

# [***Republican billionaires rally around Trump for April fundraiser as election - and scramble for cash - heats up***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BKJ-3B61-JBSS-S01W-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

(CNN) &#8212; Hedge fund founder [*John Paulson*](https://www.cnn.com/2013/05/15/us/john-paulson-fast-facts/index.html) is hosting a high-dollar fundraiser next month to benefit [*Donald Trump*](https://www.cnn.com/politics/president-donald-trump-45)'s presidential campaign that is drawing some of the Republican Party's wealthiest donors, according to an invitation obtained by CNN.

The April 6 event, slated to be held in Palm Beach, Florida, is a sign that some ultra-rich GOP figures who [*remained on the sidelines*](https://www.cnn.com/2023/08/11/politics/republican-donors-super-pacs-trump-2024/index.html) during the primary season - or backed other candidates - are coalescing behind the former president, now that he is the party's presumptive nominee and scrambles to catch up with [*President Joe Biden*](https://www.cnn.com/politics/joe-biden) and Democrats in the funding race.

"I am pleased to support President Trump in his re-election efforts," Paulson said in a statement provided to CNN. "His policies on the economy, energy, immigration and foreign policy will be very beneficial for the country."

"We are receiving an overwhelming amount of support from donors," Paulson added. "This support, along with the landslide victory he achieved in the primaries, shows his strong support amongst Americans."

Co-chairs of the "Inaugural Leadership Dinner" in Palm Beach include hedge fund billionaire Robert Mercer and his daughter Rebekah; oil tycoon Harold Hamm; hotelier and space entrepreneur Robert Bigelow; and casino mogul Steve Wynn. Bigelow had earlier [*backed Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis' political ambitions*](https://www.cnn.com/2022/07/15/politics/ron-desantis-donor-robert-bigelow/index.html) before committing to support Trump earlier this year.

The Mercers had been big Republican donors - and major backers of Trump's 2016 campaign - before taking a lower profile in ***politics*** during the 2020 cycle. Other co-chairs on the invitation include Todd Ricketts, whose family owns the Chicago Cubs and helped lead Republican National Committee fundraising efforts during Trump's White House tenure; and longtime Trump allies, such as New York Jets co-owner Robert Wood Johnson, who served as US ambassador to the United Kingdom under the former president, and Wilbur Ross, who was Trump's Commerce secretary.

Three former Trump rivals who have since endorsed him - South Carolina Sen. Tim Scott, entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy and North Dakota Gov. Doug Burgum - are also listed as "special guests" on the invitation.

The price tag for the fundraiser ranges from $250,000 per person for those who serve on the "host committee" to $814,600 per person to serve as a "chairman." Perks for those contributing at the top level include dinner seating at Trump's table, according to the invitation.

The high-dollar fundraiser is one of the first big events since Trump [*became his party's presumptive nominee*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/03/12/politics/biden-trump-presidential-nominees/index.html) and [*installed his choices to helm the RNC*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/03/08/politics/trump-republican-national-committee/index.html). A new joint fundraising agreement with the RNC and dozens of state parties is aimed at helping him quickly raise large sums as he works to close the fundraising gap with Biden and Democrats.

It also stands to benefit a leadership PAC that has helped underwrite some of Trump's [*mounting personal legal bills*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/02/20/politics/legal-bills-trump-fec-report/index.html).

Trump has lots of ground to make up.

Biden's team announced Sunday that the campaign's effort with the Democratic Party had raised $53 million in February alone and entered March - and the general election clash with Trump - with $155 million in available cash. The campaign touted that figure as the most cash any Democratic presidential candidate has had at this point in the election cycle.

Trump's team has not yet announced February totals. But his campaign and the RNC had roughly $40 million combined on hand at the end of January - trailing far behind Biden and Democrats.

As he faces a campaign fundraising crunch, the former president is taking a more hands-on approach with donors. During his first presidential run in 2016, he was "almost allergic" to fundraising, said one person involved in helping raise money for the Trump campaign this year.

"If you compare 2016 to 2024, it's no comparison. He is engaged," the person added. "He is like a normal presidential candidate as far as fundraising, and it's very helpful."

Contributions from the April fundraiser in Palm Beach will benefit the Trump 47 Committee, the joint fundraising operation established in recent days by the Trump campaign, the RNC and nearly 40 state party committees.

Save America, the Trump leadership PAC that has helped pay legal bills for the former president and his allies, is slated to receive a $5,000 share of contributions, according to the invitation.

Save America has run low on available cash as it burned through donors' money over the past year - much of it in helping to pay legal bills as Trump and his allies battle criminal and civil cases.

By Fredreka Schouten, CNN

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