

# Harris faces comparisons to Biden

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WASHINGTON — With less than four weeks until Election Day, Vice President Kamala Harris faces new urgency to define how her potential presidency would be different from that of President Joe Biden.

Her struggle to present herself both as a candidate of change while demonstrating a loyalty to the politician she serves under was made clear Tuesday when she was asked on ABC's "The View" how she would lead differently than Biden.

Harris said, "We're obviously two different people" and "I will bring those sensibilities to how I lead." But when pressed to identify a decision made by Biden that she would have taken another way, she demurred. "There is not a thing that comes to mind," she said.

She followed up later in the show by saying she would put a Republican in her Cabinet.

Two and a half months into her unexpected candidacy, Harris has so far largely relied on her age and biography to signal a break from the 82-year-old Biden and her 78-year-old Republican opponent, former President Donald Trump.

Now, in a tight race against Trump, she is being forced to reassess how she talks about her boss and how she might strike out on her own should she win the White House.

The first Black and South Asian woman to be a major party presidential nominee, Harris was 9 years old when Biden was elected to the Senate and was in law school when Trump, then a real estate heir and socialite, published "The Art of the Deal." Harris, her campaign believes, embodies change. Yet, she still may need to find a better way to talk about it.

According to aides, Harris is deeply loyal to Biden and resistant to publicly doing anything that could be construed as criticizing his presidency, though his favorability ratings remain underwater.

In private, some question what she should break with Biden on — noting the popularity of some of the biggest pieces of his legislative agenda, from infrastructure to lowering the costs of some prescription drugs, and the recklessness of signaling any daylight with the president on foreign policy at a time of global crises.

Harris was a central partner to Biden throughout, and they worry a break now could be viewed as election opportunism.

Views of Biden are still more negative than positive, even after he withdrew as the Democratic nominee in July.

About 4 in 10 Americans had a somewhat or very fa-



BEN CURTIS, ASSOCIATED PRESS

Democratic presidential nominee Kamala Harris speaks Monday before planting a memorial tree on the grounds of the Vice President's residence in Washington to honor the victims and mark one year since the Oct. 7, 2023, Hamas attack on Israel.

avorable view of Biden in an AP-NORC poll conducted in September, and 55% had an unfavorable view, which is consistent with where his favorability ratings have stood for the past two years. Feelings toward Harris, meanwhile, were warmer — half of Americans had a favorable opinion of her, while 44% had an unfavorable opinion.

In addition to her pledge to put a Republican in her Cabinet, Harris introduced some policies distinct from Biden — including calling for a smaller hike to the capital gains tax than advocated for by the president. But they have been modest, and Biden's White House, in turn, has quickly signed on to her positions.

Trump seized on her comments that she couldn't think of any decision by Biden that she would change, playing a clip of "The View" appearance at a campaign rally in Pennsylvania on Wednesday to roars from the crowd.

"Her answer that she would do nothing different is disqualifying," he said in Reading.

Some Harris allies have pressed her to more forcefully signal a break from Biden.

"She should do what's best," former Harris communications director Jamal Simmons said. "Winning will make Joe Biden feel a lot better than anything else."

Biden is "an unpopular president in a global anti-incumbent mood," added Democratic strategist Alyssa Cass, adding that the small universe of undecided voters is particularly not enthralled by Biden.

Harris, she said, needs to "communicate clearly to voters something she would have done differently that is acknowledging some of the dissatisfaction that they have — rightly or wrongly — as a way to move them to be fully comfortable with her."

The first vice president to mount a bid to replace a leader of their party in almost a quarter century, Harris is trying to strike a delicate balance. Harris' team has tried to keep Biden at a distance on the campaign trail — the pair have held only a single campaign event together — yet she has been pulled into appearing by his side to monitor hurricanes and address emergencies in the Middle East.

Harris' challenge is not unique, though the compressed nature of her campaign after Biden's exit is undoubtedly a complicating factor not faced in the modern era.

In 2000, the then-Democratic nominee, Vice President Al Gore, maintained an arms' length relationship with a scandal-tarred President Bill Clinton after he faced a high-profile impeachment inquiry over his affair with a White House intern and attempts to cover it up.

In 1988, President Ronald Reagan, then 78, did not campaign aggressively for his vice president and eventual successor, George H.W. Bush.

"Vice presidents have always struggled with how to separate themselves from incumbent presidents," said Republican strategist Alex Conant. "It's why so few of them win."

# Alston: Affordable housing needs to be main priority

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Staff Reporter

GREENSBORO — Guilford County Commissioner Melvin "Skip" Alston identified the need for affordable housing as one of the county's key challenges during his State of the County address Wednesday.

Alston, who chairs the county board, delivered the address at the Union Square Campus to an audience that included county staff and other county and municipal elected officials.

His remarks were punctuated with video clips featuring his fellow commissioners discussing recent successes in the county.

These included the recent opening of the new Claxton Elementary, the first school funded with the city's recent bond proceeds, the addition of



Alston

new health care staff to accommodate Medicaid expansion and the county's work to ward building a residential treatment center for women with young children in High Point.

As the county's leaders pointed to their successes, Alston also encouraged the leaders in the room to address the challenges the county faces. He listed affordable housing as among the county's major needs.

"As a community, we must continue to advocate for policies that promote affordable housing development, reduce barriers to home ownership and support innovative housing

solutions while maintaining sustainable growth," Alston said. "Together, we can ensure that every resident of Guilford County has access to safe, affordable and quality housing."

Speaking after the event, Alston said the county is facing housing pressures because of population growth.

In the next year, Alston said he wants to sit down with leaders in the construction industry to discuss how best to tackle the problem.

"I want to meet with all of the general contractors and the builders to see, what would it take for them to invest into affordable housing so that we might need to help them as a county absorb some of that cost," he said.

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# Swift donates \$5M to storm relief

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Taylor Swift donated \$5 million to Feeding America to support relief efforts in the aftermath of Hurricanes Helene and Milton.

The nonprofit announced the pop star's donation Wednesday with a "Thank You" graphic resembling a friendship bracelet, a favorite accessory Swift's fans trade at her concerts.

Feeding America is "incredibly grateful" for the donation, CEO Claire Babineaux-Fontenot said in a statement.

"This contribution will help communities rebuild and recover, providing essential food, clean water,

and supplies to people affected by these devastating storms," the statement continued. "Together, we can make a real impact in supporting families as they navigate the challenges ahead."

The organization also encouraged fans and supporters to "join Taylor" in contributing to relief efforts.

Swift's longtime friends, actors Blake Lively and Ryan Reynolds, also donated \$1 million to Feeding America to support the hurricane relief efforts. Babineaux-Fontenot said the couple's "longtime support of Feeding America in times of crisis" helped provide basic needs for several past natural disasters.

Swift has a long history of donating to nonprofits in the wake of natural disasters or tragic events, including a tornado that hit Tennessee in 2020 and a shooting in February 2024 at the Kansas City Chiefs' Super Bowl victory parade.

Her philanthropic relationship with food banks became a quiet hallmark of her record-breaking Eras Tour, with the singer donating the equivalent of hundreds of thousands of meals to different food banks across cities she played in.

Milton made landfall in Florida as a Category 3 storm Wednesday, bringing misery to a coast still ravaged by Helene.

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