



For two years, establishment Democrats have led a wide-ranging legal attack on University of Michigan pro-Palestinian student activists, aiming to shut down their protest of Israel. On Sunday, Democratic Party delegates symbolically rebuked the establishment’s draconian campaign. Two pro-Palestinian candidates notched upset wins against pro-Israel-backed opponents in statewide primary races in this critical upper Midwest swing state.

The races, decided by the Michigan Democratic Party’s delegates during a nominating convention, mark material and symbolic victories for pro-Palestinian activists at the University of Michigan (U-M)—some of whom continue to face investigations over their protests of the genocide. And, as more polling shows the extent to which support for Israel has collapsed across the political spectrum, the wins indicate that the pro-Israel playbook is failing even in lower, state-level races.

In the state Attorney General’s race, Ann Arbor’s progressive Jewish prosecutor, Eli Savit, beat Karen McDonald, who was backed by major corporations and pro-Israel donors. And in the race for a seat on the U-M board of regents, the school’s governing body, defense attorney Amir Makled defeated incumbent regent Jordan Acker, who helped lead the school’s legal attack on the pro-Palestinian students. Makled represented some of the students who beat the U-M prosecutions.

Makled, who is Lebanese-American, overcame an onslaught of allegations that he is antisemitic and supports Hezbollah. He told Drop Site the wins show “the electorate is done with AIPAC-aligned candidates and their smear campaigns.”

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