

# [***Interview With State Rep. Paul Renner (R-FL); Interview With Fmr. Gov. Scott Walker (R-WI); Interview With Rep. Michael McCaul (R-TX); Republicans Target Alejandro Mayorkas; Interview With Rep. Michael Turner (R-OH); Three U.S. Service Members Killed in Jordan***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6B6W-GS81-JCS1-6000-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

LLOYD AUSTIN, U.S. SECRETARY OF DEFENSE: The president and I will not tolerate attack on U.S. forces, and we will take all necessary actions to defend the U.S. and our troops.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

NEIL CAVUTO, FOX NEWS ANCHOR: Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin's first day back at the Pentagon promising action in response to that drone strike that killed three Americans and injured dozens of others.

Intelligence officials are blaming the drone strike on Iran-backed rebels. Now, Iran says not so, but House Intelligence Committee Chair Mike Turner here to say, not so fast. And he's not the only one saying that Iran is at war with us, so we better wake up to the reality that, like it or not, we are at war with Iran.

First, FOX team coverage of Jennifer Griffin at the Pentagon, where a briefing just wrapped up, and Jacqui Heinrich at the White House, where that pressure is now, well, building up.

Welcome, everybody. I'm Neil Cavuto.

Let's go first to the Pentagon. That's where you will find our Jennifer Griffin with the very latest -- Jennifer.

JENNIFER GRIFFIN, FOX NEWS NATIONAL SECURITY CORRESPONDENT: Neil, we now know the identities of the three American Army Reserve soldiers killed in Jordan.

Specialist Kennedy Ladon Sanders of Waycross, Georgia, a soldier with the 718th Engineering Company, a U.S. Army Reserve unit based out of Fort Moore, Georgia, she was just 24 years old and was killed, along with sergeant William Jerome Rivers, 46 of Carrollton, Georgia, and Specialist Breonna Moffett, age 23, of Savannah, Georgia.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

SABRINA SINGH, PENTAGON DEPUTY PRESS SECRETARY: We don't want a war with Iran. Again, these are Iran proxy groups launching these attacks on our service members, but we certainly don't seek a wider conflict.

But we also own the clock here, and we will respond at a time and place of our choosing.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

GRIFFIN: A U.S. official tells FOX News a U.S. drone was returning to the Tower 22 logistics base at about the same time the Iranian proxy attack drone was incoming, which caused confusion, allowing the defensive forces at the base to fail.

The Iranian drone was flying low, which also allowed it to evade the defenses. A senior U.S. official tells me there was a combination of human error and technical failure that led to the tragedy, the number of wounded, 40, eight needing medical evacuation. Those numbers could rise, we're told.

The Iranian proxy drone was mistaken for the U.S. drone, which was expected to return to the base at the same time. Sunday's attack was the 165th attack by Iranian proxy forces targeting U.S. troops in Iraq, Syria, and now Jordan. Iran says it was not responsible.

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin briefed the president and his national security team in the Situation Room at the White House today. Austin returned to the Pentagon for the first time since undergoing prostate surgery on December 22 and spending two weeks at Walter Reed following complications. He met with NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg this morning.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

AUSTIN: Let me start with my outrage and sorrow for the deaths of three brave U.S. troops in Jordan and for the other troops who were wounded. The president and I will not tolerate attack on U.S. forces.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

GRIFFIN: There are fewer than 4,000 U.S. troops in Iraq and Syria and 350 American troops at Tower 22 on the Jordanian-Syrian border near Iraq.

The Iranian proxy drone hit U.S. troops while they were sleeping in their barracks. The U.S. Treasury Department announced today, Neil, it was sanctioning an Iraqi bank for laundering Iranian money for Iraqi proxy militias who keep attacking U.S. troops -- Neil.

CAVUTO: Jennifer Griffin at the Pentagon, thank you.

So now what the White House will do or what it's planning to do. They're not really saying much just now, but Jacqui Heinrich has more from the White House -- Jacqui.

JACQUI HEINRICH, FOX NEWS CORRESPONDENT: Well, Neil, officials here say the president does not need congressional approval to do whatever comes next, citing Article 2 of the Constitution, and the president has promised that the U.S. will respond.

Iran is saying that it is not responsible for this, and even though officials here today flatly rejected that idea, saying they do bear some responsibility, they have also indicated at the White House that they're not keen on this idea of striking targets inside Iran, as some congressional Republicans have called for, repeatedly saying in response to that question that the U.S. is not seeking a war with Iran and not looking to escalate.

Some of the president's critics say this apparent doctrine of appeasement makes President Biden responsible partly for the deaths of these three soldiers.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

REP. MICHAEL WALTZ (R-FL): When you're trying to play defense constantly, rather than punching back in a meaningful way, this blood is on this administration's hands, period, and they need to take responsibility for it.

Bigger picture, we're shooting down these $30,000, $40,000 drones with $2 million to $3 million missiles. This is -- it's not sustainable.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

HEINRICH: But officials here deny that President Biden has not responded strongly enough in the past.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

HEINRICH: It's clear, obviously, that don't -- didn't work. Does the president have any regret over not pushing, punching back harder in any of the prior responses that he's taken to these proxy attacks on U.S. forces?

JOHN KIRBY, NSC COORDINATOR FOR STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS: I would -- I think I would push back on the idea that we didn't push back harder, that we have taken significant action against Iran economically. We have certainly taken some additional and more aggressive steps to go after these groups.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

HEINRICH: Kirby went on to say that the president will choose for himself how he wants to respond to yesterday's attack.

He met this morning with his national security team in the Situation Room, including Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin back at work in person after treatment for prostate cancer. The White House is being pretty careful not to telegraph any punches that might be coming.

But we're also watching for any news that the president has called the families of these fallen soldiers or that he plans to attend the dignified transfer at Dover. The White House had nothing to read out on either of those questions when they were asked today, Neil.

CAVUTO: Jacqui Heinrich at the White House.

Thank you, Jacqui, for that very much.

And now to the House Intelligence Committee chairman, what he wants to see happen next, Congressman Mike Turner with us now.

Congressman, you have heard the administration is being coy, maybe rightly so. You don't want to tip your hand, but what do you think they should do?

REP. MICHAEL TURNER (R-OH): Well, Neil, first off, you have the secretary of defense saying that we will not tolerate attacks on U.S. troops, when, as you just saw in this report, over 150 attacks have occurred on U.S. troops in this very area, Iran through its proxies, Hamas attacking Israel, Houthis attacking Saudi Arabia, other attacks that have occurred in the area, their support for Hezbollah.

They are funding and training and equipping a wider conflict. The problem here is that this administration has not been responding. You cannot, as Congressman Waltz just said, continue to play defense. Eventually, those that you're shooting down their missiles will find ways around your systems and in the end it will result in what we have just seen, which is the saddened occurrence of the death of U.S. troops.

CAVUTO: We have always gone after Iranian proxies like the Houthi rebels by trying to take them out in positions in Yemen and elsewhere.

Do you think now is the time we go right to the source, Iran, in Iran?

TURNER: Well, the thing about Iran right now is that, in addition to what's happening with the Hamas, Hezbollah, the Houthis and the attacks that are occurring and the rebels, the attacks that occurred on our troops in Iraq, in Syria and now Jordan, and, of course, the attacks that occurred on Israel, you also have their weapons showing up in Ukraine with their alliance now with Russia.

Weapons in Ukraine that are Iranian are killing Ukrainian soldiers that are fighting to try to restore their country. This is a time I think where we actually look into, what do we need to do to have Iran pay a price, not just their proxies? This has been a fool's game of their proxies.

We need to go right to the source and Iran needs to feel the consequences.

CAVUTO: All right, right to the source is Iran, right?

TURNER: Absolutely.

CAVUTO: So when you say you go to the source, Iran, you mean even if that means going into Iran to do that?

TURNER: I think it should be -- certainly, we should look at what we would target inside Iran that would make an impact, certainly weapons systems, weapons productions. Certainly, we have to look at what we need to do ultimately with their nuclear weapons program, as that's continuing to progress.

But there are also weapons coming out of Iran have the support of Iran. Weapons systems, transportation systems, all of those are vulnerable and should be looked at also.

CAVUTO: We don't talk as much, I know you have, Chairman, about the role of the Chinese and the Russians in being sort of backdoor players not only with Iran, but other nefarious elements in the region. Those two countries will likely just get furious if we were to do some of the things that you have said we should do and many have said we should have been doing a long time ago.

What about that, the idea -- and this always comes up in this discussion when it is Iran -- that it turns into a world war?

TURNER: Well, I don't think that's the case.

I think what we're seeing here, though, certainly is a regional conflict. Iran is not going to stop. There are proxies, the attacks that there -- that are occurring, the attacks on our troops, there has to be some consequences to Iran itself. This does -- they're the ones that are being provocative. They're the ones that are expanding this. They're the ones that are attacking our allies in the areas and, of course, our own troops are, resulting in the death of U.S. troops.

CAVUTO: Chairman, I want to thank you. I know you have a crazy schedule. We appreciate it.

Mike Turner of Ohio, the Ohio Republican Congressman, the House Armed Services Committee, and, of course, the House Intelligence Committee chairman. A lot under his watch.

Meanwhile, under our watch today is another record for the Dow and another record for the S&P 500. So, even with all this upgraded conflagration in the Middle East, oil prices actually went down today. What's been amazing about these markets is how resilient they have been in the face of this. It's earnings that are doing it for them and a whole spate of them coming out this week from technology companies.

They're expected to be good. They're expected to show continued strength in the economy, and particularly for those who like to buy fancy tech gadgets and the like. That was enough to propel yet another record today after weekly run-up in all the other averages last week.

In the meantime, Chad Pergram on Capitol Hill on a move afoot to impeach someone, not the president of the United States, one of his Cabinet members -- Chad.

CHAD PERGRAM, FOX NEWS CONGRESSIONAL CORRESPONDENT: Neil, that's right.

Two articles of impeachment for the secretary of homeland security, Alejandro Mayorkas. More on that in a moment.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

CAVUTO: Well, it's an uphill battle to get rid of a Cabinet secretary, particularly if the president seems OK with him, and it's hard to actually remove him. It has been done once in American history, but that was a long time ago.

Chad Pergram on the battle to get rid of the homeland security secretary, Alejandro Mayorkas, and where that stands.

Hey, Chad.

PERGRAM: Neil, good afternoon.

Two articles of impeachment for Mayorkas. One accuses Mayorkas of not complying with and enforcing the law. The other accuses Mayorkas of lying. Republicans say Mayorkas keeps saying the border is secure.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

REP. PAT FALLON (R-TX): Alejandro Mayorkas has perjured himself. He's putting Americans in danger. I mean, opioid deaths have doubled under the Biden administration, and that's hundreds of thousands of American lives at stake here. So we -- I think we must go forward. It's our constitutional duty to do so.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

PERGRAM: The GOP promised consequences for Mayorkas about the border. We have had three impeachments of presidents in the past quarter-century. But 1876 was the last impeachment of a Cabinet secretary.

There's concern the effort fails to meet the elite bar of high crimes and misdemeanors for impeachment.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JONATHAN TURLEY, FOX NEWS CONTRIBUTOR: I don't think they have established any of those bases for impeachment. The fact is, impeachment is not for being a bad Cabinet member or even being a bad person. It is a very narrow standard.

What I don't agree is the means being used here.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

PERGRAM: Democrats accuse Republicans of using impeachment to boost former President Trump. Mr. Trump called the Senate bill -- quote -- "horrific." He added that no bill is needed. That's why conservatives are trying to kill the bill.

The bill still is not ready.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

SEN. JAMES LANKFORD (R-OK): This bill focuses on getting us to zero illegal crossings a day. It increases detention beds so we can quickly detain and then deport individuals. It ends catch-and-release. This is not about letting 5,000 people in a day. This is the most misunderstood section of this proposal.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

PERGRAM: It's unclear if a majority of Senate Republicans will support the deal. A framework has been done for weeks, but constant tweaks make it hard to settle on the final version -- Neil.

CAVUTO: Chad, thank you for that.

Well, I caught up with Democratic Congressman Henry Cuellar on all of this. He just doesn't think the odds of getting this guy out by impeaching him, he doesn't think it's going to work. Take a look.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

REP. HENRY CUELLAR (D-TX): It's not going to happen. It might pass here in the House, but it's not going to happen in the Senate.

Look, we have got to be focusing on what needs to be done. I find it interesting that my Republican colleagues, except for two that are still here in Congress, every single Republican voted no on the last two Homeland appropriation dollars that added 2.5, so they don't want to fund it. But now they want to impeach the secretary.

I think what we ought to focus on is on the Senate deal and see if we can support that or maybe even make it better.

CAVUTO: A lot of them are chafing, maybe under orders from Donald Trump, at this plan that has bipartisan support, but Oklahoma Senator Lankford has already said he's kind of losing faith that it can get done because of the overwhelming influence of Trump forces saying, nix it, don't even try it.

CUELLAR: Well, it's unfortunate that one person can dictate to the most important body in the world, that is the U.S. Congress, both in the House and the Senate. It's unfortunate.

I mean, even the speaker has said that we ought to wait for President Trump to get reelected. I mean, if there's an issue now, let's not make it a campaign ad, but let's go ahead and try to address this.

Lankford has really tried. I think he got censured. Or they're going to censure him, the Republican Party over there, for just trying to be -- trying to be helpful in his office.

CAVUTO: You're right. He was censured by the Oklahoma Republican Party.

I interrupted you, but continue that.

CUELLAR: Well, again, we got to fix this, and we got to work on this.

It's not only what we're doing here at the U.S. border, the one-yard line, but also keep in mind the numbers were so high in December, 302,000. I disagree with those. That's bad. We shouldn't have that.

CAVUTO: Yes.

CUELLAR: But now they have gone down. Why have they gone down? Because now we got Mexico doing its job, and we got to make sure that Mexico continues doing its job and then change some of the policy.

We need to not only invest money at the U.S. border, but we got to change the policy and make sure that we address this immigration flow that we're seeing right now that's out of control.

CAVUTO: Well, many point to this plan, sir, and say it doesn't solve the problem. It still allows -- even though the president would promise that, if it passed, he would shut down the border that very day, it doesn't shut down the border.

He still would allow up to 5,000 to get into this country each day. Now, they're quibbling over that number, but it's still a lot higher than the 1,000 a day that we're coming in that had the likes of Jeh Johnson, his predecessor, saying unsustainable.

CUELLAR: I support changes in policy. I certainly support putting some monies on border security.

But we got to make sure we do this in a -- and put the money in the right places. We got to have detentions, hold people. We got to make sure we deport people, because most of the people are not going to qualify; 87 to 90 percent of the people who are asking for asylum are going to be denied once they go in front of a judge.

So, let's look at what Jeh...

CAVUTO: And then what happens?

When that happens, Congressman -- I'm sorry to jump in you, sir -- and they're denied asylum, they get to stay here. Well -- right? I mean, so to deport them is a big leap. Now, I don't know if this measure they're working on will address that, but that's part of the problem right there, asylum and what are the cases that get adjudicated, right? A lot do not.

CUELLAR: You're right, yes.

And that's why I'm a big believer in making sure that we detain people at the border and give them the quick hearing, because most of them, 87, 90 percent, are going to be rejected, and then do everything at the border and deport people, like Secretary Jeh Johnson used to do.

CAVUTO: OK.

CUELLAR: We have got to make sure there's repercussions at the border.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

CAVUTO: Going to a quick break here, but want to alert you to a statement from the U.S. Central Command on the death of Sergeant William Rivers, age 46, also Kennedy Sanders, age 24, Breonna Moffett, age 23.

"We are deeply saddened by the loss of our three Army soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice while serving their country in Jordan. Our prayers are with these loyal and courageous soldiers' families, friends of the entire 718th Engineer Company. We honor their selfless service and dedication to duty."

We will be back.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

CAVUTO: If in doubt, bring the big dogs out.

The Biden campaign looking for what will be a Marvel cast of characters, including Bill Clinton and Barack Obama, to do the honors of supporting him, or could that be outshining him?

After this.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

CAVUTO: Well, it would be like a marvel cast of political characters, the last three big Democratic presidents, including the present occupant of the White House, all championing the cause to get Joe Biden reelected to the White House.

They will include Bill Clinton and Barack Obama in an event that could happen as soon as this spring. The details are sketchy, but the impact on that is lost on some who fear that Joe Biden, compared to those heavyweights might leave some folks wanting more.

Meridith McGraw, the Politico national political reporter, Jim Merrill, the former Marco Rubio for president senior adviser, former New Hampshire campaign manager for one Mitt Romney, much more.

Jim, end it with you, begin with you on what you make of this.

Get your superstars to support the present White House occupant, it could boomerang, couldn't it?

JIM MERRILL, FORMER RUBIO CAMPAIGN ADVISER: Sure.

I mean, we know what they're dealing with here, which is a serious enthusiasm gap, right? I mean, there's not a lot of enthusiasm for President Biden, Vice President Harris. There's deep concern about where their base is right now. They had to run a fairly extraordinary write-in campaign to prevent them from being embarrassed here in New Hampshire just a week ago.

And so this is a calculated risk, putting Joe Biden, who any time he's on stage, is a potential liability for his own reelection, against -- up with two of the most influential spokespeople of the Democratic Party over the last 25 years. So it certainly could blow up in their face.

CAVUTO: Is there any chance that some of their shine transfers over to Joe Biden, Meridith? How do you see it?

MERIDITH MCGRAW, SENIOR NATIONAL POLITICAL REPORTER, POLITICO: Well, the Democrats are obviously looking to give President Biden a boost here with having him fund-raise with former President Obama and Clinton, who still remain popular among Democrats.

They were both reelected as president and still have a lot of influence over the party, and, as Jim mentioned, at a moment where President Biden really is facing an enthusiasm gap. And so getting them out there for Democrats shows that they have a united front against trying to defeat the Republican nominee in 2024.

CAVUTO: Jim, is it your impression that if you were to switch horses now for Democrats anyway -- for example, Michelle Obama's name has come up as an alternative candidate. There's talk about just reaching out to Governor Newsom in California, that they're getting desperate, but time is running out. Realistically, how much of a shot do you give that?

MERRILL: I think time has run out.

I think the time to do that was a year or more ago. You have heard people talk about him trying to declare victory after 2022 and saying he wasn't going to run again. I think that train has left the station. You see a lot of positioning right now for 2028, but I think, in 2024, what's clear, we saw it here in New Hampshire and elsewhere around the country, is that Democrats have made their bed with Joe Biden.

He's a flawed candidate, to say the least. But, right now, that's the best they have got. And so they run the risk every day every time he goes out there and gives a speech, appears an event with President Obama or President Clinton that that shine doesn't come off on him. And that reminds people that he's in his 80s and he may not be up to the task here in November.

CAVUTO: I just don't know, Meridith, how much good endorsements period do. They really didn't help, if you think about it, Ron DeSantis in Iowa with the backing of the popular state governor, nor did it do much for Nikki Haley with the backing of that state's governor.

I could go on and mention other examples, where it doesn't translate. It might look good, might get some good press, but I don't know after that what happens.

MCGRAW: Well, I think endorsements do garner a lot of press, a lot of energy. We saw out on the campaign trail Governor Kim Reynolds appearing with DeSantis...

CAVUTO: Right.

MCGRAW: ... and for Nikki Haley going on the trail with Governor Sununu in New Hampshire. As, you have said, it didn't translate exactly.

But, for Donald Trump, I know they have really been trying to rack up endorsements as a show of force, as a show of dominance over the party, and ticking off a list of people who have endorsed Trump in the state of South Carolina, for example...

CAVUTO: Right.

MCGRAW: ... to use that as a signal to the state that he has a lot of support as we move towards these late February primaries there.

CAVUTO: Yes, he does, indeed.

Guys, I want to thank you both very much.

Well, one thing the Biden administration likes to point to is that the economy is getting better and the markets are reaching records almost every day. In fact, today the Dow and S&P continued their winning record streak.

But I had a chance to catch up to a fellow named Robert Prechter. He's a noted market historian and also good at these waves. He looks at markets in terms of decades, not just years or even months. And he says that it is one thing for presidents to grab on to a good market, but, in reality, it's a special part of the market that has to do well for the guy in the White House to stay where he is.

Take a look.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

ROBERT PRECHTER, ECONOMIST: We have this crazy dichotomy we have been talking about. We have got some new highs in the S&P and the Dow. But, meanwhile, the broad list is still down virtually 20 percent.

We track the presidential popularity, and the current president's popularity has been tracking the Russell 2000, not the Dow. So I think that is probably going to remain, particularly given the current environment and the background we have in the stock market.

CAVUTO: So if you look at general market averages, that would be good for Joe Biden. If you focus on the Russell, that would be bad for Joe Biden.

PRECHTER: All I can say is, his approval rating has been tracking the Russell very closely. I think that's likely to continue. So given my outlook for stocks, I doubt that he's going to increase in his level of popularity.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

KIRBY: We are not looking for a war with Iran. We do not seek another war. We do not seek to escalate, not a war with the Houthis. We're not going to be -- we're not looking for a war with Iran.

I'm not going to telegraph punches here. We are not looking for a war with Iran.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

CAVUTO: All right, I don't know how many times I heard various administration officials say something akin to that. We're not looking for a war with Iran. They extended it in Admiral Kirby's comments here by saying that applies to the Houthis as well.

Michael McCaul joins us right now. The Texas Republican is the Foreign Affairs Committee chairman in the House, House Homeland Security Committee as well.

It's pretty clear, Chairman, to me that Iran sees itself at war with us. I don't know how you define that, but constant financed attacks on us is maybe a starter, but what do you make of our approach not to claim war back?

REP. MICHAEL MCCAUL (R-TX): Well, we don't want war with Iran, but the way to stop that, Neil, is through deterrence. And you do that through exercising strength and not weakness in the region.

We have had over 165 attacks on U.S. forces, very little response to this. We have had the Houthi rebels basically shut down commerce in the Red Sea, increasing shipping costs by 450 percent, which will impact inflation and energy, with not a very good response to that as well.

I knew it was a matter of time before an American soldier would get killed. Now we have three and dozens who have been injured now, which is very sad. And I think this has been a creation of a very weak policy against Iran, starting with lifting the maximum pressure campaign, not enforcing the sanctions on their oil, by the way, Neil, which has empowered them with $80 billion in oil revenues to conduct this sort of attack.

CAVUTO: Right.

MCCAUL: And it's important for your viewers to know that this is all tied together, Hamas, Hezbollah, Iran-backed militias, and the Houthi rebels.

CAVUTO: Well, that's why I go back to the war comment, not to jump through semantics on this, sir, but Iran clearly does want a war with us. Iran clearly acts like a country that funds a war against us, directly or indirectly. And we let that go for fear that responding in kind would invite a greater conflagration, some say even a world war.

So we're very careful how we respond. And I would imagine we will be careful how we respond here. We don't want to overreact. So what would be your definition of overreacting? I have had guests talk to me, well, attacking sites in Iran would be an overreaction. What do you think?

MCCAUL: I don't think we should take any options off the table in terms of deterrence.

I think there are plenty of Iranian asset targets outside of Iran in Iraq and Syria and in Yemen, IRGC -- that's their military forces in those countries -- that we could easily attack tomorrow if the president had the will to do so. And it would have a very damaging impact on Iran and a major sense of deterrence.

I think the question is -- they don't question our military.

CAVUTO: Yes.

MCCAUL: They question our political will to deter their conduct. I think that's what's at question right now.

CAVUTO: There's separately, if I could switch gears, sir, a move afoot among some of your colleagues to impeach the homeland security secretary, Mayorkas.

It's an uphill battle. It might not even be clear to get through the Homeland Security House Committee, let alone the full House. But I would imagine it would be dead on arrival in the Senate anyway. The president seems to like the guy and wants him to say exactly where he is. So what is the point of this?

MCCAUL: I think the point is to send a message to the administration on behalf of the American people.

When I go home -- I just came back from my district in Texas -- they're tired of this -- the policies and, quite frankly, the dereliction of duty and breach of public trust on the part of this one man who is the architect, I would say, of all the destruction and chaos and crisis that we're seeing at the border, where you have had eight million encounters, 300 on the terror watch list, 200,000 Americans, most of them young people, dead now due to fentanyl.

And they're just tired with this abdication of federal responsibility.

CAVUTO: Let me ask you about how James Lankford, the Republican center from Oklahoma, who's tried to shepherd this bipartisan measure to find the middle ground on relief at the border and still provide Ukraine funding and the like, and his own party, his own Republican Party, has all but censured him, actually, in Oklahoma.

And that's for trying to find some common ground on an issue that's dividing both parties fairly severely. What do you think of that?

MCCAUL: Well, any time you touch border, immigration, I know that, as a former chairman of Homeland, it's very difficult.

Look, I applaud him for trying to get something done. That's what we're elected to do.

(CROSSTALK)

CAVUTO: But that's the thanks he gets, Congressman. I mean, he's been ostracized by many in your party aligned with Donald Trump...

MCCAUL: Yes.

CAVUTO: ... who has been -- made it known that he doesn't think it's a good idea for this to go forward and thinks it's a very good issue for Republicans to pound in the election. He said, blame me if that's the case.

But is that constructive?

MCCAUL: Well, I think if he can achieve significant policy changes, particularly to political asylum, that would be a great step forward.

I don't want to wait a year. I just came back from the border. It's bleeding down there. The detention spaces are overflowing. And we need to address this urgency now. Having said that, Neil, the president has plenty of executive authority to do what he did on day one that he rescinded from the previous administration's policies.

CAVUTO: Right.

MCCAUL: And I think he could change this tomorrow if he wanted to.

CAVUTO: Yes, all those executive orders, there were, what, better than 30 of them, he could just reverse them and undo them. About what I said in that one, cancel it. That one, cancel it. You're right.

We will see what happens.

Chairman, always good seeing you.

MCCAUL: Yes, thanks, Neil. Thanks for having me.

All right, in the meantime, Nikki Haley says she is not going anywhere.

The view from a candidate who has been there and done that, that, if she loses big in her home state, she might be going nowhere.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

CAVUTO: All right, Nikki Haley says she's not going anywhere, despite growing pressure from some within the party to just give it a rest, call it a today, recognize the fact that she's trailing by double digits in her home state of South Carolina, and, if she does poorly there, she should hang up her hat immediately.

Scott Walker is the former 2016 Republican presidential candidate, former Wisconsin governor, Young America's Foundation president. He knows how this works and what it's like out on the stump and delivering the goods. If you don't deliver the goods, you back out of the race.

Governor, it's always a pleasure having you.

There does seem to be undue pressure on her to quit. I don't see the urgency right now, but what about you?

FMR. GOV. SCOTT WALKER (R-WI): Well, I got out before I got a nickname. So maybe I was ahead of the curve on this.

But in the end, New Hampshire was the place where she had the biggest probability of winning because of undeclared voters.

CAVUTO: Right.

WALKER: Certainly, she could stay in through the primary in her home state, but if she doesn't win or at least come a close second there, I think that the national media narrative changes rapidly, and I would imagine, for a lot of the investors in that campaign, they start to wonder what exactly they're doing.

It's not an attack on her, as someone who's liked in South Carolina. She was a two-term governor.

CAVUTO: Right.

WALKER: She did a good job as ambassador. They just like Donald Trump.

CAVUTO: I remember hearing about you when you reassessed the race. You were an early rising star in the party. And you had a lot of gravitas and credentials going in.

But you had cited one thing about Donald Trump at the time that caught your attention and candidates should learn since, that focus on the issues that hit people's hearts. I don't want to misparaphrase what you said, sir, but that knowing the issues inside now and substantive policies all are great, but that's not what closes the deal.

Maybe you can elaborate on that.

WALKER: Yes.

I mean, in the end, there were things then, as there are now, that everyday people care about. I remember earlier this past year, when Joe Biden, I think it was in Europe, Pete Buttigieg was nowhere to be found, and Donald Trump showed up in East Palestine, Ohio, to tell people there they were not forgotten.

That's the kind of thing that Donald Trump does on the campaign trail, on the stump, and, in that case, very personally, that relate to everyday Americans who feel they have been forgotten. And that was just breaking through in a way I have never seen with any sort of candidate before. And certainly I think still today is, people say, oh, how can you put up with the tweets? How can you put up with some of the language?

I think, for a lot of us, particularly in the Midwest, we don't always agree with the way he talks or tweets, but there's a lot of folks, a lot of my neighbors and a lot of other people in swing states who like the fact that he's looking out for them, unlike many of the people who talk right in the campaign, but go to Washington and forget about them.

CAVUTO: All good points, Governor.

There are a lot of people, those money people that are still talking to Nikki Haley, you're our last best hope. They don't like Donald Trump for whatever reason, his personality, his tweets, you name it, but no way in heck they'd ever vote for him. So they look at Nikki Haley as being sort of a backstop in case he blows up, in case something evolves, as one of these cases, a conviction.

I don't even know then a conviction or convictions would change the equation, as much as 91 indictments so far have not, but what do you think of that?

WALKER: No, again, I think for most voters, they see through this. They see -- I have even heard it from supporters in the past of Ron DeSantis when he was still in. I actually heard on FOX about a week ago someone who was a Nikki Haley supporter on air saying they thought the legal stuff was ***politics***. They didn't buy into it. They didn't see it that way.

CAVUTO: Yes.

WALKER: They just liked Nikki Haley better than they liked the former president.

So I think for most Republican voters, I even think for most swing voters, they can see through the ***politics*** involved here, where you see a lot of these establishment donors you have talked about just look at the numbers and say, well, OK, Nikki Haley is in a much better position to win. The odds, if you're betting, are much higher because she gets a higher percentage of the vote.

But I think for any of the challengers -- DeSantis found this out. Nikki Haley and others did as well. The only way that really becomes a compelling case for the majority, for the plurality, at least in many of these primary and caucus states, is if he couldn't -- if Trump couldn't win.

And the head-to-head, at least in five of the six battleground states right now, he's ahead, even in Michigan, eight points the last ball we saw in The Detroit News, so that's pretty significant.

CAVUTO: Yes. And we should remember that whatever Nikki Haley might gain with independents and others not inclined to vote Republican, she could lose many of those die-hard Trump fans who might not like that choice themselves, so it could be a wash.

How do you think it all ends up?

WALKER: Well I think it's going to be incredibly tight in the general election.

I think Donald Trump, former President Trump, will win in North Carolina -- in South Carolina -- excuse me. I think, probably soon after that, Nikki Haley will make the decision to move on, having carried the banner that far.

But I hope at that point conservatives start to rally and focus on what the real debate's going to be, and that's the referendum on Joe Biden and on the economy.

CAVUTO: Right.

WALKER: Young America's Foundation, one of the polls we did before the first primary debate showed that the number one issue of college students, surprisingly, was not what most people think. It was the economy.

If young people think the economy is the number one issue, Joe Biden is in a whale of trouble. And I think that's the focus that I think most conservatives want to get to, a contrast between Joe Biden's failed America and where we were before Biden and arguably could be going forward with a better economy when he's out of office.

CAVUTO: We shall see, a long way ahead.

Scott Walker, very good seeing you again. Thank you very much.

All right, we have a lot more coming up, including the push now in Florida to make law and understanding that, if you're under 16, you shouldn't be on social media, period. The guy pushing it -- after this.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

GOV. RON DESANTIS (R-FL): I think social media has been a net negative for our youth. But I also understand that to just say that someone that's 15 just cannot have it no matter what, even if the parent consents, that may create some legal issues.

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CAVUTO: All right, Governor DeSantis speaking out on this move right now where they're trying and passing just now in the state House a bill that would ban kids under 16 from using social media.

As the governor pointed out, the devil's in the details, how it's enforced, should it be enforced, who'll do the enforcing.

With us now is Representative Paul Renner. He is the Florida House speaker.

Speaker, very good to have you.

What is your position this measure? The governor seemed to have some reservations.

STATE REP. PAUL RENNER (R-FL): Well, look, the governor and I have been in lockstep to protect children in these past sessions, and we will find a spot to land on this bill as well. But I don't see it as a parental rights issue. It's really a public safety issue.

If you look at the platforms that we're focusing on, it's not all the Internet. Most of the Internet is free for and safe for children to use potentially. But we're looking at technology that is addictive, not by accident, by design...

CAVUTO: Right.

RENNER: ... and that keeps kids on online many, many hours at a time and that we know harms their mental health.

CAVUTO: So that would include probably sites like TikTok or a bunch of social media sites. There are a host of others that aren't really social media, per se, Speaker. So how do you pick and choose?

RENNER: Well, we pick and choose, again, by our definitions of what constitutes a platform that falls under this bill, and it's got to have that addictive technology, the likes and hearts and notifications, that give kids and all of us, frankly, a little dopamine hit that gets you on the platform and keeps you on the platform.

CAVUTO: Yes.

RENNER: And if you don't meet that definition, you're not part of the bill. You're not subject to bill.

So the easy thing for the platforms to do is simply change their technology to be kid-friendly, but they won't do that because that keeps them online and the profits from that are pretty lucrative.

CAVUTO: Speaker, what if parents say, we will handle it, Speaker, we appreciate your good intentions, but we as parents will deal with that?

RENNER: Yes, what I would say is, look, we don't let kids smoke or drink or even get behind the wheel of a car.

And I think we would agree that there's probably some 14- and 15-year-olds that have better reflexes than some of us that are older in age, but their brain is not developed. And so we started at 16, rather than 18, because of that brain development. And those kids just aren't ready for what they're facing in these addictive platforms and the harm to their mental health.

We know the surgeon general has said, three hours of social media, you're twice as likely to suffer depression. And the CDC has said that teenage girls, high school girls, one in three, almost, have considered suicide in the last year. And you see a direct correlation globally between these social media platforms coming online and that mental health crisis that we're facing.

CAVUTO: But you represent a party of limited government, and you yourself have espoused that throughout your career. And I know, with the best of intentions here, you're trying to address a problem that is out of control with a lot of kids, but do you fear the solution will be even worse than the original problem, that the government will be empowered with all of these new sort of provisos to take against kids and by extension some of their parents who find it a bridge too far?

RENNER: Well, the government won't be involved. We allow commercial entities to age-verify in a way that's least restrictive and protects data piracy, so that...

CAVUTO: But what if a kid finds a way around that, Speaker, as most kids can and do?

RENNER: Well, you're right about that. There's nothing -- and that's why parental rights and this parental controls that a lot of the platforms offers not going to work, because any kid out there is going to outdo their parents when it comes to the technology. So we know that's the case.

And so I agree with you on that point.

CAVUTO: Real quickly on TikTok, its future is always mentioned back and forth, should it even be around, should it be banned, the China influence and all that. What do you think of that?

RENNER: Well, I would not target and this bill does not target any particular platform.

CAVUTO: OK.

RENNER: We target technology.

And that's why it's not covered by the First Amendment. Again, the easy thing for the companies to do is simply remove that technology so that they would not be subject to the bill. There's lots of applications online that kids would still be able to participate in. But it's the addictiveness of the technology and the harm that comes from that, that we believe is a public safety issue.

That's why our Florida Sheriff's Association, our Prosecutors Association have endorsed this bill.

CAVUTO: All right. No, no, I didn't mean to jump on you.

But thank you, Speaker. I look forward to seeing where this goes. It was very nice of you to come on and explain it. Your intentions are clearly good here.

In the meantime, passing along a statement we're getting now concerning these deaths.

Before Antony Blinken said the same thing, a senior administration official was telling, of the deaths of these three soldiers, to our Jacqui Heinrich that our response and the U.S. response will likely come in phases over time and not a one-off, indicating that they really want that message to get out there, that it won't be a one-and-done type of response, that it will be over time and in phases.

In memory of these who needlessly lost their lives.

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