

# [***Alberta Premier Danielle Smith facing federal criticism after participating in Tucker Carlson events***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6B66-D781-JBSS-S022-00000-00&context=1516831)

CNN Wire

January 26, 2024 Friday 4:10 PM GMT

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**Length:** 822 words

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**Dateline:** (CTV Network)

**Body**

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CALGARY, ALBERTA ([*CTV Network*](https://calgary.ctvnews.ca/i-don-t-do-a-screening-test-premier-smith-defends-attendance-at-tucker-carlson-events-amid-federal-criticism-1.6742272)) -- Premier Danielle Smith defended her participation at former Fox News host Tucker Carlson's Alberta events on Wednesday, saying her ideologies don't always fully align with the people she speaks to.

"I don't do a screening test to make sure that every person that interviews me matches 100 per cent of what I believe, and I don't expect that they're going to," Smith said during an unrelated press conference Thursday.

"So I take a wide range of interviews: from CBC all the way through to alternative media, because my job is to get our message out about Alberta."

Roughly 4,000 people attended Carlson's afternoon speech and two Q-and-A sit-downs at the Telus Convention Centre in Calgary. The pair travelled to Edmonton for another event on Wednesday night and reportedly had dinner together.

Carlson was fired by Fox News last year after a settlement was reached over false election claims. He's been accused of spreading dangerous rhetoric and misinformation around ***politics***, immigration and religion.Federal fiasco

A group of federal Liberal ministers, including Randy Boissonnault, Edmonton Centre MP and minister of employment, workforce development and official languages, faced questions about the event on Thursday.

He criticized Smith's involvement, citing worries about LGBTQ2s+ hate speech and violence against politicians.

"You can have respectful discourse in this country, you can raise the issue, you can bang your fist on a table at a fed-prov meeting, that's all legit," Boissonnault said, "but you do not summon the dogs of MAGA Conservatives to come and somehow scare - try to scare - us and to try to incite violence against politicians of any stripe.

"It's not acceptable. If she would take her job seriously, she'd actually be focused on housing, on climate change, on actually solving the issues of Albertans."

Environment Minister Steven Guilbeault, who was discussed at length by Smith at the event, also took aim at the duo.

"We can have strong disagreements," he said, "but to incite violence against people who disagree with you, that's not how things should be done in Canada."

Smith said the goal of her attendance at the event was to get the word out to the United States about Alberta's energy sector.

"I told everyone that I wanted to make sure that somebody who has a very loud voice in America knew that we were a partner in being able to provide energy security and energy affordability," Smith said.

"And I got that message out."

At a press conference Thursday, Rachel Notley, Alberta's Opposition leader, urged Smith to walk back her view. She labelled Carlson an "extremist who regularly spreads conspiracy theories and hateful rhetoric."

"I call on the premier to apologize to the Albertans who feel less secure and less welcome this morning because of her actions yesterday, and to instead reassure them that Alberta is their home."

Federal NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh also criticized the premier, speaking in Edmonton following the party's caucus meeting.

Singh said Smith welcoming Carlson showed a "complete lack of priorities."

"We've heard a lot from Edmontonians, and what they've told me they're worried about, they're worried about cost of living, they're worried about groceries, about housing, they're worried about the crumbling health-care system," Singh said.

"I think Danielle Smith should spend time fixing the problems that she's created, rather than meeting with someone who mused about invading our country."Controversial past

Timothy Caufield, a professor of Health Law and Science Policy at the University of Alberta, attended that city's event.

Caufield spoke to CTV News about the "disenfranchised" attendees, their reaction to the speakers' attitudes and the general tone of Carlson's speech.

"He had all the things you would expect," Caufield said. "He took a lot of pot-shots at Trudeau, he made fun of our energy and health policies and he embraced some conspiracy theories. There was an explicit embrace of the racist great replacement theory: this idea that we're letting in immigrants for political reasons for votes.

"He's built his career on rage and he's playing exactly to his audience. He's saying things he knows the audience want to hear."

The professor says he thinks Smith "added fuel to the fire" by appearing alongside the polarizing figure.

"Tucker Carlson is known for lying," Caufield said. "He's known for controversial positions that are not rooted in evidence. So to legitimize those perspectives - perspectives that are doing real harm - I find that really disappointing."

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**Load-Date:** January 26, 2024

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