

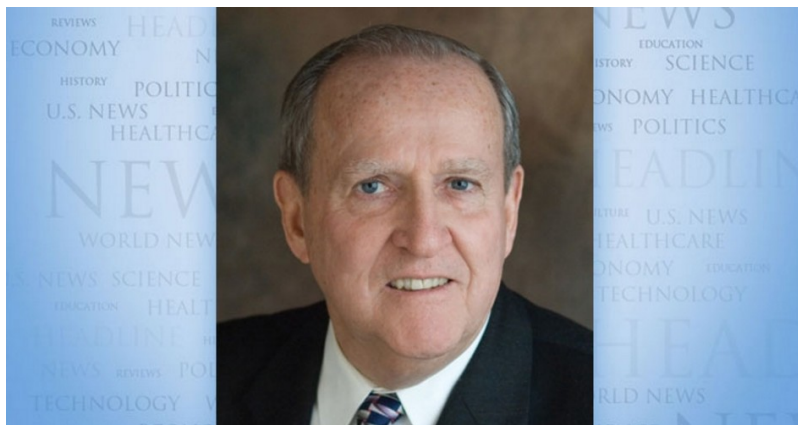


Written by [John F. McManus](#) on April 17, 2019

Weld Challenges Trump Reelection

On April 15, former Massachusetts Governor William Weld announced his decision to challenge President Trump for the 2020 Republican nomination. As the first to attempt unseating the president via the GOP nomination process, Weld might not be the last.

Now 73, Weld has compiled an unusual political history. Describing himself as fiscally conservative and socially liberal, he won election as governor of Massachusetts in 1990, followed by reelection in 1994 with 71 percent of the vote, the highest margin ever recorded in the typically Democrat-leaning state. In 1996, his attempt to defeat incumbent John Kerry in a Senate race failed 53 to 45 percent. Then, 18 months into his second four-year term, he sought appointment to become the U.S. ambassador to Mexico.



Formally nominated by President Bill Clinton for the post that would take him to Mexico, Weld found himself opposed for confirmation by the powerful leader of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Senator Jesse Helms (R-N.C.). The Helms campaign against Weld was widely believed to have been based on the Bay State governor's well-known support for homosexual and abortion rights, as well as his support for legalizing medical marijuana. Obviously tired of being governor, something he admitted, Weld resigned his governor post in July 1997 to campaign full time for the ambassadorial position.

When the Helms negativity prevailed and Weld's quest to take the job of an ambassador became unachievable, he found himself without any position whatsoever. He summed up his defeat at the hands of Helms by commenting, "I asked President Clinton to withdraw my name [for the post as ambassador] so I can go back to New England where no one has to approach the government on bended knee to ask it to do its duty."

By 2000, Weld had relocated to New York City. Not done with politics, and holding down employment with a New York-based law firm, he hoped in 2006 to become the Empire State's Republican candidate for governor. But he failed to win nomination at the 2006 New York Republican Convention. Returning to the political world in 2016, he joined the Libertarian Party. Its presidential nominee, Gary Johnson, a former governor of New Mexico, selected Weld as his running mate, a move approved at the Libertarian National Convention in May 2016. In the 2016 presidential pitting the two Libertarians against Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton, the Johnson-Weld campaign garnered 4.4 million votes. Though a Libertarian record, their vote total was far short of the amount needed for victory.

A member of the world-government-promoting Council on Foreign Relations, Weld actually endorsed Barack Obama for president in 2008. By 2016, he declared himself a "Libertarian for life." Toward the



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end of the 2016 campaign, he heaped praise on Hillary Clinton by declaring in a television appearance, "I'm here vouching for Mrs. Clinton."

Back into the Republican Party in early 2019, Weld seems determined to use his latest political adventure simply to hurt Trump. In a video made for use by his partisans, viewers will find footage showing the president ridiculing John McCain, mocking a man with physical disabilities, and insisting that "Mexico will pay for the wall." The video also reminds viewers of the former libertarian's fiscal conservatism.

While seeking to diminish support for the Trump reelection effort, Weld will make the "Make America Great Again" president the first GOP incumbent to face a primary challenge since George H.W. Bush had to deal with one mounted by Pat Buchanan in 1992. Expecting to receive criticism for his having quit the GOP and run with Gary Johnson as a candidate of the Libertarian Party, the in-again-out-again Republican plans to remind voters that Donald Trump spent most his adult years as a Democrat before deciding to run as a Republican in 2016.

William Weld hopes he can get numerous anti-Trump sparks to fly as he challenges the president. Whether he can derail the Trump reelection, an unlikely development, remains to be seen. But his goal is clear: Hurt Trump. And he will likely receive an inordinate amount of media attention in the months ahead from its many CFR and Deep State partisans.

John F. McManus is president emeritus of [The John Birch Society](#).



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