

# [***Donald Trump Suffers Gaffe-Heavy Weekend***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6C16-8X41-DY68-10M0-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Length:** 440 words

**Byline:** Alia Shoaib

**Highlight:** From praising the fictional cannibal Hannibal Lecter to seemingly confusing Beijing with Taiwan, Donald Trump made several gaffes at a New Jersey rally.

**Body**

Former President [*Donald Trump*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/donald-trump?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) is known for his off-the-cuff rally speeches that grab headlines.

But his loose, improvisational style reached new levels on Saturday, as he made a series of bizarre comments and gaffes at a rally in Wildwood, New Jersey, in which he mixed up the names of several people and places, and riffed about how much he liked the fictional cannibal Hannibal Lecter.

"The late, great Hannibal Lecter. He's a wonderful man," Trump [*said*](https://twitter.com/VABVOX/status/1789442824993144834) about the serial killer protagonist from *The Silence of the Lambs*.

"Congratulations, the late, great Hannibal Lecter. We have people that are being released into our country that we don't want in our country," Trump said, randomly segueing into speaking about immigration.

At another point in the rally, Trump appeared to confuse Beijing with Taiwan, the self-governing island that China says it will eventually reunify with the mainland. Trump [*said*](https://twitter.com/RpsAgainstTrump/status/1789727874921980096): "If you take a look at President Xi of China, talking about Beijing—now they've got ships circling, they have planes—they're never doing anything."

He also accidentally [*called*](https://twitter.com/ArtCandee/status/1789643369813062137) former President [*Jimmy Carter*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/jimmy-carter?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) "Jimmy Connors."

And just minutes into the rally, Trump started talking about [*a "very good" hot dog*](https://twitter.com/meridithmcgraw/status/1789424313138815302)he had just eaten, before recounting conversations he'd had with famed singers Frank Sinatra and Luciano Pavarotti about food.

"Frank Sinatra told me a long time ago, 'never eat before you perform.' I said, 'I'm not performing, I'm a politician if you can believe it, I hate to be called a politician,'" Trump said.

Sinatra died in 1998, much before Trump entered ***politics***.

After going on a tangent about the upcoming election, Trump returned to the subject of Sinatra and hot dogs.

"But I just had the best hot dog, so I said, Frank 'I'm sorry'. Now, Pavoratti was a good friend, he didn't have that same, he ate all the time, he didn't care."

Trump made these comments in a wide-ranging rally speech to a crowd of around 80,000-100,000 people, according to an estimate from a local official in Wildwood.

Some social media users [*questioned the large estimates of crowd numbers*](https://www.newsweek.com/donald-trump-crowd-size-questions-1899634?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships), with one reporter sharing a video that appeared to show some attendees filing out of the venue before Trump finished his speech.

Trump's age and cognitive abilities have come into question after making several gaffes on the campaign trail, including [*mixing up world leaders*](https://www.newsweek.com/donald-trump-viktor-orban-leader-turkey-hungary-1837162?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) and confusing his one-time presidential nominee rival [*Nikki Haley with former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.*](https://www.newsweek.com/donald-trump-mocked-nikki-haley-gaffe-losing-his-mind-1862470?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships)

Trump, 77, and Biden, 81, are the oldest candidates to run for president, and both have come under scrutiny for appearing to misspeak and make errors on several occasions.

[*Link to Image*](https://d.newsweek.com/en/full/2391810/donald-trump.jpg)

**Graphic**

Donald Trump

Michael M. Santiago//Getty Images

GOP presidential candidate former President Donald Trump gave a gaffe-filled speech at a campaign rally on May 11, 2024 in Wildwood, New Jersey.

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