



In July, Representative Angie Nixon asked me to remove her endorsement of my campaign. She said only that she had worked with a group whose positions conflicted with mine and belonged to unnamed organizations that could create problems for us. She did not identify DSA or any other organization. We were completely unaware that DSA had anything to do with her decision, and we did not know she would later become a DSA member. Angie indicated that keeping her endorsement could also hurt our campaign. I did not request details and removed it immediately. My campaign has never endorsed her candidacy.

I respect Angie as a strong woman, a Black leader and an elected official. This is not a personal attack. She has every right to choose her political affiliations. But respect does not require silence, and her decision to join the Democratic Socialists of America does not require me to ignore what that organization represents.

I cannot accept political support tied to an organization that has repeatedly lent legitimacy to authoritarian regimes while condemning the democratic institutions generations of Americans have fought to defend.

DSA leaders have embraced Nicolas Maduro and portrayed his government as democratic despite its repression of political opponents and destruction of free elections. DSA has sent delegations to Cuba to celebrate the supposed “achievements” of Cuban socialism while the Castro regime continues to imprison dissidents and deny its people fundamental political freedoms.

These regimes are not academic theories to the people of Florida’s 28th Congressional District. Our community includes families from Cuba, Venezuela, Nicaragua and Colombia who know the consequences of authoritarianism firsthand. They have watched tyrants silence opposition, dismantle democratic institutions, confiscate opportunity and force millions of people to flee the countries they love.

The regimes DSA romanticizes also are fundamentally at odds with the equality it claims to champion. Castro’s government sent religious minorities and political dissenters to forced-labor camps. It declared racism defeated while Afro-Cubans continued to face discrimination, deprivation and repression. Jewish civil-rights organizations have also documented antisemitic rhetoric and discriminatory political tests associated with DSA.

Racism is wrong whether it comes from the right or the left. Antisemitism is wrong whether it comes from the right or the left. Political repression does not become acceptable because the people practicing it call themselves “democratic socialists.”

FL-28 is home to strong, proud and powerful Hispanic and Black communities. I cannot ask these families to trust me and then look away when an organization praises the regimes that persecuted their families.

Angie has made her political choice. I have made mine.

I am an American and a retired United States Navy commander. I believe in democracy, pluralism, and the constitutional freedoms I spent my career defending. I will work with people across our party, but I will NEVER compromise those principles for an endorsement, a political alliance or temporary convenience. If that means losing Democratic support, then so be it.

My responsibility is to the people of Florida’s 28th Congressional District. I will not turn my back on them or our country.

*Phil Ehr, Commander, U.S. Navy (Ret.)*