

VOTE NO on Resolution #51 “National DSA Code of Conduct”

Why Is Build Opposing This Resolution?

- This is an unnecessary and dangerous proposal that would chill whistleblowing and allow for political use of the grievance process. 2017’s Resolution 33 as it currently exists already bans the worst behaviors, such as non-consensual touching, harassment, and creating a hostile environment. This resolution largely just adds items to the grievance process that shouldn’t be part of it.
- The behaviors that this resolution would make actionable as violations of the code of conduct include “yelling,” “disrespect for meeting facilitators,” and “sharing private communications without permission.” These are extremely vague bans that would penalize lots of innocent behavior, would likely disproportionately affect marginalized comrades, and would almost certainly be used by leadership cadres and caucuses to crack down on political opposition.
- Passing this resolution would overburden the grievance process, as nearly any behavior could be the subject of a grievance, even if the process wasn’t intentionally abused. Our grievance officers are already overtaxed -- we should reserve their energies for the worst behaviors, which are already banned under Resolution 33.

Text of R51:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Democratic Socialists of America will adopt and widely publish a National Code of Conduct that prohibits the following behaviors:

- Physical or verbal intimidation such as yelling; insults; threats or blackmail of any kind and behaviors that occasion a reasonable fear of physical violence such as moving into others’ personal space, grabbing their arm, pointing at their face, physically blocking them from moving, etc.;
- Stalking or unwanted contact outside of the normal course of DSA spaces, events, and organizing work;
- Verbal or emotional abuse including name-calling, denigrating jokes or innuendo, and the display or circulation of written or graphic material of a harassing, degrading, or discriminatory nature;
- Non-consensual sexual/romantic attention and touching;

- Discriminatory harassment on the basis of sex, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, physical appearance, disability, race, color, religion, national origin, class, age, or profession. Discriminatory harassment and its appropriate reporting process is outlined in Resolution 33.
- Disrespect for meeting facilitators or use of progressive stack;
- Pressuring anyone to take mind-altering substances;
- Lying about other members or spreading defamatory material about members; and
- Sharing private communications without permission.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that redress for violations of this Code of Conduct may be sought under the process outlined in Sections (2.) and (3.) of the National Harassment Policy/Resolution 33 adopted at the 2017 National Convention, as well as any further grievance procedures adopted by a National Convention or the National Political Committee.