani, Other Democrats Win November Elections

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Zohran Mamdani, a 34-year-old New York Assemblyman of Indian descent, a Muslim immigrant and democratic socialist, succeeded in the November 4 election in defeating 67-year-old former New York State governor Andrew Cuomo to win the New York City mayoral election. He won half of the 2 million votes cast. He is the first Muslim and the first socialist to govern the city.

Mamdani ran on a platform calling for freezing rents, making public transportation free, and providing free childcare. And while it was not a central issue in his campaign, he made clear that he supported Palestine and promised to arrest Benjamin Netanyahu for war crimes if he came to New York. His opponents labeled him an antisemite and even suggested he was linked to Hamas, but still, he won one-third of the Jewish vote. He won wide support from younger voters, renters, labor union members, and Black and Latino voters.

Mamdani's victory was a defeat for President Donald Trump and his Republican Party, especially coming as it did among several other Democratic victories. At the same time, it was a victory for the progressive wing of the Democratic Party. And it was a victory for the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), the country's largest socialist organization with about 80,000 members.

When he becomes mayor on January 1, 2026, he will face enormous challenges. Trump has suggested he will make Mamdani and New Yorkers pay for electing a socialist. And he has the power to do so. He can withhold funds from the city. He can send Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the National Guard to the city. And he can support the financial interests and realtors who oppose Mamdani.

In his victory speech Mamdani told his supporters that as mayor, "We will put an end to the culture of corruption that has allowed billionaires like Trump to evade taxation and exploit tax breaks." Directly addressing the president, he said, "New York will remain a city of immigrants: a city built by immigrants, powered by immigrants and, as of tonight, led by an immigrant. So, hear me, President Trump, when I say this: To get to any of us, you will have to get through all of us."

Across the country Republicans suffered defeats on November 4. In Virginia, Former Democratic Rep. Abigail Spanberger has defeated Republican Lt. Gov. Winsome Earle-Sears 51.2% to 42.6 percent to become governor. While in New Jersey Democratic Rep. Mikie Sherrill defeated Donald Trump's candidate Jack Ciattarelli, a former state legislator, to win the governorship. The Democratic victors are known as "national security democrats," that is, not "hawks" but supporters of a strong military and the use of soft power, such as foreign aid. Abigail Spanberger is a former CIA intelligence officer and Mikie Sherrill is a former Navy officer. They could both be characterized as mainstream or moderate Democrats and are definitely not progressives. Nevertheless, as Democrats they stand solidly opposed to Donald Trump and his Republican Party. In that sense, their election was a victory for the opposition.

In California, Governor Gavin Newsom and the Democrats succeeded in passing a referendum on Proposition 50 which allows them to redraw the congressional districts to get more seats in Congress. They won by 64 to 36 percent, a stunning victory for the Democrats. Prop 50 was a response to a measure in Texas that will redistrict to benefit Republicans.

The far left, those who define themselves as "revolutionary socialists," such as Solidarity and Tempest, declined to endorse Mamdani because he's a Democrat. They call instead for building mass movements to challenge Trump and

both major parties. Most American progressives look to a combination of protests like “No Kings” days and to the election of Democrats to stop Trump.

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