

Republicans back Trump as convicted ex-president threatens “breaking point” if imprisoned

Jacob Crosse
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In the days following the unprecedented conviction of ex-president Donald Trump in the New York “hush money” trial, virtually every major Republican Party politician has issued a statement declaring full support for Trump while rejecting the legitimacy of the trial and slamming the prosecuting attorneys, judge and jury.

Statements of support have been issued not only by Trump sycophants, but also by so-called “moderate” Republicans, including the entire Republican Senate leadership. Following the announcement of the verdict, Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell said the charges against Trump should never have been brought. Sen. John Cornyn (Texas) called the trial a “disgrace,” and Senate Minority Whip John Thune (South Dakota) tweeted that the case was “politically motivated” and “partisan.”

Speaker of the House Mike Johnson, whom Democrats voted to keep in power last month, said in an interview with Fox News that he believed the “Supreme Court should step in” and “set this straight.” Johnson predicted Trump’s conviction “will be overturned.”

After previously urging his followers on X to “not just get angry about this travesty, get even!”, Senator Marco Rubio (Republican-Florida), characterized the proceedings against Trump as a “show trial” in a May 31 *Newsweek* op-ed calling for Trump’s reelection.

The same day the op-ed was published, Rubio signed a letter along with seven other Republican senators promising to stymie the rest of the Biden administration’s nonmilitary agenda. The senators accused the White House of making “a mockery of the rule of law” and of “fundamentally” altering “our politics in un-American ways.”

They wrote that they would not pass any “non-security related” funding, confirm any of the administration’s

“political and judicial appointees,” or “allow expedited consideration and passage of Democrat legislation or authorities that are not directly relevant to the safety of the American people.”

In addition to Rubio, the letter was signed by senators J.D. Vance (Ohio), Tommy Tuberville (Alabama), Rick Scott (Florida), Mike Lee (Utah), Eric Schmitt (Missouri), Marsha Blackburn (Tennessee) and Roger Marshall (Kansas).

Asked if he “accepted” the jury’s verdict, Arkansas Senator Tom Cotton replied, “No... I disagree with the jury’s verdict here.” Cotton alleged that the case was “rigged from the very beginning,” adding that Trump was “an innocent man who did nothing wrong.”

Lashing out at the prosecution, on May 31, top Trump bulldog Ohio Rep. Jim Jordan sent letters to Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg and prosecutor Matthew Colangelo summoning them to Washington D.C. to testify before Jordan’s inquisitorial “Select Subcommittee [of the Judiciary Committee] on the Weaponization of the Federal Government.”

Jordan wrote that the hearing, scheduled for later this month,

will examine actions by state and local prosecutors to engage in politically motivated prosecutions of federal officials, in particular, the recent political prosecution of President Donald Trump by the Manhattan District Attorney’s Office.

One of the only Republicans not to wholeheartedly back Trump's attack on the New York trial was former Maryland Governor Larry Hogan. Just before the verdict was rendered, Hogan, who is currently running for the US Senate, tweeted:

Regardless of the result, I urge all Americans to respect the verdict and the legal process. At this dangerous, divided moment in our history, all leaders—regardless of party—must not pour fuel on the fire with more toxic partisanship. We must reaffirm what has made this nation great: the rule of law.

On Sunday, Lara Trump, the newly installed Republican National Committee co-chairwoman, attacked Hogan over his comments, saying he “doesn’t deserve” the respect of anyone in the Republican Party, and “quite frankly, anybody in America.”

The hostile response from virtually the entire Republican Party is a testament to the depth of the ongoing political crisis. Instead of sidelining Trump, the conviction has only invigorated his supporters within the party and will lead to a further lurch to the right by the entire political establishment.

As the Republicans circled their wagons around Trump, the aspiring dictator warned in his first major interview since the trial that if he were imprisoned, if only in the form of house arrest, there would be a “breaking point” in the country.

In a friendly interview from his Bedminster golf course in New Jersey broadcast on the far-right “Fox and Friends” program, Trump mused that while he could be placed under house arrest,

I don't know that the public would stand it. I'm not sure the public would stand for it... I think it would be tough for the public to take. You know, at a certain point there is a breaking point.

As in every campaign speech, Trump railed against his political opponents, calling them “sick” and “deranged.” Once again he warned that the greatest threat to America remained “the enemy from within.”

“I talk about the enemy on the outside and the enemy

from within,” Trump said. “So you have Russia, you have China, but if you have a smart president you always handle them, quite easily actually, we have a lot of advantages.

“But the enemy from within, they are doing damage to this country, they want open borders, they want high interest rates, they now want to quadruple your taxes... there is a whole sickness going on right now.”

He later added:

These scoundrels are much more evil... I'm telling you China and Russia are not the problem, we have a bigger problem from within that is really bad.

Trump complained that the trial was held in a “tough venue,” and that “they always bring” his cases to “these sections, D.C., [New York City]” places where “Republicans get virtually no votes.”

“You had a jury that was from a certain persuasion,” he added, “would have been hard to do no matter what. I did absolutely nothing wrong.”

In addition to Republican Party politicians, former dues-paying Oath Keepers member and current sheriff of Riverside County (California) Chad Bianco endorsed Trump following his conviction.

In a video posted on his Instagram Saturday, Bianco, while wearing his uniform, declared:

I'm all in... I think it's time we put a felon in the White House. Trump 2024 baby. Let's save this country and make America great again.



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