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News & Opinion About Palestine, Israel & the United States

NEWS

## Momentum grows for protest vote against Biden in Michigan primary

“It will be difficult for Biden to earn back our trust after financing war and genocide in Gaza,” says the “Listen to Michigan” campaign.

BY [MICHAEL ARRIA](#) - FEBRUARY 20, 2024 - 0

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JOE BIDEN, JOINED BY SECRETARY OF STATE ANTONY BLINKEN AND DEFENSE SECRETARY LLOYD AUSTIN, DELIVERS REMARKS ON JANUARY 25, 2023, IN THE WHITE HOUSE. (OFFICIAL WHITE HOUSE PHOTO BY CAMERON SMITH)

Activists are calling for a ballot protest at Michigan’s February 27 primary, in an effort to push President Joe Biden to support a ceasefire and end the administration’s support for Israel’s brutal assault on Gaza.

Our Revolution has become the latest organization to back the movement. The progressive action group recently sent an email to 87,000 of its members in Michigan and nearly 225,000 supporters in other states, calling on them to vote uncommitted.

“We need to send President Biden a message: We are outraged by U.S. complicity in the destruction of Gaza, the killing of thousands of civilians, including more than 10,000 children, and it must STOP!” read the email. “By voting uncommitted on 2/27, Our Rev supporters can push Biden to change course on Gaza now and increase his chances of winning Michigan in November.”

Rep. Rashida Tlaib (D-MI), who has consistently criticized the Biden administration's support for Israel, recently shared a video backing the campaign.

“It is..important to create a voting bloc, something that is a bullhorn, to say, ‘Enough is enough. We don’t want a country that supports wars and bombs and destruction,’ she says in the clip. “We want to support life. We want to support life. We want to stand up for every single life killed in Gaza.”

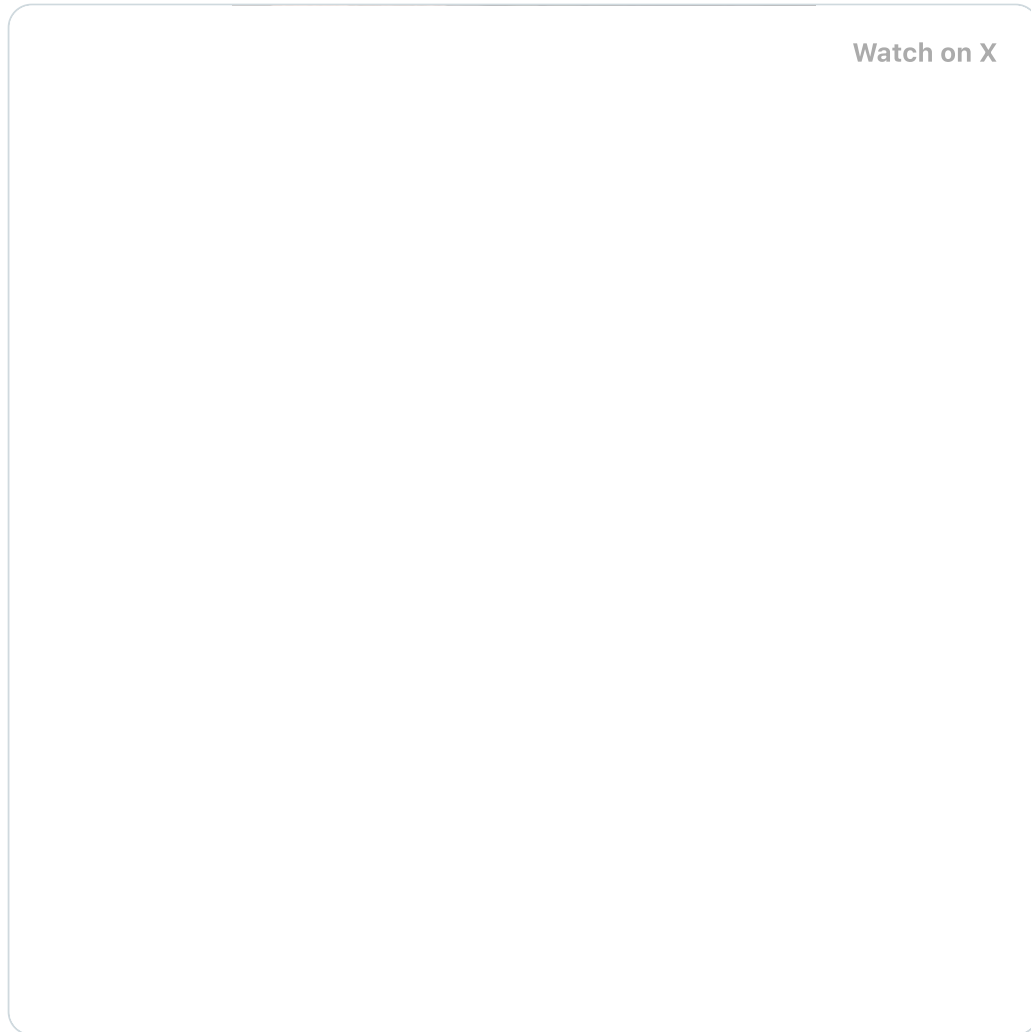
#ListenToMichigan



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NEW ENDORSEMENT: "If you want us to be louder, come here and vote uncommitted." -[@RashidaTlaib](#)

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3:47 PM · Feb 17, 2024



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Former Michigan Rep. Andy Levin (D-MI) has also voiced support for the effort. "I am working with some people who feel like they will never vote for Joe Biden, but there are many, many, many I feel will vote for Joe Biden on Nov. 5 if he changes course," Levin [told](#) the *New York Times*. "This is the best way I can help Joe Biden."

The “Uncommitted” movement has also been endorsed by the *Detroit Metro Times*. “Once voters send a message to Biden that they disapprove of the job he is doing by choosing ‘uncommitted’ in Michigan’s primary election, Biden must then do everything in his power to stop further devastation in Gaza and help mediate what must become a lasting peace in the Middle East,” [reads](#) an editorial in the paper.

Most recently, UAW **Labor for Palestine** unanimously endorsed the strategy. In a statement on the move the group cited recent tension within the labor movement over Biden’s Gaza policy.

“UAW **Labor for Palestine**’s support for the ‘Uncommitted’ strategy comes on the heels of what many felt was the UAW leadership’s premature and unprincipled endorsement of Joe Biden’s reelection campaign in late January, given his role in arming and bankrolling Israel’s genocide against Palestinians,” it reads. “Leadership’s decision was made in secret without any input from union members. Having become the largest US union to call for a ceasefire just the month before, many rank-and-file members felt confused and betrayed by leadership’s announcement to support Biden at the annual UAW political conference, [sparking a wave of internal dissent](#).”

Michigan leaders held a press conference to launch their “Listen to Michigan” campaign earlier this month. “It will be difficult for Biden to earn back our trust after financing war and genocide in Gaza,” [reads](#) the coalition’s website “He must stop funding the Israeli government’s atrocities against the Palestinian people. President Biden’s been a successful candidate in the past by representing a broad coalition, but right now he’s not representing the vast majority of Democrats who want a ceasefire and an end to our government’s unconditional weapons funding of Israel.”

The group recently put out a six-figure ad buy, which included a mailer and digital ad.

**#ListenToMichigan** 


@Listen2michigan · [Follow](#)

NEW AD BUY: Here's our ad for voters in Michigan to vote uncommitted to hold Biden accountable for funding atrocities in Gaza. Spread the word.

Watch on X



10:30 AM · Feb 16, 2024 

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Michigan, and its large Arab-American population, proved to be an important swing state in Biden’s 2020 victory, and Trump only won the state by 10,000 votes in 2016. However, recent polling indicates that Democrats have ample cause for concern.

[Multiple surveys](#) show former president, and presumptive GOP nominee, Donald Trump pulling ahead of the incumbent. Polls also show that Democratic voters, in the state and beyond, back a permanent ceasefire in Gaza in contrast to the current administration. A December 2023 [Data for Progress poll](#) found that two-thirds of Detroit-area voters support the U.S. calling for a permanent ceasefire and de-escalation of violence in Gaza. This included 80% of Democrats, 66% of Independents, and 49% of Republicans.

In January Dearborn’s Mayor Abdullah Hammoud refused to meet with Biden’s campaign manager, saying that he wanted to meet with members of the administration, not staffers attempting to get him elected.

“We chose to decline because I don’t think this is the moment that calls for electoral politics,” Hammoud told [PBS](#). “Palestinian lives should not be measured in polls. For us, this is a moment for our concerns to be heard, listened to, and for us to draft a new course together in terms of changing the direction of what’s happening overseas. Those are conversations that need to be had with senior policy staff, with Cabinet members, not with campaign staff. When you send campaign staff as the first delegation to this community to meet with us for the first time, that sends a message that this is purely a political problem that you see.”

Shortly after Hammoud’s snub, the Biden administration dispatched a number of foreign policy officials to the state to meet privately Hammoud and other Arab leaders. The aides voiced regret and admitted that mistakes had been made on Gaza. “We are very well aware that we have missteps in the course of responding to this crisis since October 7,” deputy national security adviser John Finer [told](#) attendees.

However, many were unimpressed by the gesture. “The president’s refusal to change course or even publicly acknowledge his mistakes is a grave insult to people here in Michigan – to Michigan Democrats in particular,” Abbas Alawieh, a Dearborn activist who attended one of the meetings [told](#) *USA Today*. “The hypocrisy of telling us privately that the administration has made mistakes while continuing to fail to hold [Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin] Netanyahu accountable publicly – it’s a blatant display of moral bankruptcy that will have political consequences here in Michigan.”

2024 U.S. PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

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