

# [***Mike Johnson's GOP Retreat Flops as Republicans Skip Event***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BJ6-CT01-JBR6-9083-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Byline:** Kate Plummer

**Highlight:** A number of Republicans have indicated they will not attend the annual retreat.

**Body**

Hampered by infighting and bogged down with funding negotiations, [*Mike Johnson*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/mike-johnson?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships), the speaker of the House of Representatives, has been dealt another blow as a number of his Republican colleagues indicated they won't attend a House GOP retreat.

The annual retreat, used to discuss policy and hold debates, is scheduled to take place at the Greenbrier Resort on Wednesday and Thursday in West Virginia and will be the first with Johnson at the helm. But there will be empty of seats at the resort, as a number of [*Republicans*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/republicans?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) have rejected their invitations, some publicly and some privately, according to reports.

CNN, which cited an unnamed source, reported that fewer than 100 Republicans have said they will be at the retreat, less than half the total of 219 Republican representatives in the House. It also reported that the event's key note speaker, [*Fox*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/fox?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) Business' [*Larry Kudlow*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/larry-kudlow?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships), dropped out at the last minute, further throwing the event into disarray.

*Newsweek* contacted representatives for Johnson by email to comment on this story.

Since being elected as speaker of the House in October 2023, Johnson has had to contend with a number of challenges including divisions over a series of funding bills that would send more aid to Ukraine and other countries. There has also been a [*series of resignations*](https://www.newsweek.com/ken-buck-teases-more-republican-resignations-coming-1878601?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) that shrunk the party's slim majority in the chamber, and [*public dissent*](https://www.newsweek.com/republicans-discharge-petition-mike-johnson-1874155?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) from some of his colleagues who said they are considering moving for a discharge petition against the Louisiana politician.

Colorado Republican Ken Buck, who on Tuesday announced [*he will resign*](https://www.newsweek.com/mike-johnson-blindsided-republican-ken-buck-resignation-1878516?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) from [*Congress*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/congress?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) next week, said that the chamber has "devolved into" somewhere where there is "bickering and nonsense" in an interview.

"It is the worst year of the nine years and three months that I've been in Congress and having talked to former members, it's the worst year in 40, 50 years to be in Congress," Buck told [*CNN*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/cnn?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships). "But I'm leaving because I think there's a job to do out there. This place has just devolved into this bickering and nonsense and not really doing the job for the American people."

Speaking to *Newsweek*, Todd Landman, professor of political science at the School of ***Politics*** and International Relations at the University of Nottingham, in the U.K., said lawmakers not attending the event would prove challenging for Johnson in regard to his need to build "consensus and unity" in the party.

"The retreat comes at a time when Trump has clinched the nomination and sealed his control of the RNC, which this week saw the purging of up to 60 staff who would have had a crucial role to play in garnering much needed grassroots votes in rural areas," he told *Newsweek.*

"It also comes at a time when GOP members are running their own races for office and some GOP members (e.g. Ken Buck from Colorado) are resigning their seats. It thus seems that there continue to be factions and divisions in the party at a time it needs to build consensus and unity.

"With just under a half of the House GOP Caucus planning on attending the retreat, Speaker Johnson will need to work hard to build that consensus."

Below, *Newsweek* has compiled a list of Republicans who have said publicly they will not be attending the event.

**Nancy Mace**

**Kelly Armstrong**

**Tim Burchett**

**Matt Gaetz**

**Mark Green**

**Dusty Johnson**

**Stephanie Bice**

**Dave Joyce**

**Marc Molinaro**

[*Link to Image*](https://d.newsweek.com/en/full/2361448/mike-johnson.jpg)

**Graphic**

Mike Johnson

Photo by Kent Nishimura/Getty Images

Mike Johnson (R-LA) gets setup for an interview with Fox News in National Statuary Hall at the U.S. Capitol March, 7 2024 in Washington, DC. A number of Republicans have indicated they will not attend the House GOP's annual retreat.

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