

# [***At donor retreat, Haley avoids talking about Trump and her political future***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6C1P-2PT1-JBSS-S016-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

(CNN) &#8212; More than two months after ending her presidential bid, [*Nikki Haley*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/03/06/politics/nikki-haley-2024-presidential-race/index.html) did not directly address the topic of [*Donald Trump*](https://www.cnn.com/politics/president-donald-trump-45) or her political future during a two-day gathering of some of her key donors in Charleston, South Carolina, this week. Instead, the former South Carolina governor and her top political aides answered questions about policy from those donors and ran through the numbers of how her now-suspended 2024 campaign raised and spent its money.

Since leaving the race, she has kept a relatively low profile, conspicuously refraining from endorsing Trump or encouraging her Republican supporters - who continue to show up to the primary polls, even with the former president set to win the nomination - to oppose him. The donor retreat was one of the biggest signals Haley has given since dropping out of the race that she hopes to keep some presence in national ***politics***. The former governor, according to multiple attendees, opted against weighing in on any of the larger questions concerning what comes next for her, but she did discuss policy related questions and thank some of her top donors for fueling her campaign.

The retreat was described as similar to an "investor conference," according to one attendee. Haley did not say at any point whether she would endorse Trump, be willing to run as Trump's vice presidential nominee if offered, or run for president in the future, according to multiple attendees of the donor retreat. But those attendees came away from the event with the impression that Haley herself did not have a firm answer to any of those questions.

The discussion also veered at one point to Haley backers who are still voting for her in the primary even though she's dropped out of the race. On Tuesday night, for example, during the second day of the donor retreat, Trump won the Maryland Republican primary with 80% of the vote; almost 20% of GOP voters chose Haley.

Haley didn't directly say whether she wanted her backers to keep voting for her or to just vote for Trump. She's deliberately not saying that, one attendee said, but she indicated that she wanted her supporters and attendees at the retreat to "vote your conscience, vote however you want to vote."

"It's for you to decide," Haley said, according to one attendee.

During the event, Haley did not directly address her ongoing support in the primary or offer any direct plans about her political future or running again, according to Eric J. Tanenblatt, a top donor who attended the conference.

"I don't think she's made any decisions about her future," Tanenblatt said.

Also during the retreat, longtime Haley adviser Jon Lerner and Haley campaign manager Betsy Ankney gave a presentation about how the campaign raised and spent money while the former governor and UN ambassador was running.

"[Ankney and Lerner] walked through how the money was spent and how they did what they did. There was obviously a lot of talk about what people would like her to do. But again she hasn't made any decisions. I think it's fair to say, though, that she's 52 years old, so she's got some years ahead of her," Tanenblatt said.

Haley also fielded questions from donors on specific issues, including abortion, the state of American democracy and the national debt, according to multiple attendees. She reiterated her support for Israel in the ongoing war in Gaza when asked during the retreat about the conflict.

"Well, she's been an ardent supporter of Israel and has not wavered at all. Remember at one of the debates when she said 'finish them' referring to Hamas. I think she still feels very strongly about that," Tanenblatt said.

By Daniel Strauss and Kylie Atwood, CNN

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