

Syracuse's Howie Hawkins picked as Green Party candidate for president

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By Ellen Abbott



Syracuse's Howie Hawkins was nominated as the Green Party's candidate for president this fall

If you want a choice in the race for president this fall besides Donald Trump or Joe Biden, Green Party candidate Howie Hawkins says he's your candidate. The former UPS driver from Syracuse has officially won the Green Party's nomination for president.

Hawkins told Green Party delegates Saturday during the party's virtual convention that his candidacy offers a choice beyond the two major party nominees, especially for progressive supporters of Bernie Sanders, who might otherwise vote for Democrat Joe Biden.

"If you are a Bernie Sanders supporter and you were for Medicare for All, and a full strength Green New Deal, and student and medical debt relief, and tuition-free public college, and you vote for Joe Biden? Nobody knows you stand for that. Your vote won't

count for that," Hawkins said. "You'll get lost in the sauce, because you voted for Joe Biden, who opposes all those things."

This will be the 25th time Hawkins has run for office, but his first national campaign. He's run for Congress, U.S. Senate, governor and several other state and local offices.

After accepting the party's nomination, Hawkins ticked through the issues that he has pushed in his previous campaigns, including a poverty bill of rights, and decriminalization of drugs.

But it's not just the issues Hawkins wants voters to take into consideration on Election Day. It's getting the Green Party on a national political stage that is dominated by two parties. He admitted it's hard cracking the national media concentration on Republicans and Democrats.

"And I'm looking at you NPR, and PBS, and MSNBC, and CNN, and the New York Times. You've been acting like state media stenographers for the two-party corporate state. Do your job, cover the issues, let the Green Party into the debate," he said.

National media coverage isn't the only place the Green Party is struggling to be noticed. Ballot access is one of the biggest issues Hawkins faces. He's currently on the November ballot in 30 states.

"We're gonna fight to get on every ballot," he said. "And ballot access in this country is harder than almost any country in the world. You have to get a hell of a lot more signatures."

Hawkins said getting Greens on ballots across the country allows more candidates to run in local elections, and that's how the Green Party becomes a force in American politics.

"Look, the corporate two-party state has failed us," he said. "Our country needs the Green Party right now, to advance real solutions to the life and death issues of our time. Our lives depend on it."

Hawkins is one of the original founders of the Green Party, which has roots that go back to the early 1980s. His running mate is Angela Nicole Walker, a truck driver and union organizer from Wisconsin.