

# [***Blackstone s Stephen Schwarzman Reportedly Skeptical Of DeSantis Joining These Other Billionaire GOP Donors***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:686H-06S1-DXVP-54V5-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Length:** 583 words

**Byline:** Molly Bohannon, Forbes Staff

**Highlight:** Schwarzman, the 54th richest person in the world, was reportedly unimpressed after meeting DeSantis.

**Body**

**Topline**

Billionaire Stephen Schwarzman is holding off on backing Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis as a potential presidential candidate, BloombergreportedTuesday, making the Blackstone CEO the latest GOP donor who has expressed hesitation in supporting DeSantis and concern around who to back in next year s presidential race.

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The Blackstone Group Chairman & CEO Stephen A. Schwarzman is interviewed by Maria Bartiromo during her "Mornings with Maria Bartiromo" program, on the Fox Business Network, in New York Friday, April 27, 2018. (AP Photo/Richard Drew)

AP

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**Key Facts**

Schwarzman visited Florida recently to meet DeSantis, but decided after the meeting to withhold pledging his support for anyone to take on former President Donald Trump in the 2024 Republican primary, Bloomberg reported, citing unnamed sources.

The billionaire also backed away from Trump last year despite previously supporting him, tellingAxios: It is time for the Republican Party to turn to a new generation of leaders and I intend to support one of them in the presidential primaries.

Schwarzman is not the first billionaire GOP megadonor to be hesitant around where to put their money in 2024 Interactive Brokers founder Thomas Peterffy and Gristedes CEO John Catsimatidis havestatedtheywon tbe supporting DeSantis.

Billionaire Citadel CEO Ken Griffin, who praised DeSantis after he won his bid for reelection last year, has grown uncertain about endorsing him, the**New York Times**reportedin late April, citing people close to him.**Forbes**reached out to DeSantis and Blackstone for comment.

**Forbes Valuation**

We estimate Schwarzman is valued at $27 billion as of Tuesday, making him the 54th richest person in the world. Schwarzman co-founded private equity giant Blackstone in the 1980s.

**Key Background**

DeSantis hasn t announced a presidential bid, though he s expected to launch a campaign in early June and is widely regarded as the candidate most poised to take on Trump. But some megadonors have expressed concerns around his policies Peterffy questioned DeSantis stances on abortion and book bans, and Griffin reportedly dislikes DeSantis stance on Ukraine and donors like Catsimatidis have said they won t support him because of his poor relationship-building skills. In a late April poll, DeSantis was trailing Trump by a stunning 46pointsin a hypothetical 2024 GOP primary race.

**Contra**

Billionaire Peter Thiel who donated $35 million in last year s election cycle previouslytold business associateshe wouldn t support any candidate in the coming election, Reuters reported, but hechangedhis tune last week. On the podcast**Honestly with Bari Weiss**, Thiel said: I think DeSantis would make a terrific president if he s the Republican nominee. I will strongly support him in 2024. Thiel added that focusing on identity ***politics*** and the woke issue is a distraction from more important economic issues.

**Tangent**

Schwarzman has donated to countless Republican candidates over the years. In the 2018 midterms, he donated to notable Republicans including Sens. Mitch McConnell (Ky.), Mitt Romney (Utah) and Lindsey Graham (S.C.), along with Rep. Kevin McCarthy (Calif.), according toOpen Secrets. In 2017, he donated $5,400 to Trump.

**Further Reading**

Steve Schwarzman Holds Off Giving Money to DeSantis After Meeting Him(Bloomberg)

GOP Donor Peter Thiel Reportedly Sitting Out 2024 Race Despite Donating $35 Million Last Year(**Forbes**)

Trump Leads DeSantis By 46 Points In Widest Margin Yet(**Forbes**)

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