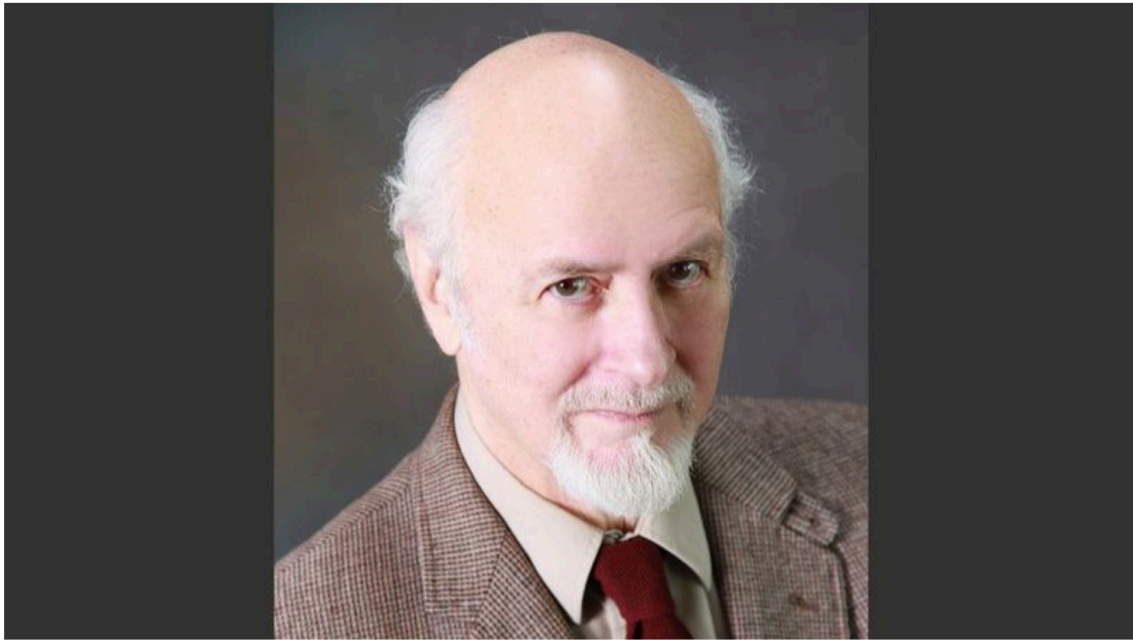


Los Angeles Times

Democrats, Republicans and Bread and Roses? New socialist party could be on the ballot in Maryland.

By LUKE BROADWATER | THE BALTIMORE SUN | SEP 13, 2018 | 2:00 AM



Silver Spring resident Jerome Segal, 74, a political activist and University of Maryland professor who challenged U.S. Sen. Ben Cardin in June's Democratic Senate primary. He's behind a grassroots effort to get the Bread and Roses Party onto the ballot in Maryland. (Courtesy photo)

Since the turn of the century, Maryland has had — with the exception of a few years — four political parties whose candidates automatically appear on the general election ballot: the Democrats, Republicans, Libertarians and Greens.

A fifth could be coming soon.

The Bread and Roses Party, a self-identified socialist group, is 227 certified signatures away from the 10,000 it needs to get onto the ballot in Maryland. The party has submitted 19,500 signatures to the Maryland Board of Elections, and 9,773 have been certified.

Silver Spring resident Jerome Segal, 74, a political activist and University of Maryland professor who challenged Ben Cardin in June's Democratic Senate primary, is behind the grassroots effort. He's hoping to get his name on the November ballot to challenge Cardin, and then build up a party that can run in multiple races in 2020.



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SEP 11, 2018 | 4:15 PM

The Maryland Board of Elections rejected his request Aug. 29. In addition to being 227 votes short of the 10,000, board officials told him 1,200 signatures failed the state's "name standard" — namely, the signatures lacked middle initials.

Last week Segal filed a lawsuit in federal court asking a judge to order the board to re-evaluate its rejection of his new-party petition and place his name on the ballot.

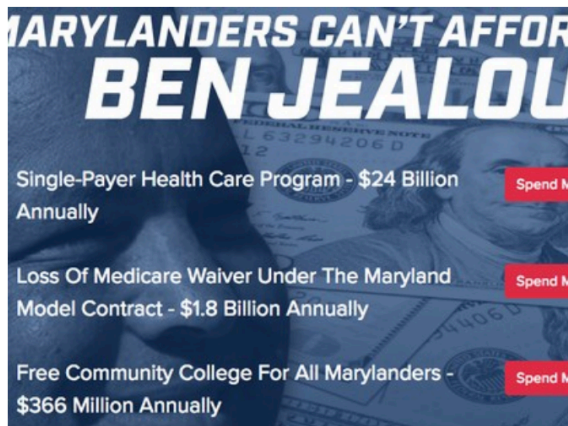
The timing is crucial, the lawsuit states. The board may begin printing ballots Sept. 17.

His lawsuit seeks to challenge the "name standard" regulations as well as Maryland's so-called "sore loser" law that aims to prevent failed primary election candidates from appearing on the general election ballot.

The lawsuit argues that "substantial public interest is served through his admission to the ballot."

Why?

Segal claims he is the first candidate "in American political history" to challenge an incumbent senator "because of his fealty to the American Israel Public Affairs Committee."



Gov. Larry Hogan campaign launches Jeopardy-style website mocking Ben Jealous' plans for Maryland

SEP 11, 2018 | 8:05 AM

Plus, he adds: "There are no campaigns in recent American political history that have been more ideas-based, and have more deeply challenged conventional thinking than Dr. Segal's campaign."

Segal also argues he would "suffer irreparable injury" if the court does reverse the board's rejection.

While Segal writes in the lawsuit that his "candidacy is not motivated by financial considerations," he claims he will face financial harm if he fails to get on the ballot.

"If Segal does not appear on the ballot for the November election, Segal For Senate is a defunct organization, with no opportunity to raise money and no opportunity to repay its financial debt to Dr. Segal," the lawsuit states.

The debt is significant.

Segal's lawsuit states that he lent his campaign fund "over \$1.4 million of his own funds." Federal campaign finance reports tracked by the nonprofit Open Secrets research group show he has raised \$13,442 from individual contributions, provided \$1.17 million of his own money to the campaign and spent \$1.15 million.

Meanwhile, state campaign finance reports, show that an entity named "Jerome Segal" spent nearly \$56,000 in June 2018 on media to support Ben Jealous, the Democratic candidate for governor.



Experts decry single debate between Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan, Democrat Ben Jealous before election

SEP 10, 2018 | 2:00 AM

Still, even if he fails to get onto the ballot this year, he will have two years to get the necessary signatures.

The "Bread and Roses" party will emphasize promoting peace internationally and creating decent, equitable society at home, Segal said.

"We are socialistic in our ideals but open to nonsocialists and new socialists," he said. "We believe in the old tenets of socialism: From each according to his ability to each according to his need."

He said a new party is needed because the Democrats and the Green Party aren't addressing the deeper needs of Maryland residents.

"Americans are hungry for something deeper," Segal said. "We've gone astray and there's no party out there articulating what this would mean in terms of a public policy agenda. Nobody is talking about beauty. Nobody is talking about access to the natural beauty of America and access to the beauty of urban spaces."

If recognized by the state Board of Elections, the Bread and Roses party would be the first new democratic socialist party established in the United States since 1973, according to Segal.

Jared DeMarinis, director of the Maryland State Board of Election's candidacy and campaign finance division, said he couldn't comment on Segal's pending lawsuit. But he confirmed the party is close to gaining ballot access for 2020 — with only a couple hundred more signatures needed and nearly two years to get them.

"As a recognized political party, they could have ballot access for every single race on the ballot from county level to president," DeMarinis said.

Virginia Rodino, co-chair of the Maryland Green Party, said her organization welcomes the new party, which she said will give voters more choices.

“The two corporate parties are not only taking our votes for granted, they believe they are entitled to them,” Rodino said. “Yet these parties are no longer relevant when the majority of Americans have repeatedly said they want universal health care, or money for education and jobs and not wars, or a reversal of the climate crisis. The fact is that Americans don’t really want either of the two corporate party options.”

The state’s other political parties either did not respond to a request for comment or declined to comment.