

SPOTLIGHT

Trump Wades into Competitive Ohio Senate Race

The former president makes a gamble on a must-win race.



FILE - Bernie Moreno is acknowledged at a rally with former President Donald Trump at the Delaware County Fairgrounds, on April 23, 2022, in Delaware, Ohio. Moreno has joined the 2024 race to unseat Democratic U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown. (AP Photo/Joe Maiorana, File)

ASSOCIATED PRESS



Sydney Kashiwagi
@SYDNEYKASHIWAGI

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Former President Trump has so far only endorsed the safer bets in Senate races.

In Indiana, he's backing Rep. Jim Banks (R-03), who has the full support of the state Republican Party and the primary field on lock. In Arizona, he's behind 2022 gubernatorial candidate Kari Lake (R), who has high name ID and is facing lesser known challengers. In West Virginia, Trump's behind Gov. Jim Justice (R), who has dominated the polls for months.

But on Tuesday, he endorsed 2022 candidate Bernie Moreno (R) in Ohio. Moreno is a wealthy businessman who is running again this year after falling short in the GOP primary last cycle. He's also the father of Emily Moreno, the wife of former White House aide Rep. Max Miller (R-07).

The NRSC has not endorsed in Ohio yet, but appeared on board with Trump's decision.

"President Trump's endorsement is the most powerful endorsement in politics, so this will certainly be a huge benefit to Bernie Moreno," NRSC Communications Director Mike Berg said in a statement.

By backing Moreno, Trump, who took the heat for backing candidates who went on to lose general elections during the 2022 cycle, is betting big on his star power in Ohio.

So far, the polling in the race has been close, but Secretary of State Frank LaRose (R), the only candidate who has won statewide, has led in recent hypothetical head-to-head matchups against Sen. Sherrod Brown (D).

Ahead of Trump's endorsement, Moreno released two separate internal polls that showed him statistically tied with LaRose and 2022 candidate Matt Dolan (R) in the GOP primary. Undecided voters dominated both polls.

Trump's endorsement is likely to help pull Moreno ahead in a state he's carried twice. This is the first must-win race for Republicans, who need to flip just one seat to take back control of the Senate after Sen. Joe Manchin (D-WV) announced his retirement, all but ceding the race to Republicans.

—Sydney Kashiwagi
skashiwagi@nationaljournal.com

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Trump leads in fundraising among GOP candidates by a wide margin

Candidate	Total
Trump	\$1,000,000
LaRose	\$200,000
Moreno	\$150,000
Dolan	\$100,000

Fundraising among 2024 GOP presidential candidates

Eighteen Republican-held districts voted for Biden in 2020

District	Rep
1st	Biden
2nd	Biden
3rd	Biden
4th	Biden
5th	Biden
6th	Biden
7th	Biden
8th	Biden
9th	Biden
10th	Biden
11th	Biden
12th	Biden
13th	Biden
14th	Biden
15th	Biden
16th	Biden
17th	Biden
18th	Biden

Republican-held House districts that voted for Biden in 2020

House race spotlight: UT-02

Candidate	Party	Margin
Tommy Swartz	Rep	51%
Chloe Swartz	Dem	49%

State elections in 2023

Biden's lead over Trump in 2024 candidate favorability polls has dwindled

Month	Biden	Trump
Jan 2023	75%	65%
Feb 2023	70%	60%
Mar 2023	65%	55%
Apr 2023	60%	50%
May 2023	55%	45%
Jun 2023	50%	40%
Jul 2023	45%	35%
Aug 2023	40%	30%
Sep 2023	35%	25%
Oct 2023	30%	20%
Nov 2023	25%	15%
Dec 2023	20%	10%

2024 general election polling

Three debates were scheduled by the Commission on Presidential Debates for 2024

Date	Topic
Jan 15, 2024	Foreign Policy
Feb 15, 2024	Economy
Mar 15, 2024	Healthcare

2024 presidential debates

As DeSantis falls in the polls, support for Ramaswamy ticks upwards

Month	DeSantis	Ramaswamy
Jan 2023	45%	10%
Feb 2023	40%	15%
Mar 2023	35%	20%
Apr 2023	30%	25%
May 2023	25%	30%
Jun 2023	20%	35%
Jul 2023	15%	40%
Aug 2023	10%	45%
Sep 2023	5%	50%
Oct 2023	0%	55%
Nov 2023	0%	60%
Dec 2023	0%	65%

Polling ahead of the first 2024 GOP presidential debate