

# Fascist pro-Trump Republicans advance in primary contests

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State Representative Dan Cox, an all-out election denier, won the Republican primary for governor of Maryland Tuesday, buoyed by the endorsement of former President Donald Trump and a reactionary and cynical campaign by the Democratic Party to boost the most right-wing candidate in the Republican primary, claiming he will be the easiest to defeat in November.

Cox defeated former State Commerce Secretary Kelly Schulz, a longtime aide to current Governor Larry Hogan, one of the few open political opponents of Trump within the Republican Party. Hogan and the state party establishment backed Schulz in the primary, but she lost by a margin of 56 percent to 40 percent.

There was little financial backing for Cox—including from Trump, who gave him an endorsement but no money—until the Democratic Governors Association carried out a multimillion-dollar ad attacking Cox as too loyal to Trump, calculated to boost turnout among right-wing Republican voters.

The cynical calculation of the Democratic Party operatives was that in a state Trump lost by more than one million votes and by the third largest margin in terms of percentage of the vote, trailing only Vermont and Massachusetts, an avowedly pro-Trump candidate would be a sure loser to whomever the Democrats nominated.

That nomination was still unclear as of this writing. Afghanistan war veteran and best-selling author Wes Moore held a lead over former Democratic National Committee Chair Tom Perez and Maryland Comptroller Peter Franchot, but 40 percent of the vote, largely mail-in ballots, still remained to be counted as of Wednesday night.

Cox directly participated in the January 6, 2021 attempted coup by Trump. He brought busloads of Trump supporters to the rally in front of the White

House that culminated in a march on the Capitol, in the course of which the fascist-led mob stormed the building, halted the congressional counting of electoral votes and sought to ensure that Trump remained in the White House despite the outcome of the November 3 presidential election.

The first-term state representative wrote on social media that Vice President Mike Pence was “a traitor” for refusing Trump’s demand that he illegally reject electoral votes for Democrat Joe Biden. He declared that Trump is “the only president that I recognize right now” and pledged to conduct “a forensic audit” of the results in Maryland, which no Republican presidential candidate has won since 1988.

While Trump’s personal endorsement has been a mixed blessing in Republican primary contests, with some high-profile defeats as in Georgia, Nebraska and Idaho, the overall result of the primary season, which reached its halfway point in Maryland, has been a sweeping transformation of the Republican Party into one that is deeply opposed to democracy and refuses to accept the results of any election it does not win.

According to a remarkable tabulation by the 538.com website published Monday, half of all the candidates so far nominated by the Republican Party for US senator, US representative, governor, state attorney general and secretary of state (the top election officer in each state) deny the results of the 2020 election and, at least implicitly, regard the Biden administration as illegitimate.

The number of victorious Republican candidates questioning the legitimacy of the 2020 election dwarfs the number who “have unambiguously accepted the legitimacy of President Biden’s victory,” the website wrote.

Of the 340 nominees selected up to but not including

the Maryland primary, 120 are “full-blown election deniers,” meaning they have declared the election illegitimate or backed legal challenges to it. Another 48 nominees have said there was substantial fraud but have not drawn the conclusion that Biden is illegitimate.

These figures are likely an underestimation because 84 nominees, more than a quarter, are not on record in relation to the 2020 election, and are likely to voice opposition to it once the general election campaign against a Democratic opponent begins.

Significantly, the highest percentages of election deniers are among candidates for governor, who will play a critical role in the certification of their state’s electoral votes in 2024, and among candidates for the House of Representatives, where the Republicans are currently favored to win a majority in November, putting them in a position to determine the outcome of the presidential contest two years later.

A majority of House Republicans voted not to certify the 2020 electoral votes for Biden in two critical battleground states, Arizona and Pennsylvania, even in a vote conducted several hours after the fascist mob was cleared out of the Capitol and the joint session of Congress resumed certification of the Electoral College results.

Still to be determined are a number of high-profile contests in states expected to be closely contested in 2024, including Arizona and Michigan, with elections August 2, and Wisconsin on August 9.

In Arizona, election deniers are leading in the polls for all four critical statewide contests. Blake Masters, a former aide to billionaire Peter Thiel and an open fascist, is leading in the race for the Republican nomination for US Senate. Bolstered by \$13 million from Thiel and Trump’s endorsement, Masters focuses on denunciation of the “stolen election” and anti-immigrant vitriol, tweeting that the Democrats are trying to “change the demographics of our country” to win elections, a variation on the neo-Nazi “great replacement” theory. It came to light recently that in a 2006 essay Masters declared that World War II was not a just war. The essay concluded with a quote from Nazi leader Hermann Goering.

In the three state leadership races, Trump-supported former broadcaster Kari Lake is in the lead for the Republican nomination for governor. Mark Finchem, organizer of the “stolen election” campaign, leads for

secretary of state, while Abe Hamadeh, a Syrian-born Army intelligence officer, has Trump’s endorsement for state attorney-general.

Meanwhile, the Arizona Republican executive committee censured Republican state House Speaker Russell “Rusty” Bowers Tuesday and called on voters to “replace him in the ballot box” in the primary, following his anti-Trump testimony in front of the House Select January 6 Committee. Bowers testified last month that there was no significant fraud in Arizona and that Trump lawyer Rudy Giuliani admitted he had no evidence of fraud.



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