

# [***Haley supporters 'dismayed' at Trump-Biden rematch: 'This country can do better'***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BGV-YSX1-JBSS-S1G7-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

(CNN) &#8212; As [*Nikki Haley suspended her campaign*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/03/06/politics/nikki-haley-2024-presidential-race/index.html) Wednesday morning, a major question remained: Who will her voters, who span the political spectrum, throw their support behind in the general election?

"I, at this point, can't answer that question," Carole Colburn of Arlington, Virginia, told CNN.

Colburn, who's a "huge supporter" of Haley and was in lockstep with her call for a "new generational leader," wished the former Republican governor had kept campaigning for the White House and was sorry to see her historic campaign end.

"We need to change things in this country, and we need the young people to become more in charge, and I say that as an older person," Colburn said.

Colburn is one of several Haley supporters who are dreading another match-up between former president Donald Trump and President Joe Biden and feel conflicted about who they'll ultimately back.

After disappointing results on Super Tuesday, in which she won only one of the 15 GOP contests, Haley on Wednesday announced she was suspending her presidential campaign, resulting in Trump becoming the presumptive GOP nominee. Haley, however, withheld endorsing Trump and said it's up to the former president to try and earn the support of her voters.

Looking ahead to the general election, Colburn told CNN that she believes the country faces a difficult choice between Trump and Biden.

"This country can do better than the choice that we've been given, and I don't know how we can change that," Colburn said.

Kelly Schofield, a self-described old school conservative and Fairfax County voter, has been a loyal Haley supporter, following her career ever since former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin endorsed her bid for South Carolina governor. Despite the end of Haley's campaign, Schofield still plans to write her in this November.

"I really cannot vote for her opponent, and that's the decision I've made," Schofield said. "I really, truly want somebody who will protect the US Constitution and who will have civility and dignity, and I'm not secure with my vote going to the other candidate."

Schofield, too, is disheartened by the likely Trump-Biden matchup in 2024. She said given their age, the vice-presidential candidates will deserve scrutiny.

"I'm very dismayed," Schofield told CNN. "I'm dismayed, like everyone, because of their age, of their mental capacity."

"You never know what might happen and maybe she'll unsuspend the campaign, and so I am not giving up my heart," Schofield said. "With that said, I think people are looking closely, you know, at the vice-presidential candidate, because it's a very probable possibility that they will be president by the end of the four years."

Ultimately, Schofield believes Haley supporters, like herself, will not fall into Trump's fold and sees the former president facing a real challenge drawing independents.

"I think it's gonna be another nail biter. I think it is not a sure thing that Donald Trump is going to win the general election," Schofield said. "I am not going to go to vote for Trump. So, with that said, I can't speak for all of Nikki Haley's voters, but I do know many independents who also voted for Nikki Haley."

According to CNN's exit polls surveying primary voters in New Hampshire, South Carolina, Virginia, North Carolina and California, just 19% of Haley voters would be satisfied with Trump as the Republican nominee.

"With the lack of character that he's had, he has turned off those independent voters," Schofield added. "I don't think he's going to be able to corral Nikki Haley supporters and independent voters back."

After Haley exited the race, Biden, meanwhile, made an appeal to her supporters, suggesting that while there's "a lot we won't agree on," there could be "common ground" with her supporters on issues like democracy, rule of law and the preservation of NATO, among others.

"Biden is not an option for me," Schofield said. "That is why I'm sticking with, as a conservative, with a Republican candidate."

"My problem with Biden is, obviously it's nothing new that the two issues that most people voted on were the border and the economy," Schofield later said. "Even though the market is getting better and showing signs of improvement, it's still going to the grocery store. The prices are way too high. Inflation is too high."

Alissa Baker, a Loudoun County, Virginia, voter who backed Trump in 2016 and left the top of the ticket blank in 2020, said the prospect of voting for Biden over the former president is "definitely a consideration" for her this time around.

While she appreciated the president's olive branch to Republican Haley voters, Baker said the Democratic Party at large still "does not necessarily represent the views that some of us would bring to the table."

"This kind of big tent concept ... You know, it sounds great on paper," she mused.

Baker said before Haley launched her campaign, she had been feeling out of place in the GOP, telling CNN, "MAGA has been taking over more of the Republican Party. It's been feeling less and less like home."

"She started a conversation and has brought a lot of voices forward that have been quiet for a while," she said of Haley.

Baker said she listened to the "conciliatory tone" put forth by Trump surrogates but pointed to his more combative tone on Truth Social, boasting that Haley was "trounced" in Tuesday's elections, as a concern.

"Unfortunately, I think they let Trump be Trump, which, you know, plays well to his base," she said.

Tamara Wilson, a lifelong Democrat, voted for Haley in the Virginia primary in an attempt to keep Trump off the top of the GOP ticket in the general election.

Now, she hopes to encourage dedicated Republicans who voted for Haley to return the favor and back Biden in November

"When the stakes are as high as this, you have to kind of set aside those party lines, right?" she said.

Wilson had been volunteering with Primary Pivot, a nonprofit group formed to encourage independent and Democratic voters to consider a Republican alternative to Trump in states with open primaries.

The group announced a new name on Wednesday - Haley Voters for Biden. But Wilson admits it will take not just organizers, but the president himself, to fulfill the goal of that name.

"I think President Biden should work to earn those votes. Votes shouldn't have to be taken or given just on a whim," she said, listing reproductive rights and foreign policy as areas where Biden could make inroads with GOP voters.

A lifelong Republican voter, Jim Fetgatter of Alexandria, Virginia, backed Trump in 2020. But he said the former president lost his support over his foreign policy approach, specifically his stance on Ukraine.

He remains unconvinced that Trump will take Haley's advice to appeal to her voters or change enough as a candidate for him to back Trump. Nor would he reconsider voting for Trump again if Trump were to choose Haley as a running mate. And Fetagatter said he won't back Biden, calling the Democratic president "not fit to be in office."

Instead, Fetgatter said that he may write-in someone or vote for a third party candidate who's backed by the centrist group No Labels, with the hopes that Haley would run on the No Labels ticket - a scenario that Haley has rejected.

Asked how he feels about another Trump-Biden match-up, Fetgatter replied: "Depressed."

Baker also expressed an interest in No Labels, saying she's watching the group "very closely" and would like to see Mitt Romney or John Kasich, Republicans whom she supported in previous elections, as potential candidates.

"Isn't it funny that we almost have a four party race, potentially?" she said, alluding to Robert F. Kennedy Jr.'s independent campaign.

She argued Haley tapped into the "let's get away from the drama" sentiment that many Americans feel, explaining, "I think a lot of people are just looking for that middle of the road solution."

Brittany Martinez, who has spent her career working in Republican ***politics***, including in communications roles for former House Speaker Kevin McCarthy and the Republican National Committee, says she chose Haley because she offered "new and different leadership" in the party.

"I have seen the chaos myself. I've been affected by it," she said.

Martinez, a California voter who previously voted for Trump, says she will not do so again, but she is not shocked that the establishment of her party has fallen in line behind the former president so quickly.

"It's not surprising, but it is disappointing," she said, later adding, "I know that a lot of folks really aren't as satisfied or happy with him as they express to be."

While Haley has shot down the idea of serving as Trump's vice president, some supporters are holding out hope that there's a place for her in a potential second Trump administration.

"I would wish that Donald Trump would be a little contrite and invite Nikki to be with him if indeed he is elected - vice president or another position. She's great at international affairs, Secretary of State. I just hope there is a path forward for her," Margaret St. Amand, a Republican voter from Charlotte, North Carolina, said.

Asked about the chances, St. Amand said, "I have hope, that's all I can say."

CNN's Jeff Zeleny contributed to this story.

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