

# [***Biden sets his sights on 2024 Florida win during visit to Trump territory***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6B71-MJ21-DY7V-G00B-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

As far as presidents go, the Palm Beach region is the domain of the former White House occupant [*Donald Trump*](https://www.cnn.com/politics/president-donald-trump-45).

But for a few hours Tuesday, it was President [*Joe Biden*](https://www.cnn.com/politics/joe-biden)'s motorcade zipping through the wealthy South Florida enclave as the Democrat looks to line his campaign coffers ahead of this year's election - and potentially capture the state's electorate in November.

"Here in Florida, you've had a real dose of Trumpism," Biden told donors in nearby Jupiter, Florida where Trump owns a golf course. He called his predecessor a "loser" and said it was up to Democrats to ensure he doesn't retake the White House.

"You're the reason Donald Trump is a defeated president," Biden said to the attendees. "And you're the reason we are going to make him a loser again."

Air Force One hadn't returned to Palm Beach International Airport since it ferried Trump south on his last day in office in 2021, landing just before Biden was officially sworn in, but on Tuesday, it taxied past the Trump-emblazoned jet parked near a hangar.

Since then, Trump's Mar-a-Lago estate has emerged as the de-facto epicenter of national Republican ***politics***. He formally changed his residence from New York to Palm Beach in 2019, and spends the winter months using the oceanfront estate as a campaign hub, fundraising venue and setting for dinner meetings over steak and chocolate cake.

Even as Biden is raking in cash from Democrats, Republican megadonors are convening their own gathering in Palm Beach this week to hear from aides to both Trump and Nikki Haley, the former South Carolina governor who remains in the GOP race, as they plot future donations.

Biden's visit Tuesday has brought him to events in Jupiter and Miami, which have been proven to be fertile fundraising territory for Republicans and Democrats alike. Co-hosts for his events include lawyers and financiers from around Florida. He isn't scheduled to hold any public events.

The president's reelection campaign says he'll return to the Sunshine State over the coming year as he looks to make the state competitive in the general election. Along with North Carolina, Florida is a state Biden lost in 2020 but which his campaign sees as a pickup opportunity.

Biden's campaign advisers acknowledge winning Florida in November will be an uphill climb, but have still invested resources there as they test messaging ahead of the general election contest, and Biden on Tuesday set his sights on win in the state in November.

"Here in Florida, we have to organize, mobilize the vote. I think we can win Florida. I think the Democrats can win in Florida," he said Tuesday in Jupiter, about 20 miles from his predecessor's Mar-a-Lago resort.

It's a very tall order for the Biden campaign. The president lost Florida voters 65 and older to Trump by 10 points in 2020, a wider gap than his 5-point deficit nationally. But there are some signs that the campaign could shift in his favor, including initiatives on the state's 2024 ballot.

Biden offered an appeal to the state's senior population on health care during his remarks, something the campaign could focus its messaging on in the coming months: "Seniors in Florida and all across American should know this: Trump and his MAGA friends are determined to take away the 35 dollar a month insulin, which we just got passed into law."

That message comes one year after Biden [*railed*](https://www.cnn.com/2023/02/09/politics/joe-biden-tampa/index.html) against GOP efforts to curb entitlements, drawing a contrast with the state's GOP Sen. Rick Scott, who made a proposal to sunset federal legislation - including Social Security and Medicare - every five years. Florida has the highest population of seniors of any state.

Democrats in Florida have given the national party few reasons for hope in the state since 2016, when Trump's victory kicked off a series of statewide wins by Republicans that culminated in Gov. Ron DeSantis' dominating 19-point reelection performance in 2022. During that stretch, Democrats for the first time lost their voter registration advantage and they now trail the GOP by nearly 800,000 voters.

Support from national Democrats all but dried up amid the fallout, with few seeing reason to invest in a state known for its disparate and expensive media markets.

Lately, though, Democrats have found reason to be optimistic again. Earlier this month, a Democrat won a state House race in a special election, flipping the seat from red to blue in a district DeSantis won by 12 points just 14 months ago.

Last year, Jacksonville voters elected Democrat Donna Deegan to mayor, ending eight years of Republican control in the state's most populous city and the party came about 500 votes short of winning a special election for a Miami-area state House seat that Republicans had dominated in recent years.

Then there's the 2024 ballot, which could include referendums to legalize recreational marijuana and expand abortion access through state constitutional amendments. Organizers have passed the signature thresholds and are awaiting approval from the Florida Supreme Court. Similar referendums have sparked a wave of left-leaning voter turnout in other states in recent elections.

Armed with these data points, Florida Democrats have urged Biden and his national allies not to write off the state and its 30 electoral college votes this November. State party chairwoman Nikki Fried said she has been assured national groups will invest enough in Florida to "make a splash" this cycle, though she declined to provide a concrete figure.

On the eve of Biden's fundraising trip to Florida, Fried told CNN her message to the president was: "Never count us out."

"In order to stop some of the movement in these atrocious anti-Democratic, homophobic misogynistic policies, you gotta bring the fight here," she said. "Because if you can't win here, how is that message going to resonate with the rest of the country?"

Biden's campaign fundraising has been a bright spot over the past year for Democrats, many of whom still harbor concerns about the challenges facing the president's reelection campaign.

Biden brought in more than $97 million for his presidential campaign and the Democratic Party in the fourth fundraising quarter last year, ending 2023 with $117 million in his campaign war chest.

That haul included proceeds from a string of events in Los Angeles toward the end of the year that brought in north of $15 million over three days.

His campaign believes the strong fundraising figures "put a wind in our sails" and showed enthusiasm from high dollar and small dollar donors alike, despite Democratic handwringing, a source familiar with the campaign thinking said.

"Our people are ready and they will do everything they possibly can whether they're driven by a massive pro-Biden stance or a massive anti-Trump stance," the source said. "We have a fight on our hands. We're taking nothing for granted. That's a big piece of what's fueling us right now."

At the same time, Biden's campaign is closely watching Haley's donors over the coming weeks, believing they could have an opportunity to peel off contributors who are worried about a prospective Trump second term.

Biden's campaign has used the threat of another Trump presidency in some of their biggest online fundraising pushes this year, including raising more than a million dollars from grassroots donors in the 24 hours after the president's speech on threats to Democracy around the January 6 anniversary.

They raised more than $1.6 million in the 24 hours after Trump won the Iowa caucuses.

In the months ahead, Biden's campaign is looking to tap into additional Democratic cash through a fundraiser featuring former Presidents Barack Obama and Bill Clinton, according to a person familiar with the plans. NBC News [*first reported*](https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/2024-election/biden-campaign-fundraiser-president-bill-clinton-barack-obama-rcna136020) the plans.

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