



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on July 31, 2018

Left Coast Clone of Ocasio-Cortez Tries to Pull a Similar Upset

Sarah Smith, a liberal millennial Democrat from Washington State, [is hoping to duplicate](#) the success of another liberal millennial Democrat from New York, in removing a long-term Democrat from office in the state's August 7 primary. On a recent forum on Reddit she wrote: "I'm Sarah Smith and I'm running for US Congress in the 9th [District] on the same slate as Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez."



Smith grew up in Southern California and attended the University of Arizona before moving to Renton, Washington, where she worked at a body shop as an insurance adjuster. On her website she expanded on her background:

I am a working-class woman. I live the same life as my constituents; I have to re-balance my finances every year as living gets more expensive. I felt the recession in 2008. My family was forced to move, leaving on my own at the age of 17, new to Washington State and rapidly building student debt.

I saw first-hand the devastation our economy faced as a foreclosure specialist, a paralegal, and a bodily insurance adjuster.

Faced with the constant struggle of people like myself, I was drawn to activism.

That activism included supporting Bernie Sanders during his run for the presidency in 2016, which caught the attention of the same group that discovered, supported, and funded Ocasio-Cortez: Brand New Congress. That group, founded by 20 former Sanders supporters following his defeat by Clinton in the summer of 2016, requires each of its carefully selected candidates to "align with Sanders' presidential platform." That platform included ending the "War on Drugs," "removing money from politics," supporting climate-change legislation, and, most importantly, demanding "Medicare for All."

Smith is running against a 20-year liberal Democrat from Washington State's Ninth District, Adam Smith who sports a Freedom Index rating of 21 out of 100.

Sarah Smith's platform runs 19 pages and includes:

- Supporting the recently cancelled Iran Nuclear agreement;
- Expanding the National Affordable Housing Trust Fund to at least \$5 billion a year in order to "construct, preserve, rehabilitate at least 3.5 million affordable housing rental units", because, according to Smith, "Housing is a human right";
- Raising the federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour and tying it to inflation;
- Expanding funding for Planned Parenthood;
- Expanding Social Security benefits;



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- Banning “for-profit” prisons which “create an over-incentive to arrest, jail and detain non-violent offenders in order to keep prison beds full”
- Legalizing marijuana;
- Federalizing local police departments;
- Making all public universities tuition-free;
- Spending \$5.5 billion to create a million federal jobs;
- Spending another \$4.6 *trillion* over the next 10 years to reestablish the Roosevelt New Deal’s Works Progress Administration (WPA) “to put more than 13 million Americans to work rebuilding our crumbling cities, roads, bridges, public transportation systems, airports, drinking water systems and other infrastructure needs;
- Requiring federal agencies “to achieve climate and environmental justice” because, according to Smith, “the debate is over, and the scientific jury is in: global climate change is real, it is caused mainly by emissions released from burning fossil fuels, and it poses a catastrophic threat to the long-term longevity of our planet”;
- Banning Arctic oil drilling;
- Banning offshore drilling;
- Stopping “dirty pipeline projects” such as the Keystone XL;
- Stopping exports of liquefied natural gas (LNG) and crude oil; and
- Banning fracking.

But first on her agenda is “Medicare for All”: “From my first day in office I will co-sponsor the current incarnation of a Medicare for All bill (H.R. 676) to ensure no American ever has to worry about healthcare again.” After all, intoned Smith, “Healthcare is a right, not a privilege.”

Missing from Smith’s platform was any mention of just how all of this would be paid for. But when her “mentor” Ocasio-Cortez was asked the same question by Trevor Noah on *The Daily Show* last Thursday night, she responded by demanding that “people pay their fair share ... corporations and the ultra-wealthy.” That would include “revers[ing] the tax bill, rais[ing] our corporate tax rate to 28 percent ... [and implementing] a carbon tax on top of that.... If we do those ... things, and also close some of those loopholes, that’s \$2 trillion right there. That’s two trillion dollars in ten years.”

That’s a lot of money. But according to several organizations, it won’t be nearly enough. A new study released on Monday from George Mason University’s Mercatus Center estimates that Sanders’ “Medicare for All” program touted by both Ocasio-Cortez and Smith would cost \$32.6 billion in its first 10 years, and escalate upwards from there afterwards.

This estimate mirrors the results from the liberal Urban Institute, which took a hard look at Sanders’ proposal back in 2016: The price tag for his socialized medicine for everyone was \$32 trillion over the first 10 years.

Kenneth Thorpe, a health policy professor at Emory University in Atlanta, authored another study with similar conclusions:

It’s showing that if you are going to go in this direction, it’s going to cost the federal government [the taxpayers] \$2.5 trillion to \$3 trillion a year in terms of spending.



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Even though people don't pay premiums [under "Medicare for All"], the tax increases [on them] are going to be enormous. There are going to be a lot of people who'll pay more in taxes than they save in premiums.

The New American analyzed various healthcare proposals, including a system such as [Medicare for All](#) and an entirely [government-run system such as the Veterans Administration](#), and found that both would be very inefficient and costly. To read the entire healthcare series, the first article is [here](#).

As the Washington State primary draws closer, voters may be wondering, "Is it possible for lightning to strike twice, for Sarah Smith to replace Adam Smith as Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez replaced Joe Crowley in New York?"

That is highly unlikely. Crowley, despite his liberal voting record, ignored signs of discontent among his constituents, made some major gaffes in the closing days of the campaign, and Ocasio-Cortez seized the opportunity to portray Crowley as out-of-touch and disinterested in local concerns. Ocasio-Cortez also leaned heavily on the race card to a heavily minority populace, playing to her minority roots.

On the other hand, Adam Smith, the 20-year incumbent in Washington, isn't likely to make the same mistake. In a phone interview, incumbent Smith said, "Have you been to Queens, New York? Queens is not SeaTac or Seattle. I am not Joe Crowley, and Sarah Smith is not Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez. Other than that, the comparison's perfect."

Image of Sarah Smith: votesarahsmith.com

An Ivy League graduate and former investment advisor, Bob is a regular contributor to The New American magazine and blogs frequently at LightFromTheRight.com, primarily on economics and politics. He can be reached at badelman@thenewamerican.com.

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