Biden ends failing reelection campaign, backs Harris as nominee

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(…)

Biden was the oldest U.S. president ever elected when he [beat Trump in 2020](https://www.reuters.com/graphics/USA-ELECTION/RESULTS/jznvnjyjzvl/). During that campaign, Biden described himself as a bridge to the next generation. Some interpreted that to mean he would serve one term, a transitional[[1]](#footnote-1) figure who beat Trump and brought his party back to power.

But he set his sights on a second term in the belief that [he was the only Democrat](https://www.reuters.com/world/us/tethered-together-biden-harris-move-toward-2024-re-election-run-2023-03-23/) who could beat Trump again. In recent weeks, his advanced age became more apparent. His gait[[2]](#footnote-2) became stilted and a childhood stutter occasionally returned.

Calls for Biden to reconsider his candidacy grew much louder after his shaky, halting performance during a first debate with Trump on June 27, giving pause to[[3]](#footnote-3) even some of his biggest supporters.

Donors [began to revolt](https://www.reuters.com/world/us/biden-campaign-tries-soothe-panicked-donors-tense-phone-calls-2024-07-02/) and supporters of Harris began to [coalesce](https://www.reuters.com/world/us/vp-harris-top-choice-replace-biden-election-race-if-he-steps-aside-sources-say-2024-07-03/)[[4]](#footnote-4) around her. Top Democrats, including former House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi, a longtime ally, told Biden he cannot win the election.

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Earlier this year, facing little opposition, Biden [easily won](https://www.reuters.com/world/us/biden-trump-poised-clinch-nominations-set-up-bruising-presidential-rematch-2024-03-12/) the Democratic primary race to pick its presidential candidate, despite [voter concerns](https://www.reuters.com/world/us/bidens-approval-rating-falls-lowest-level-nearly-two-years-reutersipsos-poll-2024-05-21/) about his age and health.

His staunch[[5]](#footnote-5) support for Israel's military campaign in Gaza [eroded support](https://www.reuters.com/world/us/inside-democratic-rebellion-against-biden-over-gaza-war-2024-02-27/) among some in his own party, particularly young, more liberal Democrats and voters of color.

Many Black voters say Biden has not done enough for them, and enthusiasm among Democrats overall for a second Biden term had been low. Even before the debate with Trump, Biden was trailing the Republican in some national polls and in the battleground states he would need to win to prevail on Nov. 5.

1. Transitional, adj. = overgangs- [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Gait, n. = gang [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Give pause to = bekymre, få til at tøve [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Coalesce, v. = samles [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Staunch, adj. = stærk, urokkelig [↑](#footnote-ref-5)