

# Biden Drops Out, Endorses Harris

President ends campaign for second term amid concerns over his age, backs 59-year-old vice president for Democratic nomination



President Biden, shown above at the G-7 summit in Italy last month, said Sunday he was withdrawing from the 2024 race.

President Biden said Sunday he was ending his presidential run, after failing to quell a Democratic rebellion following a catastrophic June debate performance, capping a five-decade career and marking one of the most monumental political collapses in American history.

By Andrew Restuccia, Annie Linskey and Catherine Lucey

“It has been the greatest honor of my life to serve as your president,” Biden wrote in a one-page letter on social media. “And while it has been my intention to seek re-election, 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.”

Biden endorsed Vice President Kamala Harris to replace him at the top of the ticket, and several prominent Democrats backed her candidacy. The president said he would speak to the nation later this week in more detail about his decision.

Biden’s announcement came several days after Republicans formally nominated Donald Trump and after a cascade of Democrats both publicly and privately urged the president to withdraw.

Republicans emerged from their convention energized and unified behind Trump, who escaped an assassination attempt

last weekend, and national and battleground state polls had shown the former president building a lead over Biden.

The decision ended weeks of speculation about how Biden, 81 years old, might proceed, and it came following a solemn weekend at the president’s vacation home in Rehoboth Beach, Del., where he was isolating following his diagnosis with Covid-19.

The president made a final decision to withdraw Saturday evening, after consulting with the political advisers who have stood by his side for much of his storied career. The news was closely held among a small group of trusted aides to prevent leaks.

Early Saturday, Biden asked longtime aide Mike Donilon to join him in Rehoboth, according to people familiar with the discussions. Another trusted adviser, Steve Ricchetti, was already there.

The trio discussed the president’s prospects, including who was supporting him and the state of the race. Biden and his team had been adamant in public that the president had no plans to withdraw, but the wave of opposition had begun to make remaining in the race seem nearly impossible. Biden spoke to his family, Ricchetti and Donilon helped craft the statement, and they drew up a

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◆ Inside Trump’s hidden ground game..... A7

## A Half Century of Power in D.C. Ends

By Ken Thomas and Aaron Zitner

WASHINGTON—President Biden’s decision to abandon his re-election campaign brings a stunning end to one of the longest and most consequential careers in modern American politics, one that has given him a central role in the nation’s affairs for more than a half century.

Biden announced in a letter posted to social media that

while it had been his intention to seek a second term, “I believe it is in the best interest of my party and the country for me to stand down and focus solely on fulfilling my duties as President for the remainder of my term.” He said he would address the nation later in the week and backed Vice President Kamala Harris to take over at the top of the Democratic presidential ticket.

First elected to the Senate in 1972, at age 29, Biden, now

81, served as a lawmaker, vice president and president in an era that spanned Richard Nixon’s resignation to the election of Barack Obama as the nation’s first Black president and Biden’s own White House victory over Donald Trump; from the end of the Vietnam War and the collapse of the Soviet Union to the rise of international terrorism and wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

As a senator, he presided over multiple Supreme Court

confirmation hearings, including the contentious 1991 confirmation of Justice Clarence Thomas amid sexual harassment allegations, and as president named the first Black woman to the high court. In the White House, he guided the nation through the Covid-19 pandemic and ordered a precipitous withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan, ending America’s longest war.

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Joe Biden as chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee in 1995.

## As Harris Seeks Top Spot, She Faces Path With Little Precedent



Kamala Harris said she would ‘earn and win’ the nomination.

By Catherine Lucey and Tarini Parti

WASHINGTON—With President Biden’s exit from the race, Vice President Kamala Harris is now seen as the Democrats’ likely pick—and Biden’s choice—to take on Donald Trump, offering her a chance to make history as the first woman of color on the top of a major-party ticket.

The 59-year-old Harris has been thrust into a political maelstrom with little modern precedent. The last time a

president chose not to run for re-election was in 1968, when Lyndon B. Johnson opted out.

Harris has earned endorsements from Biden and other Democrats, including former President Bill Clinton and 2016 presidential nominee Hillary Clinton. As Harris continues to rally support from her party, she isn’t guaranteed the nomination and will have to earn the required delegates to take Biden’s place at the party’s convention in August.

But she has a leg up over any challengers who may jump

into the contest or be recruited by donors to compete.

Harris said Sunday that she would run. “I am honored to have the President’s endorsement and my intention is to earn and win this nomination,” she said in a statement.

Biden and Harris spoke multiple times ahead of the president’s announcement on Sunday, according to a person familiar with the discussions.

Several Democratic officials and groups coalesced around Harris, including some thought to be potential re-

placement nominees themselves, such as Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg and California Gov. Gavin Newsom. But some party leaders held off, including former Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D., Calif.), House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries (D., N.Y.), Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D., N.Y.) and former President Barack Obama.

“We will be navigating un-

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◆ Harris quickly wins support of big donors..... A6

### What’s News

#### Business & Finance

◆ **The stock market has** turned upside down, with the ‘Magnificent Seven’ tech companies stumbling and the Russell 2000 index of smaller stocks beating the S&P 500 by a historic margin. **A1**

◆ **The buggy CrowdStrike** update that struck more than eight million Windows computers highlights both Microsoft’s ubiquity in workplaces and decades-old design choices that allowed the widespread outages. **B1**

◆ **Travelers confronted** a third day of flight snarls and long waits at U.S. airports, as many computer monitors still displayed the telltale blue screens of the technology meltdown. **B3**

◆ **While the U.S. economy** has held up well against higher inflation and interest rates, many individual Americans who need to borrow for a car or a house stand on shakier ground. **A2**

◆ **Boeing has a parking** problem: About 200 fully or mostly finished but undelivered airplanes are sitting around, failing to deliver much-needed cash and presenting logistical challenges. **B1**

◆ **Luxury brands including** Burberry and Yves Saint Laurent are taking a once-taboo step and cutting prices to win back important middle-class customers who had recently been neglected. **B1**

◆ **Videogame maker** Electronic Arts relied on artificial intelligence to create images of many of the 11,000 players seen in its newest Madden college-football game. **B1**

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#### World-Wide

◆ **Biden dropped out** of the race for re-election under pressure from fellow Democrats following his poor debate performance. He endorsed Vice President Harris as his successor. **A1**

◆ **The announcement** brings a stunning close to Biden’s 52-year career in national politics, from Senate to vice presidency to the White House. **A1**

◆ **Harris emerges** as the likely Democratic pick for president, in what would be the first nomination for a Black woman. **A1**

◆ **Israel for the first time** staged a direct airstrike against Houthi rebels in Yemen, a day after the Iran-

backed militants hit Tel Aviv with a drone attack. **A9**

◆ **Americans aren’t just** having fewer children—they’re likelier to have none at all. The shift means childlessness may be emerging as the main driver of the country’s record-low birthrate. **A8**

◆ **The motive of the** shooter at the Pennsylvania Trump rally is a mystery to his friends, as investigators are focusing more on the act itself than the target. **A7**

◆ **At least 20 U.S. citizens** are in Russian jails, six of them since Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich was arrested in March 2023, in an apparent strategy to put leverage on the U.S. **A18**

◆ **China and the Philippines** reached a deal over the fiercely disputed Second Thomas Shoal in the South China Sea, Manila said. **A18**

◆ **Died: Sheila Jackson Lee**, 74, House member from Texas. **A3**

## Stock Shift Catches Investors by Surprise

By Karen Langley

The stock market has suddenly turned upside down.

The market’s laggards have sprung to life in recent days, while the seemingly impervious “Magnificent Seven” group of technology stocks has stumbled.

Investors are even more focused than usual on corporate earnings as they try to anticipate what comes next.

The Russell 2000 index of smaller stocks beat the S&P 500 over the seven days through last Wednesday by the largest margin during a period of that length in data going back to 1986, according to Dow Jones Market Data. The Russell 1000 Value index, meanwhile, notched its biggest lead over its growth-stock counterpart since April 2001, after the dot-com bubble burst.

Few investors saw the shift coming, and many are puzzled

by what is behind it: Changing forecasts for Federal Reserve interest-rate cuts? Expectations that Donald Trump will return to the White House? A technology trade that grew precariously crowded?

President Biden’s announcement Sunday that he wouldn’t seek re-election augmented the uncertainty and promised to refocus market attention on the presidential campaign.

Now, investors are scrambling to determine whether the reordering of winners and losers is a mere blip in an era of tech ascendancy—or if a sustainable shift is in fact under way. “That’s what everybody is trying to answer,” said Raheel Siddiqui, senior investment strategist at Neuberger Berman.

The small-cap index rose 1.7% this past week, extending

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◆ **Heard on the Street: Did the Trump trade work?**..... B10