



Written by [Luis Miguel](#) on October 26, 2023

Top GOP Donors Hop Back on Trump Train as Other Candidates Languish

Some Republican megadonors are accepting what they believe to be the inevitable.

According to a report by [NBC News](#), a number of top donors who spent most of this year seeking an alternative to Donald Trump are now open to getting behind him.

One example is Ed Broyhill, a fixture in GOP fundraising who served as North Carolina finance chairman for Trump in 2020. While he was previously looking into other candidates, such as Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis and former Vice President Mike Pence, he now considers himself firmly back in the Trump camp.

“I have met with all the candidates,” Broyhill told NBC. “None are close to the level of support Trump has.”

He added, “There is no doubt in my mind that Donald Trump will be the nominee of our party. The grassroots are a solid foundation for Donald Trump.”

One person close to Trump told the outlet that “top business leaders and big money donors have now resigned themselves to Trump as the nominee” but are waiting to donate significantly until after Trump has clinched a few primary contests.

Part of the newfound success in bringing former donors back into the fold is due to the work of a handful of wealthy supporters who have remained at Trump’s side. This includes New York Jets owner Woody Johnson and others who have been on the phones and arranging meetings on Trump’s behalf.

As NBC reports, these efforts have borne fruit with numerous top donors:

Among the biggest names on the list: Oklahoma oil and natural gas magnate Harold Hamm, who before having a falling out with Trump was once considered one of his top advisers on energy policy. Hamm previously contributed to former United Nations Ambassador Nikki Haley, and he co-hosted an Oklahoma City fundraiser for DeSantis this year.

South Carolina hedge fund manager Scott Bessent, a past Trump supporter, gave to DeSantis and Sen. Tim Scott of South Carolina this year before he cut Trump a check last month, Federal Election Commission records show. And Susan and Howard Groff, who were among Trump’s biggest California donors in 2020, gave to DeSantis, Pence and Scott this year before they wrote a check to Trump in late August.



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The Trump team also has their eyes set on Trump administration Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross, a key ally during the 2016 election who recently hosted a fundraiser in the Hamptons in New York for Virginia Gov. Glenn Youngkin, but who Trump allies hope can be persuaded to support the 45th president again.

Not everyone has come around just yet. As [The New American](#) recently reported, there is still a cadre of megadonors trying to select the most viable Trump alternative:

At a Republican donor gathering in Texas earlier this month, the teams for DeSantis and Haley made their respective candidates' cases as being the most viable non-Trump contender — while also taking jabs at one another.

The DeSantis people argued that Haley cannot beat Trump in a head-to-head match. The Haley team asserted that DeSantis has flatlined, while Haley — per their private polling — is on the ascendant and ahead of the Florida governor in key early voting states. The Haley team also said their boss has more cash on hand in her campaign, whereas DeSantis is relying heavily on third-party expenditures via super PACs for his messaging.

Among the mega donors present at the event and listening to the presentations were hedge-fund billionaire Paul Singer and investor Ken Griffin, two of the biggest givers in GOP politics. The conference was hosted by real estate developer Harlan Crow out of a desire to thin the primary herd by finding someone behind whom the anti-Trump crowd can coalesce.

But for the donors who are willing to once again open up their pocketbooks for Trump, the greatest priority is taking back the White House no matter who the candidate is.

“Why? It is easy, I want to win,” said one donor, who had previously given to Trump but then eyed candidates such as DeSantis before deciding to stick with Trump in view of the [polling](#) — which places Trump around 50 points ahead of the rest of the field.

“They are moving back to President Trump, and I want to win,” the donor added.

And one policy advisor to Republican donors who spoke to NBC News on condition of anonymity put it bluntly: “They have realized it is Trump or bust.”

Andrew Romeo, a spokesperson for DeSantis' campaign, told the outlet he believes Trump is trying to win over donors because he fears the competition from DeSantis in Iowa and Nevada.

Yet, while he has received few major donations this year, Trump has hauled in major money from small-dollar donations. Through the end of June, Trump's joint fundraising committee had raised \$23.7 million from donors giving less than \$200, which is more than twice the grassroots contributions to all the other Republican candidates combined.

The Republican primary may formally be far from over. But in the eyes of many voters and donors, the contest is seemingly already decided.



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