

# [***Trump Defends Colorado GOP Chair Who Barred Journalist From Meeting***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BS5-5WK1-JBCM-F01C-00000-00&context=1516831)

Forbes.com

April 9, 2024 Tuesday

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**Length:** 656 words

**Byline:** Sara Dorn, Forbes Staff

**Highlight:** Trump said Dave Williams is under Fake News assault because he is doing such a strong job as an advocate for MAGA.

**Body**

**Topline**

Former President Donald Trump defended Colorado s state GOP chair Dave Williams after he banned a journalist from a Republican Party meeting Saturday over what Williams claimed was unfair coverage a move that sparked widespread condemnation as an attack on the First Amendment.

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Former President Donald Trump speaks to guests at a rally on April 02, 2024 in Green Bay, Wisconsin. (Photo by Scott Olson/Getty Images)

Getty Images

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**Key Facts**

Williams is under Fake News assault because he is doing such a strong job as an advocate for MAGA, Trumpwroteon Truth Social early Tuesday, while also calling a failed effort by a group of voters to have himremoved from the state s ballotfor his role in the January 6 Capitol riots a charade.

Sandra Fish, a veteran journalist at the Colorado Sun who has covered ***politics*** since 1982, was kicked out of the party s assembly meeting Saturday in Pueblo, Colorado, after she was left off the press credentials list, but decided to attend the meeting anyway, she told Forbes.

Sheriff s deputies escorted Fish from the venue when she declined to leave.

Earlier Saturday, a representative for the party, Eric Grossman, told her in a text message she was left off the guest list because the state chairman believes current reporting to be very unfair, without explaining what reporting he was referring to.

Fish said it was unclear why she was targeted, but noted she has reported on the Colorado GOP scontroversial useof state party resources to promote his candidacy and the party s financial woes under Williams leadership.

Responding to Trump s statement defending Williams, Fish said I am not fake news, I am not a fake news reporter, adding this is about democracy . . . they are trying to keep control of the media to only deliver their messages and not any others it should be a concern to people.

**Tangent**

The Colorado Republican Party sent mailers in February that attacked Williams opponent in the race for Colorado s 5th Congressional District, Jeff Crank, and a local newspaper whose editorial board has been critical of Williams. The mailers, along with an email the party sent announcing Williams House candidacy, are the subject of a Federal Election Commissioncomplaintaccusing Williams of using the State Party as a slush fund.

**Chief Critic**

The Colorado Pro chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists said ina statementthe party s decision to ban Fish from the meeting represents a hostile disregard for the fundamental standards of transparency, accountability and press freedom, adding that interfering with and attempting to suppress journalists from covering matters of civic engagement is an offense to democracy.

**Key Background**

Fish s removal prompted widespread criticism from both sides of the aisle. Former Colorado Republican Party Chair Kristi Burtontweetedthat the incident represented a dangerous take by the current (Colorado GOP), adding transparency is necessary for our nation. Williams stood by the move, telling theAssociated Pressthe party makes no apologies for kicking out a fake journalist, who actually snuck into our event while accusing the Colorado Sun, without evidence, of being an extension of the Democrat Party s PR efforts. The party also announced it was endorsing Rep. Lauren Boebert, R-Colo., over her GOP primary opponent, Deborah Flora, after Flora criticized the party s decision to kick Fish out of the meeting as wrong and a violation of the First Amendment in a tweet. The partyaccused Floraof boot licking fake journalists who only help Democrats in announcing its endorsement of Boebert.

**Further Reading**

Colorado ***Politics*** Reporters Expulsion From A Republican Gathering Causes Uproar(Associated Press)

Journalist Removed From Colorado Republican Event For Unfair Reporting(The Guardian)

Colorado GOP Ousts Reporter From Event, Claiming Unfair Coverage(The Washington Post)

**Load-Date:** April 10, 2024

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