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Vice President Kamala Harris has continued to rack up endorsements and delegates since President Biden's surprise announcement yesterday that he would not accept the 2024 Democratic presidential nomination. As of tonight, Harris has the support of at least 2,471 delegates, more than the 1,976 she will need to secure the nomination.

Endorsements have also continued to mount, with the Congressional Black Caucus, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, the Congressional Progressive Caucus, the AAPI (Asian American and Pacific Islander) Victory Fund, and the Latino Victory Fund all endorsing her.

Labor unions have also backed her: the AFL-CIO, which represents 12.5 million workers, endorsed Harris. So did the Service Employees International Union, with 2 million workers, as well as the United Steelworkers, which represents 850,000 metal workers and miners, and the Communications Workers of America. Other unions endorsing Harris include the American Federation of Teachers, the United Food and Commercial Workers, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees.

Money continues to roll in. Since Biden's announcement, Harris and the Democrats have raised about \$250 million in donations and pledges. More than 888,000 were from small-dollar donors. Volunteers are also joining the Harris campaign, which said that more than 28,000 people have signed up to work on the campaign in the day since Biden passed the torch. Today, Beyoncé gave Harris permission to use her song "Freedom" as a campaign song, and TikTok users have jumped on the Harris trend.

Harris is keeping some of the key infrastructure of Biden's campaign. She has announced that Biden campaign manager Julie Chávez-Rodríguez and Biden campaign chair Jen O'Malley Dillon will remain in their positions. Michigan governor Gretchen Whitmer announced today that she,

too, will stay on as co-chair for Harris's campaign as she was for Biden's.

Harris spoke today at campaign headquarters in Wilmington, Delaware, smoothing the transition from Biden's campaign to her own. "I know it's been a rollercoaster and we're all filled with so many mixed emotions about this," Harris said. "We love Joe and Jill. We really do. They truly are like family." Biden called in to the meeting from Delaware, where he is isolating as he recovers from Covid, to thank the staff. "I know it's hard, because you've poured your heart and soul into me, to help us win this thing," Biden told them, but added: "The name changed at the top of the ticket. The mission hasn't changed at all." Biden told Harris: "I'm watching you kid, I love you. You're the best, kid."

Harris went on to indicate that she will be taking the fight for the presidency aggressively to Trump, highlighting his criminal behavior. "Before I was elected as Vice President, before I was elected as United States Senator," she said today, "I was the elected Attorney General, as I've mentioned, to California, and before that, I was a courtroom prosecutor. In those roles I took on perpetrators of all kinds. Predators who abused women. Fraudsters who ripped off consumers. Cheaters who broke the rules for their own gain. So hear me when I say I know Donald Trump's type."

She was clear, though, that the fight is not just about Trump; it is about "two different versions of what we see as the future of our country.... Donald Trump wants to take our country backward. To a time before many of our fellow Americans had full freedoms and rights. But we believe in a brighter future that makes room for all Americans." She promised to continue the work of building the middle class, protect abortion rights, enact commonsense gun safety legislation, and protect voting rights. She contrasted the Democrats' vision of "a country of freedom, compassion, and rule of law" with the Republicans': "a country of chaos, fear, and hate."

Biden's announcement and Harris's rapid consolidation of support and money appear to have blindsided the Trump-Vance campaign. MAGA Republicans have responded with scattershot arguments that suggest they had not thought through a scenario in which Biden would step down, an omission so astonishing it perhaps suggests they could not imagine a presumptive nominee voluntarily giving up power.

Without a coherent strategy, MAGA Republicans today have been all over the map, suggesting among other things that Biden's voluntarily stepping down from his presumptive nomination is a "coup" and that Harris is a "D[iversity] E[quity and] I[nclusion] hire."

For a party that is offering voters a popular set of policies, the opposing party's nominee shouldn't matter all that much, but Trump policies and the Trump campaign's Project 2025 are both so unpopular that operatives intended to run not on policy but by firing up their base against Biden himself. In *The Atlantic* yesterday, journalist Tim Alberta explained that the entire Trump campaign apparatus was focused on Biden and that putting extremist Ohio senator J.D. Vance on the ticket "was something of a luxury meant to run up margins with the base in a blowout rather than persuade swing voters in a nail-biter."

Now the energy appears to have shifted. As Anne Applebaum wrote today in *The Atlantic*, operatives staged the Republican National Convention of just last week to project strength and power, and Trump's rambling and incoherent performance there seemed "deranged, sinister, and frightening." Now, Applebaum wrote, "it just looks deranged," as Biden's decision to step away from power contrasts powerfully with Trump's desperate attempts to cling to power with the Big Lie while he calls up his threadbare descriptions of national carnage.

The change Applebaum identified dovetailed neatly with a new political action committee started by conservative lawyer George Conway to highlight Trump's "mental unfitness for office." Frustrated by the apparent unwillingness of the press to cover Trump's mental health while it focused on President Biden's, Conway formed the "Anti-Psychopath PAC" to highlight Trump's mental state. "The failure to treat Trump's behavior as pathological has led the media and the country, perversely, to treat it as normal," Conway told *The Independent*, and said that Project 2025 should be seen as an extension of Trump's malignant narcissism "because basically he wants to turn the government into a mechanism for retribution."

A post on Trump's social media feed tonight suggested that Trump recognizes that being the oldest candidate ever nominated for the presidency is a campaign issue. The post said that "Lyin' Kamala Harris...has absolutely terrible pole [sic] numbers against a fine and brilliant young man named DONALD J. TRUMP! Be careful what you wish for, Democrats???"

Today, Trump's vice presidential pick Vance gave his first campaign speech at his former high

school in Middletown, Ohio. There, dressed in a blue suit with a red tie that echoed Trump's signature look, Vance spoke of his history in the town and promised that he and Trump are "ready to save America." But his lack of experience on the campaign trail showed in his delivery, and the Fox News Channel, which was covering the speech, cut away from it while he was speaking.

Media outlets gave more attention to the Ohio state senator who preceded Vance, George Lang, who began a chant of "fight, fight, fight" and told the audience: "I believe wholeheartedly Donald Trump and Butler County's JD Vance are the last chance to save our country politically. I'm afraid if we lose this one, it's going to take a civil war to save the country, and it will be saved." He later posted on social media that he regretted his "divisive remarks."

Later in the day, Vance spoke in Radford, Virginia, where he said that "[h]istory will remember Joe Biden as not just a quitter, which he is, but as one of the worst presidents in the history of the United States of America." He continued: "Kamala Harris is a million times worse and everybody knows it. She signed up for every single one of Joe Biden's failures, and she lied about his mental capacity to serve as president."

Josh Dawsey and Michael Scherer of the *Washington Post* reported today on a different kind of jockeying in the 2024 presidential race. Independent presidential candidate Robert F. Kennedy Jr. has recently been in talks with Trump about dropping out of the race and endorsing Trump in exchange for a position in a Trump administration. Kennedy, who opposes vaccines, is interested in a portfolio that covers health and medical issues.

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