

News From The States

EVENING WRAP

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By [Kate Queram](#)

Here I am, in 2024, about to write a whole thing about an upcoming presidential election between Donald Trump and Joe Biden. Does time exist? (Is this the real life? Is this [just fantasy](#)?) Would anyone notice if I just copied and pasted a newsletter from 2020? (Probably the COVID would give me away.) If a newsletter writer goes slowly insane but continues to write a newsletter, will anyone notice? These and other semi-political thoughts, coming your way.



The Big Takeaway

Whatever slim chance remained for a relatively sane election year evaporated into the ether Tuesday night as Trump triumphed in the New Hampshire GOP primary, besting Nikki Haley by 11 points, [per the New Hampshire Bulletin](#). That margin is a lethal blow for Haley's campaign, which outspent Trump two to one in hopes of wooing New Hampshire's moderate Republicans and independent voters and *still* failed to finish within 10 points of first place. There is no plucky comeback in store here. This is not the turning point of the primary. This is the end, and [everyone](#) knows it.



"Onward!"

(Photo by Brandon Bell/Getty Images)

Except, possibly, Haley, who gave a sort-of concession speech congratulating Trump on the win while also attempting to downplay its significance, [the Bulletin reported](#).

"New Hampshire is first in the nation. It is not the last," Haley told a crowd of supporters in Concord. "This race is far from over. There are dozens of states left to go, and the next one is my sweet state of South Carolina."

Yeah, that's not a positive. Trump holds a [37-point lead](#) in South Carolina and a [56-point lead](#) nationally, margins that will only increase as more Republicans [fall in line](#) behind his candidacy (potential criminal convictions [be damned](#)). There is no path forward for Haley, who will start to face pressure to exit the race from donors and GOP leaders — if she hasn't already, said Dante Scala, political science professor at the University of New Hampshire.

"They don't want to see a knockdown, drag-out fight," Scala said. "I don't think party leaders have the stomach for that ... even if Donald Trump is the nominee and they have doubts in their heart about that, ultimately, I think the urge to unify will overwhelm that."



*Donald Trump, known unifier.
(Photo by Alex Wong/Getty Images)*

“Unify” is always a tricky word when it comes to Trump, who gave a relatively magnanimous speech after last week’s win [in Iowa](#) only to go scorched-earth on Haley after it became clear she would not end her campaign after Tuesday’s loss. Ranting onstage in a hotel ballroom, Trump mocked Haley’s clothing (“I watched her in the fancy dress that probably wasn’t so fancy”), pilloried her electability (even “Ron [DeSantis] beat her”), and demanded she exit the race lest she find herself “under investigation” for things “she doesn’t want to talk about.”

“This is not your typical victory speech, but let’s not have someone take a victory when she had a very bad night,” he said. “You can’t let people get away with bullshit.”

Over in the land of not-giving-me-an-aneurysm, Biden — who won Tuesday’s Democratic primary in a write-in campaign without [setting foot in New Hampshire](#) — agreed about the state of the race, telling voters it was “now clear” that Trump would be the Republican nominee.

“And my message to the country is the stakes could not be higher,” he said [in a](#)

[statement](#). “Our democracy. Our personal freedoms, from the right to choose to the right to vote. Our economy, which has seen the strongest recovery in the world since COVID. All are at stake.”

Biden didn’t mention Haley but did make a play for her supporters, urging independents and (regular/non-MAGA) Republicans to “join as us Americans.”

“Let’s remember: We are the United States of America,” he said. “And there is nothing — nothing — we can’t do if we do it together.”



*On Wednesdays we wear aviators.
(Photo by Drew Angerer/Getty Images)*

This might be encouraging if we ever harnessed our collective power for good, or even just for “not being the worst.” In this case, “we” mostly means “Republicans,” who are otherwise known as “the people who are actually about to nominate Trump for president *again*.” In Kentucky, they’re also the ones pushing to ban the use of college IDs as voter identification, [the Kentucky Lantern reported](#).

[The bill](#), advanced Tuesday by a Senate committee, would strip university-issued IDs as well as credit and debit cards from the list of accepted forms of identification for voters who do not have a driver’s license or other form of

government ID. Supposedly, the change will reduce voter fraud, which is easier to pull off with a university ID than with one issued by the government, according to state Sen. Adrienne Southworth, the Republican who sponsored the bill.

Government IDs are just more trustworthy, she added, because people usually have to “swear an oath” or adhere to “ethics codes” to get them.

“People that have these government-issued documents have had to do things ... a lot of kind of surrounding stuff that goes around where we assume these people may be telling us the truth so we’re going to accept it on its face,” she said.

Southworth did not provide evidence of ... whatever that was. She also could not cite a single voter fraud case involving a university ID — or even a single voter fraud case. She “doesn’t have access” to those investigations, she said.



Duh.

(Photo by McKenna Horsley/Kentucky Lantern)

She *probably* has access to a phone, though, which she *probably* could have used to call Kentucky [Secretary of State Michael Adams](#), either to ask about voter fraud cases or to get an informed opinion on the bill itself. Luckily, reporters also have access to phones, which is how I can tell you that Adams is extremely not into this whole idea. It’s not a moral opposition so much as a defensive one: The bill is possibly illegal, and that could endanger the state’s [voter ID law](#) as a whole.

“Our Photo ID to Vote law was carefully drafted to ensure success against court challenges, and Secretary Adams was successful in three such challenges,” said Michon Lindstrom, Adams’ director of communications and an apparent fan of random capital letters that *wound my soul*. “We are concerned that this bill could get the Photo ID law struck down. Also, as a Republican, Secretary Adams believes his party should be careful not to gratuitously alienate young voters like college students by taking away their ability to use college Photo IDs in the absence of any evidence they have been used fraudulently.”

Southworth hadn’t heard this. She’s a *legislator*, you guys. And *everyone* knows that *legislators* don’t talk to *government officials*.

“It’s not their job to tell us how we need to do our job,” she said.



Also Trending

More than half of librarians in Idaho are considering leaving their jobs due to stress and exhaustion related to the state’s increasingly antagonistic rhetoric — and legislation — targeting the profession, [the Idaho Capital Sun reported](#). Some have been called “groomers” amid debate over reading materials, most of them related to the LGBTQ+ community. Others fear backlash for improperly complying with vaguely worded legislative proposals that rile up the culture warriors but make little sense in the day-to-day operation of a library.

“I could go to a bigger town, a smaller town, or the same size of town and get paid triple of what I’m getting paid now to work somewhere else, but I don’t want to do that,” said Maegan Hanson, director of the rural Buhl Public Library. “I want to set roots and raise my family here. But if this is the climate, I genuinely don’t know how long we can sustain the good work that we’re doing.”



YEAH HI CAN I CHECK THIS OUT OR
(Photo by Mia Maldonado/Idaho Capital Sun)

Last year, Idaho lawmakers introduced [at least five bills](#) focused on restricting reading content for kids and nitpicking libraries' material acquisition policies. Only one made it out of the legislature: [House Bill 314](#), which would have allowed parents to sue libraries for providing “harmful materials” to minors. Republican Gov. Brad Little vetoed it last April, saying its ambiguity could harm libraries. Concerned parents, he [added](#), should “become familiar with the local policies of their fully elected library or school trustee board and engage directly with the officials who oversee them.”

This was not a call to resurrect the bill, but lawmakers did anyway. The [new policy](#), sent back to the House State Affairs Committee last week, would require libraries to establish an “adults only” section for reading materials deemed harmful by community members. If those items are not relocated within 30 days of a written objection, patrons could sue the library for \$250 plus damages and “any other relief.”

The new bill does not aim to “bankrupt libraries,” according to state Rep. Jason Crane, a Republican and the measure’s lead sponsor. It’s meant to *protect* them — *and* the kids. And it *definitely* doesn’t intend to target librarians, he added.

Because Crane knows what that feels like. He gets mean messages about his library bills, too.

“It’s unfortunate,” he said. “I don’t think anybody should be threatening others on either side. I’m sorry that’s happening to them, but that’s not anybody’s intention.”



From The Newsrooms

Gov & Politics

- [State Senate panel presses ahead with bill that would ban ranked choice voting in Georgia](#)
- [AZGOP Chairman Jeff DeWit resigns after Kari Lake leaked a tape of him trying to ‘bribe’ her](#)
- [Out-of-state lobbying group returns to Kansas to condemn residents who need food, health care](#)
- [Louisiana elected officials helped fund PAC that sent anti-LGBTQ+ texts to voters](#)

Education

- [Ryan Walters names Libs of TikTok creator to Oklahoma school library panel](#)
- [South Dakota lawmaker lacks proof for claim that private school scholarships save millions](#)
- [Virginia legislation would require school bathroom checks every 30 minutes](#)
- [Bathroom restrictions for transgender kids added to Missouri ‘parents bill of rights’](#)

Economy

- [Happy hour, cocktails to-go bill makes a splash in Indiana](#)
- [Amazon, Walmart remain atop list of companies with most employees on Nevada Medicaid](#)
- [Proposal that would force Oklahoma judges to retire at 75 stokes concern](#)
- [U.S. Rep. Maxwell Frost, Florida House Dems urge solutions for affordable housing, insurance crisis](#)



One Last Thing

Jon Stewart will return to host *The Daily Show* [on Mondays](#), because 2024 had to give us *SOMETHING*.

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