

# [***Ahead of South Carolina primary, Nikki Haley vows to stay in the race until 'the last person votes'***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BCH-YWN1-JBSS-S1G3-00000-00&context=1516831)

CNN Wire

February 20, 2024 Tuesday 5:52 PM GMT

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**Length:** 954 words

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**Dateline:** (CNN)

**Body**

Greenville, South Carolina (CNN) &#8212; Republican presidential candidate [*Nikki Haley*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/02/18/politics/haley-trump-nato-comments/index.html) on Tuesday reiterated her plans to continue her White House bid against former President Donald Trump, just five days ahead of the South Carolina Primary.

"Some of you-perhaps a few of you in the media-came here today to see if I'm dropping out of the race. Well, I'm not. Far from it," Haley said in a speech in Greenville.

Haley vowed she is not exiting the race now, saying she will continue to compete in the primary past the South Carolina primary and through Super Tuesday on March 5.

"That's why I refuse to quit. South Carolina will vote on Saturday. But on Sunday, I'll still be running for president. I'm not going anywhere," she said. "I'm campaigning every day, until the last person votes, because I believe in a better America and a brighter future for our kids."

Haley's remark come as she continues to challenge Trump for the GOP nomination, though he has won every delegate contest so far and holds a wide lead over Haley in her own home state, making many question the path forward for the former governor's campaign.

Haley had previously said that she had to do better in the South Carolina primary than she did in New Hampshire primary - where she lost to Trump by 11 points - but she is no longer saying that she must hit that goal.

Polls consistently show Haley trailing Trump in South Carolina by a considerable margin. According to the latest [*new CBS/YouGov survey*](https://www.cbsnews.com/news/trump-nikki-haley-south-carolina-republican-primary-poll-2-12-2024/), Trump leads Haley among likely voters in South Carolina's upcoming Republican primary, 65% to 30%. Those results echo previous [*Monmouth University-Washington Post polling*](https://www.monmouth.edu/polling-institute/reports/monmouthpoll_sc_020124/), which also found Trump taking majority support.

Haley made her case for staying in the race by pointing to a number of factors, including her view that some politicians who embrace Trump publicly "privately dread him."

"Look, I get it. In ***politics***, the herd mentality is enormously strong. A lot of Republican politicians have surrendered to it... Of course, many of the same politicians who now publicly embrace Trump privately dread him. They know what a disaster he's been and will continue to be for our party. They're just too afraid to say it out loud," Haley said.

Haley said that her "own political future is of zero concern" and said that she plans to stay in the race for "something bigger" than herself, saying Americans have the right to have their voices heard at the polls.

"They deserve a real choice, not a Soviet-style election where there's only one candidate and he gets 99% of the vote. We don't anoint kings in this country. We have elections. And Donald Trump, of all people, should know we don't rig elections!," she said.

Haley also said she has "a handful of serious concerns" about Trump but has "countless serious concerns" about Biden. Her remarks differ from her [*previous comments*](https://us.cnn.com/videos/politics/2024/01/21/nikki-haley-trump-biden-equally-bad-sot-vpx-nr.cnn) in New Hampshire, when she told CNN's Dana Bash that Trump and Biden are "equally bad" for Americans.

The Trump campaign sought to undercut Haley's message by releasing a memo hours before Haley's speech, arguing their calculations show Trump will earn the number of delegates needed to become the Republican nominee by March 19 at the latest and that Haley's campaign was "out of gas."

"The true 'state' of Nikki Haley's campaign? Broken down, out of ideas, out of gas, and completely outperformed by every measure, by Donald Trump," Trump campaign managers Chris LaCivita and Susie Wiles wrote in the memo.

The memo reads, "Nikki Haley's campaign ends Saturday, February 24th, fittingly, in her home state, rejected by those who know her the best."

Trump has been in South Carolina for a single event since the New Hampshire primary and he will be back in the state on Tuesday night for a town hall with Fox News.

Pitching herself as the best alternative to both President Joe Biden and Trump, Haley again painted both leaders as "two old men who are only getting older," and accused them both of polarizing the country.

"The truth is, Americans already know what Joe Biden and Donald Trump will do. But we're just as concerned with who they are. They're dividers at a time when America desperately, urgently, needs a uniter," Haley said as she continued to offer a message of unity.

"In the America I know and love, we disagree strongly, but we do it without hating each other, and we still have a shared national purpose. In the America I know and love, we respect freedom and the rule of law, we refuse to use the awesome power of big government to punish those we dislike, and we recognize that America has done more good for more people than any country in the world."

Haley's speech ended on a visibly emotional note as she highlighted her husband's current deployment with the South Carolina Army National Guard.

"As I prepare for what lies ahead, Michael is at the front of my mind. I wish Michael was here today, and I wish our children and I could see him tonight. But we can't," Haley said, as she began tearing up.

Haley often talks about her husband's military service on the campaign trail - especially after that service was mocked by Trump, who recently questioned his whereabouts - but she does not routinely tear up when she reflects on his service.

"Michael is fighting for the country he loves. So are all his brothers- and sisters-in-arms, wherever they're stationed in our dangerous world. They have made their stand because America is worth fighting and even dying for. Now I will continue to make my stand because America is worth living for," she added.

CNN's Kate Sullivan contributed to this report.

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**Load-Date:** March 21, 2024

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