

# [***Interview with Nikki Haley (R), Presidential Candidate***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BCY-SJP1-F072-X0KV-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

HARRIS FAULKNER, FOX NEWS ANCHOR: President Biden has let it fester for so long, the border crisis is out of control. And it now has migrated to every single state in the nation, including his precious Democrat-led states.

We showed you this first on "The Focus" yesterday, really angry Chicago residents at a city council meeting.

(BEGIN AUDIO CLIP)

JESSICA JACKSON, CHICAGO RESIDENT: All this asylum-seeking lie, all this about refugees, that no, no, no, what's happening is, they're emptying out the dregs of their jails into the United States, into our communities.

They're junking up our country. And, yes, we feel some kind of way about it because it's our country.

(END AUDIO CLIP)

FAULKNER: Well, you bet they feel some kind of way about it. And I'm going to be talking with a Chicago resident who definitely will express her feelings about it coming up later this hour.

Let's stay on the topic with my first guest, all eyes on South Carolina, that state's pivotal primary now just two days away. Nikki Haley says she's staying in the race and is looking at contests beyond her home state.

Recent polling shows former President Trump holding a commanding lead, one by more than 30 percentage points. When you look across the board, that's a lot. Here's the former president at a FOX town hall just this week.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

DONALD TRUMP, FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (R) AND CURRENT U.S. PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE: You're not supposed to lose your home state. It shouldn't happen anyway. And she's losing it bigly, big. I mean, really -- I said bigly. And bigly...

(CROSSTALK)

(LAUGHTER)

TRUMP: She's losing it bigly.

But we're going to -- we're going to really do a job. I think that, as you know, when we went to Iowa, we got the biggest margin in the history of the caucus.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

FAULKNER: Recent polling also suggests some challenges for Nikki Haley when it comes to minority voters. Black, Hispanic, and Asian voters make up just about 8 percent of the Republican electorate.

But a recent poll finds that, combined, they prefer the former president by 18 points. A New York Times analysis is also laying out another group of voters that may pose a challenge for Haley. Since she became the first U.N. ambassador in 2017, South Carolina has had a net gain of 372,000 new residents to register.

And they are old enough to vote, that particular number of them. And that means that nearly 10 percent of the current electorate did not experience Nikki Haley's South Carolina state leadership.

For now, South Carolina Congresswoman Nancy Mace on "The Focus" yesterday.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

REP. NANCY MACE (R-SC): And I told the president last week that the enthusiasm that I'm seeing on the ground here in South Carolina is greater than it's ever been. He's going to win, not only South Carolina, win huge, but he's going to win every single state in the primary.

Despite the media, despite what his opponent -- opponents say in this race so far, he's going to win it all.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

FAULKNER: "In Focus" now, the candidate herself, former South Carolina Governor and Ambassador Nikki Haley.

Welcome.

NIKKI HALEY (R), PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE: Good morning.

FAULKNER: I want to circle back, if we can, to ***politics***, because we have got to hit this border situation.

So the president now says -- and AOC is accusing him of basically mimicking Donald Trump, mimicking what others have done that has worked. What's your take on Biden suddenly saying, oh, yes, I can take executive action to fix the border?

HALEY: I mean, it's just amazing. What took him so long?

I mean, the only thing that's affecting him now are the poll numbers. And anybody that governs by poll numbers isn't really governing. But I think you have to look at what happened last week. I mean, we had a border bill in Congress, right?

The good part about the bill was that it strengthened asylum laws. We have to do that. There were three million illegal immigrants that came in the Trump administration because our asylum laws weren't strong enough. The weak part about the bill was, it didn't have remain-in-Mexico, which is hugely important, and it had a 5,000-person threshold.

We don't even want a one-person threshold.

FAULKNER: Yes.

HALEY: We have got to make sure we're vetting everybody.

The problem is, Congress should have gotten in a room and kept going until they could get a strong bill out. Instead, they went home on break for two weeks. And then President Trump goes and tells them, don't get anything done until after the general election.

We can't wait one more day to get a strong border bill out. We need Biden to do his part. We need Congress to do his part. And we need Trump to stay out of it, because America continues to act like it's September 10. And we better remember what September 12 felt like. It only takes one person to have a 9/11 moment. Congress needs to do their job.

FAULKNER: All right, I hear you on all that.

A couple of things. Congress already had a bill to go over together in a room. It was called H.R.2. And it's been sitting there for eight to nine months, because they put those -- Republicans put that House bill out. And why that didn't happen has to do with Democrat senators, particularly Chuck Schumer, in the Senate.

So that needed to happen then. And you're saying it needs to happen now. But then there's the other part of this. I mean, if we wait on Congress to do something, the big sticking point will be, this president won't follow that law any more than he's following the law of the U.S. Supreme Court not to pay off people who aren't paying off their school loans.

He's not interested in following that law. He's already proven it by doing what he did yesterday, reflexively paying off -- getting votes from people who need to pay off their school loans by people's money who didn't even go to college.

HALEY: It's exactly right. It is unthinkable. And it's the worst of socialism when you see that he is basically making people who didn't go to college pay for those who did go to college.

Michael and I spent years paying off our student loan debt. But if you want to talk about that, what we're really getting to is, we can't let Biden or Kamala Harris have another administration. And if you -- you showed a lot of polls in the front.

The one you should have showed was the Marquette poll that just came out that shows that Trump and Biden are margin of error. We're going to once again be biting our nails wondering if Trump can pull it off, and he can't. I defeat Joe Biden by 18 points in the Marquette poll.

The thing is, we have to make sure that we can win. We want to do all these changes in our country. None of those changes matter if we can't beat Biden.

FAULKNER: So...

HALEY: And we have got to get that done. And that's why these primaries matter, is, we can talk about who we like all day long, but, at the end of the day, if who you like can't win, then we're in a whole ball of mess.

FAULKNER: So, how do you get there?

HALEY: And we cannot take four more years of Joe Biden.

FAULKNER: How do you get there? This Saturday, the primary, how do you get there beyond this state, when you haven't won a state yet? How do you win your first state?

HALEY: I mean, it's amazing to say I haven't won a state yet. You have only had three states that have voted.

FAULKNER: Well, it's not amazing.

HALEY: We need to go out and let this state...

FAULKNER: South Carolina is winner-take-all.

HALEY: No, but we need to let this state...

FAULKNER: I mean, it's -- he's going to pick up more delegates.

HALEY: South Carolinians have not voted yet. South Carolinians have not voted yet.

FAULKNER: Fair.

HALEY: Look, if you and everybody else tells me to get out of this race...

FAULKNER: I'm not telling you anything.

HALEY: ... it would be the longest general election race in history.

Keep in mind, 70 percent of Americans have said they don't want Trump or Biden.

FAULKNER: True.

HALEY: They are the most disliked politicians in America; 60 percent of Americans have said Donald Trump's too old and Joe Biden's too old to run for president.

We have to win. And we need a new generational leader that can put in eight years of hard work day and night, making sure we get things done, no drama, no vendettas, just results for the American people. I'm determined to go to every single state and give people the right.

If 70 percent don't want Trump or Biden, let them have another option. Let's let them vote. Let's let this play out. Ten days after South Carolina, 20-plus states and territories will vote. Let's let that happen.

FAULKNER: Real quickly -- and I'm going to ask my team for grace on this - - Saturday, February 24, the same day as your primary, is two years exactly to the date that the war started, when Russia invaded Ukraine.

I'm wondering. With 48 percent of Americans in a recent poll saying that they thought we didn't need to spend more, that we have spent too much already, they want to know exactly where the dollars are going to Ukraine, with that kind of headwind, you have advocated for continued aid for Ukraine.

Can you make that case and can you convince people to see it your way?

HALEY: Well, first of all, I think we should never govern by the polls. I think we need to tell people the hard truth.

I blame Joe Biden, because he has never once told the American people why they should care about Ukraine. And I think we have to look at the fact that I don't think we should give cash to any country, friend or enemy, because you can't follow it and you can't hold it accountable.

But in this situation, the reason it matters so much, Harris, is because Putin has said, once he takes Ukraine, Poland and the Baltics are next. Those are NATO countries. That immediately puts America at war. This is about preventing war. We should give them the equipment and ammunition they need to win.

It is only 3.5 percent of our defense budget, and it saves us in the long run from having to send more resources or any of our men and women to do that. We don't want war. We have got to prevent it. And I will tell you, what was really dangerous is, you had Donald Trump go and say that he would side with Putin over those NATO countries that aren't pulling their weight.

And he even doubled down and said he would encourage Putin to invade those countries that aren't putting -- pulling their weight. We can't have that kind of language when he goes off-script from a teleprompter, because you have got to look at the fact that Trump just sided with a thug that kills his political opponents.

FAULKNER: Well...

HALEY: He just sided with a man who goes and arrests American journalists and holds them hostage. He sided with him over the allies who stood with us at 9/11.

Let's be...

(CROSSTALK)

FAULKNER: Ambassador, I understand that you take it that way and that that's what you heard. And we will have to see how all of this plays out.

This president didn't have an invasion by Putin on his watch, the only one in recent presidents. So there is that to be said about it.

I can't wait for you to debate him or somebody along the way to give Americans you say deserve that choice. And you're right about that. But we will see. You have got to win a state. And we will be watching on Saturday.

HALEY: Well, and he should debate. He should debate. He should answer these questions about Ukraine.

FAULKNER: All right.

HALEY: He should answer questions about Social Security and why he wants to cut benefits.

FAULKNER: OK.

HALEY: He should answer questions about raising taxes. Those matter.

FAULKNER: You and I always have a spirited talk. I'm so grateful for your time. Thank you very much. Good to see you.

HALEY: Thanks so much. Go to NikkiHaley.com.

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