


# Big money lurks behind the Ocasio-Cortez Green New Deal. Who's really backing it?

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The Green New Deal blueprint introduced by Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez was crafted by three far-left organizations and is being pushed by a coalition of well-funded professional progressive groups and known leftist agitators.

Some of the organizations helping to promote the Green New Deal have ties to financing from billionaire George Soros and trace their roots to such radical groups as Occupy Wall Street and Black Lives Matter.

Earlier this month, Ocasio-Cortez posted an 11-page Google document in the form of a nonbinding legislative resolution that has become the most authoritative version of the Green New Deal, a broad outline for the current conception of the socialist-style plan.

Ocasio-Cortez's Green New Deal resolution, introduced along with Sen. Ed Markey (D-MA), has already been endorsed by more than 45 Democratic representatives. The deal received high-profile endorsements from Senators Elizabeth Warren, Cory Booker and Bernie Sanders.

The Green New Deal seeks, as the *New Yorker* recently put it, "nothing less than a total overhaul of our national infrastructure."

The utopian deal demands 100 percent of all buildings in the U.S. convert to clean energy, calls for the removal of all greenhouse gases from the entire atmosphere, and includes such non-"green" clauses as a federal jobs guarantee while protecting the right of all workers to organize and unionize.

It also pledges "affordable, safe and adequate housing" for "all people of the United States."

The wealth-spreading deal aims to "virtually eliminate poverty in the United States and to make prosperity, wealth and economic security available to everyone participating in the transformation."

## **Radical groups, Soros ties**

**The Green New Deal was crafted by Ocasio-Cortez along with three groups - the Sunrise Movement, Justice Democrats and a group calling itself New Consensus.**

*The New Yorker* reported:

The document was written over a single December weekend by the staff of the freshman representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and three like-minded progressive groups, none of which existed two years ago: the Sunrise Movement, a grassroots climate organization; the Justice Democrats, which recruits and supports progressive candidates; and an upstart policy shop called the New Consensus.

Besides helping to write the deal text, the Sunrise Movement has been the central progressive organization lobbying the Democratic Party to implement the Green New Deal.

Sunrise markets itself as an "army of young people" seeking to "make climate change an urgent priority across America, end the corrupting influence of fossil fuel executives on our politics, and elect leaders who stand up for the health and wellbeing of all people."

Sunrise co-founder Varshini Prakash described his organization's expansive goals for 2020: "We, along with our partners, are going to be attempting to build the largest youth political force this country has ever seen." Markey invited Prakash to be his guest at President Trump's State of the Union address two weeks ago.

Sunrise was in part inspired by the activism of Occupy Wall Street, Black Lives Matter and the radical immigration group United We Dream.

Sunrise took the national spotlight last month when Ocasio-Cortez joined some two-hundred of the movement's protesters to temporarily occupy Nancy Pelosi's office to peddle the Green New Deal. Sunrise engaged in that direct action campaign alongside Justice Democrats.

In December, Sunrise said that it raised less than one million dollars, mostly from foundations and grassroots donors. It is not known how much Sunrise has since raised.

*Inside Philanthropy* reported on donations to Sunrise from the Rockefeller Family Fund:

The group raised just under \$1 million in 2018 between its 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(4) entities, and received early support from a set of core funders that have since stuck with it. Wallace Global Fund, which was instrumental in the fossil fuel divestment campaign, funds Sunrise, as do the Rockefeller Family Fund (one of the smaller foundations associated with the oil family), and the Winslow Foundation, run by Wren Winslow Wirth, who is married to former politician Tim Wirth. Institutional funders made up about 55 percent of its 2018 budget, with 35 percent coming from individual donors, and the rest from nonprofit partners.

To promote the deal, Sunrise sponsored an activist campaign called "Operation Green New Deal Blitz." Co-sponsors with Sunrise include

350.org, Organic Consumers Association, People's Action, CPD Action and Justice Democrats.

CPD Action is led by **Ana Maria Archila**, one of the two women who infamously confronted Arizona Republican Sen. Jeff Flake in an elevator prior to the confirmation hearings for Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh. Archila was a guest of Ocasio-Cortez for Trump's State of the Union.

Archila serves as co-executive director at the Center for Popular Democracy (CPD) and maintains the same position as the group's activist arm, the Center for Popular Democracy Action.

**CPD, which is advocating the Green New Deal, is heavily financed by billionaire George Soros.** In October 2014, literature that was part of a CPD event listed Soros's Open Society Foundations as one of CPD's "three biggest funders." The Foundations provided the CPD with \$130,000 in 2014 and \$1,164,500 in 2015, tax documents show. In 2016, Soros's Open Society Policy Center provided \$705,000 to the Center for Popular Democracy's Action Fund.

**CPD is highly involved in anti-Trump activism.** In May 2017, CNN reported that the Center for Popular Democracy Action fund unveiled an "\$80 million effort to coordinate the work of dozens of smaller progressive groups from around the country" as part of what the news network characterized as the anti-Trump "resistance" movement.

People's Action, another Sunrise partner pushing the Green New Deal, is a merger of a group that previously went by the name of National People's Action. **National People's Action was also funded by Soros to the tune of \$1.2 million and reportedly helped to train protesters for the Occupy Movement, which was also close to Soros funding.** *The Washington Times* previously reported that Soros donated to People's Action itself.

**350.org, which is aiding Sunrise in pushing the Green New Deal, has disclosed a donation from the Tides Foundation. Tides, in turn, has been financed by Soros and has been a donor partner of Soros's Open Society Foundations.**

Also forming the backbone of advocacy for the Green New Deal are the **Sierra Club and Greenpeace**. Sierra has received funding from Soros's Open Society Foundations. Greenpeace has been funded by the Soros-financed Tides Foundation. Tides also funds the Sierra Club.

The Green New Deal, meanwhile, is viewed in progressive activist circles as taking the mantle from something called the Leap Manifesto, a so-called clean energy plan co-authored by radical activist and author Naomi Klein.

Leap was initiated by the Tides-funded 350.org as well as Black Lives Matter-Toronto. Leaked documents from Soros's Open Society Foundations previously disclosed donations to Black Lives Matter.

### **'Democratic socialist party-within-a-party'**

On its website, meanwhile, Sunrise advertises its partnership with Justice Democrats, with the two groups working together with Ocasio-Cortez to craft the Green New Deal.

Justice Democrats backed the Congressional campaign of Ocasio-Cortez when she was largely unknown and the two are closely linked. According to reports, it was Justice Democrats that originally recruited Ocasio-Cortez to run in the first place.

Waleed Shahid, Justice Democrats' communications director, reportedly worked on Ocasio-Cortez's campaign prior to joining the group. Justice Democrats was co-founded by Saikat Chakrabarti, who serves as Ocasio-Cortez's chief of staff.

Justice Democrats does not hide its socialist ideology, with Shahid telling Vox.com the organization seeks to nudge the Democratic Party toward democratic socialism:

Shahid describes it as a "social democratic or democratic socialist party-within-a-party," arguing that the vicissitudes of the US party system force people like him to share a party with people like Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer and House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer who, in a European-style proportional system, would simply inhabit different political blocs. The point, however, is not to displace the Democrats but to change them.

Justice Democrats is looking to push far-left candidates in largely uncompetitive local races, and it plans to use support for the Green New Deal as a bellwether for possible Democratic primary challenges from the far-left.

"We're going to recruit Democratic primary challengers for House races in 2020 who will fight with us," stated Alexandra Rojas, executive director of Justice Democrats. "And we'll keep putting pressure on Democrats in Congress and those running for President in 2020 to support the Green New Deal."

### **One Justice Democrats founder was Cenk Uygur of The Young Turks.**

He resigned from the group after old blog posts surfaced that were out of step with Justice Democrats' ideology, with some of the posts appearing to be sexist.

Uygur's The Young Turks is a member of The Media Consortium, a network of far-left media organizations that is reportedly funded by Soros.

