

# Democrat Eric Swalwell ends campaign for California governor over sexual misconduct charges

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Democratic Congressman Eric Swalwell, who had been the leading Democrat in the election for governor of California, announced late Sunday that he was ending his campaign as a result of allegations of sexual misconduct made by several women, including a former staff member.

In a statement posted on X, he wrote:

I am suspending my campaign for Governor. To my family, staff, friends, and supporters, I am deeply sorry for mistakes in judgment I've made in my past. I will fight the serious, false allegations that have been made—but that's my fight, not a campaign's.

House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries and former Speaker Nancy Pelosi both urged Swalwell to end his gubernatorial campaign after the *San Francisco Chronicle* published a lengthy account Friday of claims made by the former staff member, who said that Swalwell had raped her.

CNN published more details of allegations by other women, and by Saturday there was a full-scale media feeding frenzy on the issue, with demands that Swalwell resign his seat in Congress as well as ending his campaign for state governor.

A statement issued by Jeffries and other House Democratic leaders called for a “swift investigation” as well as the end of his current campaign. “This is unacceptable of anyone—certainly not an elected official—and must be taken seriously,” they said.

“This extremely sensitive matter must be

appropriately investigated with full transparency and accountability,” Pelosi said in a statement. “As I discussed with Congressman Swalwell, it is clear that is best done outside of a gubernatorial campaign.”

Two co-chairmen of the Swalwell campaign, Democratic congressmen Jimmy Gomez and Adam Gray, immediately revoked their endorsements after the *Chronicle* story was published.

Swalwell launched his campaign for governor last November, forgoing reelection from the 14th Congressional District, which includes portions of the Bay Area east, including all or parts of the cities of San Leandro, Hayward, Union City, Fremont and Livermore. He only emerged as the leading Democratic candidate in a poll published last month, ahead of billionaire Tom Steyer, who has already spent \$110 million on his own campaign, and former Representative Katie Porter.

Under the “jungle primary” system used in California, all candidates of all parties will appear on a June 2 primary ballot, with the top two candidates, regardless of party, advancing to a November runoff. The leading Republican in the race, right-wing talk-show host Steve Hilton, was just endorsed by President Trump. He is polling slightly behind Swalwell. The current governor, Democrat Gavin Newsom, is term-limited and will leave office at the end of this year.

The rush to drive Swalwell out of the gubernatorial race and out of Congress comes before any of the allegations against him have been seriously investigated. The Democratic-controlled Manhattan district attorney's office has taken the lead in the case, since the Swalwell aide says that he attacked her in a hotel room there. The Manhattan DA's office urged

“survivors and anyone with knowledge of these allegations” to contact its Special Victims Division.

The reference to “survivors” and the demands that Swalwell resign his seat immediately are typical of the anti-democratic attacks on due process and presumption of innocence that have characterized the #MeToo scandal-mongering campaign since its inception.

There is no reason to believe or disbelieve the allegations made by Swalwell’s former staffer until her testimony has been tested against other evidence. That Congress and the two capitalist parties that control it are both rife with political, financial and moral corruption is hardly a secret.

Any charges against Swalwell would likely be referred to the House Ethics Committee, which is already investigating Democrat Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick of Florida on financial corruption charges and Republican Tony Gonzales of Texas for sexual misconduct that allegedly contributed to the suicide of a former aide.

Most of Swalwell’s current campaign and congressional staff signed a statement supporting the former staffer and urging the congressman to end his gubernatorial campaign and resign from his seat immediately. Writing that they were “horrified” by the allegations, they said, “We stand with our former colleague, and the other women who have come forward. We believe you should stand with them, too.”

The timing of the *Chronicle* exposé is certainly politically motivated, since it comes barely two weeks after Swalwell appeared to separate himself from the other Democratic contenders, in large measure because he has postured as an aggressive opponent of Trump and the fascistic operations of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

The article was published after the deadline passed for any new candidate to enter the race, and less than three weeks before the first of two televised debates scheduled for the primary campaign.

Besides Steyer and Porter, the other prominent Democrats in the race include former Secretary of Health and Human Services Xavier Becerra; former Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa; San Jose Mayor Matt Mahan; California Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond; and former State Controller Betty Yee. None of these candidates has topped five percent in recent polls.

The moves to oust Swalwell were a major topic of discussion on several Sunday television interview programs. Representative Eugene Vindman of Virginia, a Ukrainian-born former Army officer who played a role in the first impeachment of Donald Trump, called on Swalwell to resign from Congress as well as drop out of the governor’s race.

Representative Pramila Jayapal, chair of the House Progressive Caucus, said she would vote to expel both Swalwell and Republican Tony Gonzales from the House (neither has been criminally charged, let alone convicted). “I do think that both of them need to step down from Congress, let these investigations happen,” she said. “I think that this is very important that we believe women, and that we show people across the Capitol and across the country that we will not accept this kind of behavior.”

The “believe women” slogan raised by the #MeToo campaign amounted to convicting accused men based on accusation alone, rejecting the need for evidence or the legitimacy of any form of challenge or cross-examination, even for the most dubious and flimsy allegations.



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