



Written by [Steve Byas](#) on July 1, 2020

Pro-Gun Rights Candidate Who Confronted Beto O'Rourke Wins Republican Primary in Colorado

In a stunning upset, Lauren Boebert, a strong gun-rights activist, defeated incumbent Republican U.S. Representative Scott Tipton in a Republican primary in Colorado on Tuesday. Tipton had a 66-percent score on the "Freedom Index" of *The New American* magazine (which scores the votes of members of Congress based on their fidelity to the U.S. Constitution).

With 86 percent of the precincts reporting, and Boebert holding a significant lead of almost 10,000 votes (54-46 percent), Tipton conceded, and the Associated Press called the race at 9:30 p.m.

President Donald Trump carried the district by 12 points in 2016, and had endorsed Tipton, but in the end it did not matter. Tipton, who was the co-chairman of Trump's campaign in Colorado, was nevertheless gracious in defeat. In a statement, Tipton said, "I want to congratulate Lauren Boebert and wish her and her supporters well." Trump even added his congratulations, as well, saying, "Congratulations on a really great win!"

How did Boebert take out an incumbent of her own Republican Party who had the support of Trump? First, Boebert made news last year when she confronted then-Democratic presidential candidate Beto O'Rourke about his strong anti-gun rights stance. O'Rourke said during one of the Democratic presidential debates that he supported an assault weapons ban, saying, "Hell, yes, we're going to take your AR-15, your AK-47."

According to the *Denver Post*, Boebert told O'Rourke, "I am here to say: Hell, no, you're not," when the former Texas congressman (who had lost narrowly to Republican Senator Ted Cruz of Texas in 2018) came to Colorado searching for support. Instead, O'Rourke got a tongue-lashing from the fiery Boebert, who runs a pro-gun-rights themed restaurant in western Colorado called the Shooter's Grill. The restaurant, located in the appropriately named city of Rifle, is famous for its servers, who openly carry firearms.

Tipton served five terms in Congress, and may have taken Boebert too lightly. Whereas Tipton ran no television ads, Boebert did. In one commercial, voters were encouraged to throw out Tipton, even tying him to avowed socialist U.S. Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.) and House Speaker



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Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.). Tipton had defeated Democrat John Salazar in 2010 (a wave election for Republicans, held during President Barack Obama’s first term), and had defeated Democrat Mitsch Bush in 2018, by eight percentage points.

Now, Democrat Diane Mitsch Bush will face Boebert in the November general election.

One lesson that Republican incumbents can take from this surprising turn of events is that taking strong stands for such things as the Second Amendment are usually rewarded by the Republican primary voters. Even with all the advantages of incumbency, plus the endorsement of Donald Trump — who has almost astronomical support among voters who identify strongly as Republicans — Tipton lost to a primary challenger who dared to take a strong stand in support of the Second Amendment.

Boebert also has made remarks about Trump having to fight against the “deep state,” expressing hope that Americans will return to “conservative values,” adding “that’s what I am for.”

Image of Lauren Boebert: [Screenshot of CBS Denver video](#)

Steve Byas is a university instructor in history and government and the author of History’s Greatest Libels, a challenge to the falsehoods perpetrated against personalities from Thomas Jefferson to Marie Antoinette. He may be contacted at byassteve@yahoo.com.



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