



*“I believe it is in the best interest of my party and the country for me to stand down and to focus solely on fulfilling my duties as President for the remainder of my term.”*

President Biden, in a letter announcing the end of his reelection campaign

# BIDEN EXITS RACE

Triumph, tragedy define 50-year political career

BY TOLUSE OLORUNNIPA

President Biden's momentous decision to drop out of the 2024 presidential race marks the sunset of a consequential career in public service that spanned more than 50 years, during which he traversed the thrills and troughs of American politics while also navigating personal tragedy.

Biden, whose quest for the presidency began three decades before he finally fulfilled it in 2021, becoming the oldest ever to hold the office, is bowing out of politics reluctantly and under pressure, at a moment he has called a critical “inflection point” for America.

The move caps a turbulent journey in Washington for a self-described “great respecter of fate” who tried to protect his legacy by bowing to the conclusion drawn by many Democratic leaders and allies that, at 81 and showing increasing signs of aging, he did not have a viable path to defeating Donald Trump.

“It has been the greatest honor of my life to serve as your President,” Biden wrote in a letter he posted to social media Sunday. “And while it has been my intention to seek reelection, I believe it is in the best interest of my party and the country for me to stand down and to focus solely on fulfilling my duties as President for the remainder of my term.”

In the end, the doubts that emerged from his halting and politically disastrous performance in the June 27 debate with Trump proved too great for Biden to overcome. Leaving the race just months before voters cast ballots, Biden becomes the first

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## PRESIDENT BACKS HARRIS AS NOMINEE

Some lawmakers call for open nomination process

BY TOLUSE OLORUNNIPA AND PATRICK SVITEK

REHOBOTH BEACH, DEL. — President Biden abruptly ended his reelection campaign Sunday, sending shock waves through the political world and plunging the Democratic Party into an unprecedented scramble to choose a new nominee to face former president Donald Trump.

“It has been the greatest honor of my life to serve as your President,” Biden, 81, wrote in a letter he posted to social media Sunday afternoon. “And while it has been my intention to seek reelection, I believe it is in the best interest of my party and the country for me to stand down and to focus solely on fulfilling my duties as President for the remainder of my term.”

In a separate social media post Sunday, Biden endorsed his vice president, Kamala D. Harris, to replace him as the Democratic Party's standard-bearer ahead of its national convention Aug. 19-22.

“Today I want to offer my full support and endorsement for Kamala to be the nominee of our party this year,” Biden said in a post shared on X. “Democrats — it's time to come together and beat Trump. Let's do this.”

Biden's exit leaves his party in an almost unprecedented position just months ahead of the Nov. 5 election. In a presidential race that has already been rocked by a felony conviction and an assassination attempt, the latest plot twist added to the sense of tumult that has gripped

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Trump slams Biden, prepares for new faceoff

BY HANNAH KNOWLES, JOSH DAWSEY, MARIANNE LEVINE AND ASHLEY PARKER

Donald Trump and his allies confronted a new electoral landscape on Sunday as President Biden ended his bid for reelection, a move that upended a period of steady political gains for the Republican nominee and forced his campaign to regroup with a new blueprint less than four months before the election.

Fresh off weeks of mounting confidence over Biden's stumbles and reams of polling showing the former president ahead in key swing states, Trump at one point appeared frustrated at Biden's exit, writing on social media that he was “forced to spend time and money” against Biden and now has to “start all over again.”

The Republican nominee and his advisers still sought to project confidence about the path forward and the prospect of taking on Vice President Harris, whom Biden endorsed as his successor. Trump said any new opponent

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After miscues and revivals, history opens a door

Harris's contention for the Democratic nod marks the biggest comeback in a career full of them

BY PETER JAMISON AND CLEVE R. WOOTSON JR.

Throughout her history-making and often rocky ascent to the summit of American public life, Kamala D. Harris has shown an uncanny ability to revive her political fortunes.

Now she is on the verge of a more momentous test: With just over 100 days before the presidential election, can she revive the fortunes of the Democratic Party?

If Democrats choose Harris to replace President Biden atop the ticket, as Biden asked them to do when he announced his withdrawal from the race on Sunday, she would become the first Black woman, and first person of South Asian descent, to be nominated for the presidency by a major party. It would represent a remarkable comeback for a politician who not long ago seemed destined to join the long list of promising state elected officials who flame out on the national stage.

Harris stands to become the

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DEMETRIUS FREEMAN/THE WASHINGTON POST

Vice President Harris said in a statement Sunday that she was “honored to have the President's endorsement” and that “my intention is to earn and win this nomination.”

Indelible moment sets Democrats on uncertain path

BY DAN BALZ

The words “unprecedented” and “historic” have been used so often to describe the state of American politics in recent years that they have become a devalued currency — until Sunday that is, when President Biden sent a lightning bolt through the country with his decision to stand down from the 2024 campaign.

This milestone will remain indelibly in the annals of politics, a sitting president pressured by fellow leaders of his party to give up his candidacy. The script for 2024 continues to be rewritten at warp speed, an election year of twists and turns that seem never ending. This has left the electorate fearful and reeling, from Donald Trump becoming the first former president convicted of a felony to the assassination attempt against him and now, just eight days later, the decision by Biden to withdraw. What next?

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**When J.D. Vance** burst onto the scene with his memoir in 2016, he was a different person. America was different, too. **C1**

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