

# [***Trump Attacks DeSantis On Truth Social Playing Up Narrative That GOP Wants To Cut Social Security And Medicare***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67PW-12T1-JBCM-F4FV-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Highlight:** Trump, in a series of Truth Social posts on Monday, also went after Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg, who reportedly has convened a grand jury that is weighing charges against Trump over 2016 hush-money payments to Stormy Daniels.

**Body**

**Topline**

Former President Donald Trump attacked Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis (R) over his stance on Social Security and Medicare reforms on Monday building on a strategy of tying his GOP opponents to what s known as the third rail of ***politics***, as the former president ramps up his third campaign for the White House.

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Back in the saddle again: Former President Donald Trump speaks at the Conservative Political Action Conference (or CPAC) 2023, on Saturday, March 4, 2023.

Alex Brandon)/Associated Press

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**Key Facts**

Trump, using the nickname Ron DeSanctus, said DeSantis has voted THREE TIMES to cut and destroy Social Security, advocated for increasing the retirement age to at least 70 and voted to radically CUT MEDICARE, he wrote on Truth Social.

The post appears to refer to DeSantis three votes as a Congress member in favor of nonbinding resolutions that recommended reducing projected Medicare spending over the next ten years.

DeSantis also suggested during his 2012 campaign that he supports a partial privatization of of Medicare and in 2013 told CNN that we need to restructure Medicare, though he appeared to soften his stance on the issue earlier this month, telling Fox News that Republicans are not going to mess with Social Security.

Trump has sought to draw a contrast with other GOP members by playing up criticism of those who have expressed openness to entitlement reforms: In January he urged Republicans in a video posted to social media not to destroy federal retirement and healthcare programs as they negotiate with the White House to raise the debt ceiling.

During his speech on Saturday at the Conservative Political Action Conference in Washington, Trump took a veiled shot at DeSantis, without mentioning him by name, and said, We re not going back to people that want to destroy our great Social Security system, adding, I wonder who that might be.

Former Republican South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley also faced attacks from Trump on her Medicare and Social Security positions after announcing her presidential campaign on February 14, when he promptly sent an email to supporters that highlighted her support for a plan by former Republican House Speaker Paul Ryan that would have turned Medicare into a voucher program.

**Tangent**

In a separate post Monday on Truth Social, Trump targeted Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg, who landed a tax fraud conviction against the Trump Organization in December andreportedly has convened a grand juryto weigh charges against Trump in connection to hush-money payments made to Stormy Daniels during his 2016 campaign for president. Trump called Bragg a racist and said he is spending resources on harassing and tormenting my 75-year-old employee, while Manhattan is one of the worst murder & violent crime areas in the United States. The post referenced former Trump Organization chief financial officer Allen Weisselberg, who was sentenced to five months in prison in the tax fraud case. The GOP has seized on rising crime rates in major cities during the pandemic and voters safety concerns in attacking Democratic policies as soft on crime. The dynamic is widely believed to have led to the defeat of Chicago MayorLori Lightfootlast week in an election where pro-police candidate Paul Vallas won the largest share of votes among the nine Democratic candidates.

**Key Background**

The attacks come after DeSantis and Trump spoke at dueling Republican events over the weekend and as the two are ramping up their political activity ahead of next year s GOP primary. During Trump s CPAC speech, he attacked the Republican establishment, telling the crowd, We are never going back to the party of Paul Ryan, Karl Rove and Jeb Bush. He also backtracked on his previous claims of fraud in early and absentee voting and urged the party to embrace all forms of voting after Republicans suffered an unexpected number of midterm losses amid rampant distrust in the early voting process that was proliferated by Trump and his allies. DeSantis, meanwhile, spoke Thursday at a donor event hosted by the fiscally conservative Club for Growth, whose PAC is a top spender on GOP races. Trump was not invited to the event after a feud that began during last year s GOP primary races, when Trump and the club endorsed opposing candidates in key Senate contests. DeSantis also delivered remarks Sunday at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library in Simi Valley, California, in conjunction with a signing for his new book,**The Courage to Be Free: Florida s Blueprint for America s Survival.** The speeches leaned heavily on DeSantis pitch that Florida thrived during the Covid-19 pandemic due to its less-restrictive policies.

**Surprising Fact**

Trump s attack on the GOP s proposed cuts tied to Medicare and Social Security the aforementioned third rail of ***politics*** due to its broad unpopularity with voters is one more frequently used by the Democratic party against GOP candidates. The White House has leaned on the tactic in its negotiations with Republicans over raising the debt ceiling and has repeatedly claimed that Republicans want to slash Social Security and Medicare. The Biden Administration has homed in on a proposal by Sen. Rick Scott (R-Fla.) that would require a vote on all federal legislation every five years, including Social Security and Medicare. Amid the criticism which included opposition from Republican Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell Scott changed the proposal in February to omit the entitlement programs.

**Further Reading**

Here s Why Trump Was Snubbed By A Major Conservative Event Headlined By DeSantis(Forbes)

DeSantis Sets The Stage For 2024 Run: Hosts Trump Backers At Fundraiser And Launches A Cross-Country Book Tour (Forbes)

Biden Uses Decades-Old Strategy In Attacking GOP On Social Security, Medicare(Forbes)

**Load-Date:** March 7, 2023

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