

Trump-backed Republicans win Illinois primaries, Democratic establishment prevails in New York

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Democratic and Republican primary elections were held in seven states Tuesday, with the outcome confirming the two main trends of the 2022 election campaign so far: the dominant role of pro-Trump fascists in the Republican Party and the primacy of the Democratic Party establishment over challenges from “left” candidates backed by Bernie Sanders or Alexandra Ocasio-Cortez.

The main contests Tuesday were in Illinois, Colorado and New York, with primaries of lesser significance or runoffs affecting only a few nominations in Nebraska, Mississippi, Oklahoma and Utah.

In the Illinois primary, the evolution of the Republicans into an ever more openly fascist party was bolstered in the most important contest by the support the ultra-right candidate for governor received from the Democrats, based on the narrowest electoral calculations. Another significant factor was the obscene amount of money involved. The intervention of three billionaires, one Democratic and two Republican, made it one of the most expensive primary elections on record.

State Senator Darren Bailey, who embraces Trump’s “stolen election” lies and opposes mask wearing and abortion rights, took about 57 percent of the Republican vote and will face sitting governor J.B. Pritzker, a Democrat, in the general election in November. Bailey is an open racist and semi-fascist, having referred to Chicago as a “hellhole,” and has advocated partition of the state to exclude its largest city. Naturally, he had Trump’s endorsement.

Richard Irvin, former mayor of Aurora and criminal defense attorney, who was supported with \$50 million in campaign contributions, took 15 percent of the vote, trailing a lesser known candidate, venture capitalist Jesse Sullivan, by a margin of 0.7 percentage points.

Last Saturday, Trump appeared in Quincy, Illinois to support Bailey’s campaign and that of the extreme right-winger and open admirer of Adolf Hitler, US Representative Mary Miller. At that event, Miller referred to the US Supreme Court’s overturn of *Roe v. Wade* last Friday as “a victory for white life.”

Miller, who took 57 percent of the vote, defeated the more

moderate Republican Rodney Davis, who took 43 percent of the vote, in the recently redrawn 15th district that created a contest between two Republican members of Congress. Davis had voted to certify the 2020 election results and supported the formation of an independent bipartisan commission to investigate the January 6 attack on the Capitol, which was blocked by a filibuster in the Senate.

Battle of the billionaires

Citadel hedge fund founder and billionaire Ken Griffin backed Irvin in the Republican gubernatorial primary with \$50 million, accounting for a reported 90 percent of his total campaign cash. Irvin then passed funds on to other Republicans. Griffin, the richest man in Illinois, has reportedly become the largest single Republican mega-donor in the US.

Dick Uihlein, the billionaire head of ULINE shipping and office supplies, backed Bailey with about \$9 million directly and \$8 million to a political action committee, and also gave \$3 million to Mary Miller’s campaign.

Pritzker himself is a billionaire, part of the family which inherited the Hyatt Hotel fortune. He spent \$175 million on his first election in 2018, and is expected to spend even more this year.

In a cynical and reckless move, Pritzker directed \$37 million, via the Democratic Governors’ Association, towards the nomination of Bailey against Irvin, on the presumption Bailey will be easier for him to beat in the general election in November. Thus the Democrats are actively assisting in the consolidation of the Republican Party into a more openly fascist organization.

Pritzker and the Democrats funded ads that portrayed Irvin, who is African American, as too moderate for the Republican Party nomination, and, along similar lines, funded ads underscoring Bailey’s right-wing extremist politics, both aimed at ginning up Republican votes for this fascist. The DGA also

ran ads attacking Irvin from the right, portraying the former criminal defense attorney as “soft” on crime, ads which Pritzker defended in media interviews in April.

Irvin’s campaign told the press the DGA spent \$26.8 million in advertising to support Bailey and defeat Irvin, with Pritzker himself contributing more than \$6 million.

In his concession remarks, Irvin referred to the Democrats’ intervention in the Republican primary and seemed to throw his support behind the extremist wing of the party: “Listen, I hope this governor is wrong in his assessment that he can easily defeat the opponent he paid tens of millions of dollars to face. But if this governor is correct and if he does easily prevail, we as citizens must rise up.”

Republicans nominated the Uihlein-backed candidate for Illinois attorney general, Thomas DeVore, over the candidate Griffin supported, Steve Kim. DeVore, who campaigned on his support for guns, came to prominence for opposing COVID-19 mitigations and vaccines, having filed lawsuits against Governor Pritzker over the statewide masking policies, and against Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot and other school district leaders for encouraging teachers to get COVID-19 vaccines.

The vaccine policy is often referred to as a “mandate” in the press, but as the WSWWS reported, it was not a mandate. Employees could opt out, and instead submit to weekly testing, while continuing to work as before.

Voter turnout was extremely low, indicating widespread alienation from the billionaire vs. billionaire contests. Turnout in the state’s largest city, Chicago, was reported as 20 percent, or about 300,000.

In Democratic contests for congressional seats, Representative Sean Casten, a former Republican and “green” capitalist, defeated Representative Marie Newman, whose campaign was torpedoed by ethics charges related to her having hired a would-be primary opponent to forestall a challenge. The two representatives were thrown into the contest against each other by redistricting.

In the first congressional district in south side Chicago, where incumbent Democrat Bobby Rush is retiring, Jonathan Jackson, a son of the Reverend Jesse Jackson Jr., won a contest among more than a dozen candidates. In the newly created third district, embracing part of Chicago’s west side, Delia Ramirez won the Democratic nomination. In the seventh district, also on the south side, Rep. Danny Davis barely retained his seat against a “progressive” challenger, Kina Collins. Democratic Socialists of America member Anthony Joel Quezada won a seat on the Cook County Commission.

Results in Colorado and New York

In Colorado, a Democratic Party effort to boost more right-wing candidates in the Republican primaries for US Senate, governor and the newly created Eighth Congressional District all failed.

Ron Hanks, a state legislator who marched on January 6, 2021 to the US Capitol, lost his bid for the US Senate nomination to businessman Joel O’Dea, who will face incumbent Democrat Michael Bennet in November. Greg Sanchez, a former mayor of Parker, Colorado, lost the gubernatorial nomination to Heidi Ganahl, a regent of the University of Colorado, who will face incumbent Governor Jared Polis in November.

Another fascist Republican failed to win nomination for secretary of state, the top statewide election official. Tina Peters, the former clerk of Mesa County, is an advocate of Trump’s “stolen election” lies who faces seven felony counts for breaking into voting machines seeking “evidence” of election fraud. She finished a poor third.

The fascist representative Lauren Boebert easily won renomination in her Third Congressional District, which covers the largely rural western and southern parts of the state. Just before the vote, Boebert remarked that she was “tired of this separation of church and state junk.” According to the Founding Fathers, she said, “the church is supposed to direct the government.”

In New York state, sitting Governor Kathy Hochul easily won the Democratic Party nomination over two opponents, including one, New York City public advocate Jumaane Williams, who had the support of the pseudo-left. Hochul’s chosen running-mate for lieutenant governor, two-term representative Antonio Delgado, won the nomination over Ana Maria Archila, a candidate backed by Alexandra Ocasio-Cortez.

Primary contests for congressional seats in New York have been pushed back to August 23 because of late court-ordered changes in the boundaries of congressional districts.

Two disgraced Republican congressmen were defeated or replaced in other votes. In Nebraska, Representative Jeff Fortenberry resigned his seat after being convicted of lying to the FBI about illegal foreign campaign contributions. Republican State Senator Mike Wilson won the special election to replace him. In Mississippi, Representative Steven Palazzo was defeated in a runoff for the Republican nomination by Sheriff Mike Ezell. Palazzo faced ethics charges over misuse of congressional and campaign funds.



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