

Republicans oust Liz Cheney from House leadership

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On Wednesday morning, Republicans in the House of Representatives ousted Congresswoman Liz Cheney of Wyoming from party leadership because she continues to oppose the false claim that the Democrats stole the 2020 election from incumbent candidate Donald Trump.

In a voice vote during a 20-minute closed-door meeting of the Republican caucus, a majority of the GOP representatives stripped Cheney of her role as conference chair, the number-three party position in the House.

An extreme right-wing political figure throughout her career, Cheney's removal is a demonstration of the increasingly fascistic evolution of the Republican Party. Cheney was one of just 10 of 221 Republicans in the House who voted for the impeachment of then-President Trump on January 13, just one week after the fascist assault on the US Capitol in an attempt to stop congressional certification of the election results.

On Tuesday evening, Cheney spoke from the floor of Congress and condemned those in the Republican Party who refuse to oppose the efforts of Trump to discredit the 2020 election results. She said, "Today we face a threat America has never seen before: a former president, who provoked a violent attack on this Capitol, in an effort to steal the election, has resumed his aggressive effort to convince Americans that the election was stolen from him. He risks inciting further violence."

Continuing to speak after all but one Republican had walked out of the chamber, Cheney said that those who refuse to accept that the election is over and refuse to state that President Joe Biden's victory was legitimate "are at war with the Constitution."

"Remaining silent, and ignoring the lie, emboldens the liar," she said. "I will not participate in that. I will

not sit back and watch in silence while others lead our party down a path that abandons the rule of law and joins the former president's crusade to undermine our democracy."

After the vote on Wednesday morning, Cheney warned that Trump's lies that Joe Biden stole the presidency through widespread election fraud was provoking violence and destabilizing American democracy. She said, "I will do everything I can to ensure that the former president never again gets anywhere near the Oval Office."

Although House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy said on Wednesday that the removal of Cheney was about "simply who's best at delivering the message, that's all," the plan to remove her as an obstacle to the consolidation of the Republican Party around Donald Trump had been known for weeks.

A leading candidate to replace Cheney as conference chair, Congresswoman Elise Stefanik of New York, has been auditioning for the position with non-stop statements of loyalty to Trump and charges of election fraud such as "in many cases, there was no signature verification process," for more than a week. On Wednesday, Stefanik posted a letter on Twitter appealing to GOP lawmakers to support her, "Today I humbly ask to earn your vote for House Republican Conference Chair to unify our message as a team and win the majority in 2022."

However, Stefanik faces opposition due to the fact that her policy history has not been right wing enough. On Tuesday, Representative Chip Roy of Texas sent a memo to members of the House Freedom Caucus stating that the Republican leadership should not rush to replace Cheney with Stefanik because her "voting record embodies much of what led to the 2018 ass-kicking we received by Democrats."

The House Freedom Caucus is made up of the most rabid right-wing supporters of Donald Trump in the House such as Mo Brooks (Alabama), Matt Gaetz (Florida), Jim Jordan (Ohio) and Marjorie Taylor Greene (Georgia). CBS News reported on Wednesday that the far-right QAnon supporter Greene said she asked Minority Leader McCarthy to delay the vote to replace Cheney, which is set to take place on Friday. “We really haven’t had much time,” Greene said.

For his part, McCarthy left the meeting that removed Cheney—which effectively endorsed Trump’s claim that the Democrats did not win the election—to attend a meeting in the White House with President Biden, Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, Senate Majority Leader Charles Schumer, and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

When he emerged from the White House, McCarthy claimed no one is questioning Biden’s legitimacy. “I think that is all over with,” McCarthy said. “We’re sitting here with the president today.” However, McCarthy voted against the certification of Biden’s victory and supported a Texas lawsuit seeking to throw out millions of votes in the states of Georgia, Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin that voted for Biden.

It is significant that the statements of Liz Cheney denouncing Donald Trump and the threat to democracy represented by his supporters are both more energetic and more accurate than anything coming from the Democratic Party. While the Republicans embrace the politics of Trump, according to which Biden’s presidency is illegitimate, Biden insists that the Republican Party is not only legitimate but must be preserved as a “strong” opposition party.



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