

# [***Florida Republicans Suspend Chairman Accused Of Rape Amid National Furor***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:69WV-NKY1-DXVP-535F-00000-00&context=1516831)

Forbes.com

December 17, 2023 Sunday

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**Length:** 542 words

**Byline:** Sara Dorn, Forbes Staff

**Highlight:** The decision paves the way for Ziegler s permanent removal.

**Body**

**Topline**

The Florida Republican Party suspended its embattled chair, Christian Ziegler, in the wake of rape allegations against him stopping short of permanently removing him as the state scandal continues to impact national ***politics***.

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Embattled Florida GOP chairman Christian Ziegler, who is facing rape allegations, greets former president Donald Trump at the RPOF Freedom Summit in Kissimmee, Florida. (Joe Burbank/Orlando Sentinel/Tribune News Service via Getty Images)

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**Key Facts**

The party s 40 executive committee members unanimously voted Sunday in an emergency meeting to remove almost all of Ziegler s powers and reduce his salary to $1,multiple outletsreported.

Ziegler has refused to heed calls for his resignation, including from Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, since allegations he sexually assaulted a woman in October were made public last month.

Ziegler, who has not been charged, told police he had consensual sex with the woman, and has told party members he believes the allegations are because he and his wife are such loud political voices, the**Washington Post** reportedpreviously.

His wife, Bridget Ziegler, is the co-founder of the influential conservative group Moms for Liberty, which has also faced negative consequences because of the accusations.

**Key Background**

Ziegler s accuser allegedly told police she agreed to have consensual sex with Ziegler and his wife on Oct. 2, but backed out when she learned Bridget Ziegler would not be present, multiple outlets have reported, citing a police affidavit. Shortly after calling off the meeting, Ziegler allegedly showed up to the accuser s apartment and raped her, she told police. Police also reportedly viewed surveillance footage taken outside the woman s apartment and saw Ziegler arriving there, according to the documents.

**Tangent**

Bridget Ziegler, who co-founded the right-wing Moms for Liberty group and is a member of the Sarasota School Board, has supported her husband, and became embroiled in the scandal after admitting to police she and her husband previously had a consensual sexual encounter with the accuser. She has refused to step down from the Sarasota School Board after it voted last week to remove her. Moms for Liberty, which claims 130,000 members in 300 chapters in 48 states, has lost a local chapter in Pennsylvania over the allegations, and the other co-founders have distanced themselves from Ziegler.

**Surprising Fact**

Ziegler had reportedly been negotiating a possible severance deal with the Republican Party, according tomultiple reports. The proposal would have reportedly paid him up to $2 million to voluntarily step down, prompting outrage from some Florida Republicans, including state Rep. Spencer Roach, who told the he deserves nothing, he should get nothing, and he should not be able to profit one penny off of discrediting the party. Ziegler denied the buyout negotiations in a statement to the**Post.**

**Big Number**

$120,000. That was Ziegler s salary as chairman. He was elected to the position in January for a two-year term.

**What To Watch For**

The Florida GOP will hold a meeting January 8 to decide whether to permanently remove Ziegler and select a replacement if he does not step down before then, according to the

**Load-Date:** December 19, 2023

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