

# News

## The State of the Republican Party

By Olivia Slack, Features Editor

In 2016, the U.S. experienced a contentious presidential election for both the Democrats and the Republicans. However, the rift did not just occur between the two parties, but within them as well. The Republican party in particular is still experiencing this tension within itself in the run-up to the 2020 presidential election, and the split between current president Trump's supporters and those who wish for a different Republican in the Oval Office is one that will surely only deepen when the campaigns for the primaries begin in earnest.

Currently, there is only one Republican candidate for president in 2020: Donald Trump. However, other prominent Republicans like John Kasich have not (yet) ruled out presidential bids. The Republican National Committee, though, seems to be extremely wary of the potential

for more division within the party, and *The Washington Post* reported that in January the RNC ceremonially signed their support for Donald Trump as their candidate in 2020. This does not technically bar others from running against him in the primaries, but it does strongly discourage them, and in fact some state Republican parties are at least considering not holding their primaries so that Donald Trump becomes the de facto candidate. According to the South Carolina newspaper *The State*, in December 2018, S.C.'s state Republican party chairman Drew McKissick said that in summer 2019, S.C. would make the decision on whether to hold the GOP's primary—the first of the year held in the Southern states—or whether to show their unequivocal support for Donald Trump and cancel the primary. This is not the first time that

cancelling presidential primary elections has been considered by state parties: S.C. Republicans specifically did so for incumbents Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush in 1984 and 2004, respectively, and Democrats in S.C. similarly did not hold primaries in 1996 for Bill Clinton and in 2012 for Barack Obama.

Though canceling state primary elections is largely symbolic, it could also have major implications for whoever ends up winning the GOP's support. Not holding primaries is also considered by some to be unfair to voters in those specific states, who would not have the chance to vote for the candidate they believe would best represent their party in the general election. One could argue that refusing to allow Republican voters to voice their opinions on the current president through their votes in the primaries

could end up splitting the party even further. This move has the potential to alienate those who do not support the current figurehead of the GOP by not giving them the chance to dissent. This act of almost forcing Republican voters to support Trump in the general election could arguably end up sending some to the Democratic side, or driving some to not vote at all.

Overall, the Republican party is at a crossroads of sorts, where regular members of the party must decide where they fall in the divisive debate over President Trump's viability as a candidate in 2020, and officials within the party must decide whether to try to preserve the party's intactness through force or let their constituents show their will.

## Allison Dhale: A Woman in Power

By Hannah Brittain-Dubois, Staff Writer

Allison Dhale was sworn into office in the North Carolina House of Representatives this January. She came into office unexpectedly after allegations came out about sexual harassment charges that were filed against the former Democratic candidate, and former State Representative Duane Hall. Governor Roy Cooper requested that Hall resign from his position as representative of the state of North Carolina. Dhale corresponded over email with the *Herald*.

**How does it feel to be in a role that predominantly has been completed by a man?**

"I have never thought of any position that way. Growing up, my father and mother always talked about the person, not their gender and what they were contributing to the government or whatever committee of which they were apart. To be perfectly honest, it

was just a given that my brother and I could do things equally."

**What are the main things that are important to you and what would you like to change?**

"Equal Rights Amendment, LGBTQ rights specifically trans rights, and making sure that people with disabilities have the same access to all services that those without disabilities are able to access."

**How did your childhood affect you where you around many strong women?**

"My mother worked at Meredith in the continuing education department (she actually started that program); I always thought of this program as lifting women up and letting all of us know that we can do anything we set our minds to. I spent summers on the Meredith College campus and all the

women I came in contact with were strong women and had lived through a time where women were marginalized and were ready for women to take their place in history as contributing members of society."

**Do you have anything you are passionate about working towards these next couple of years?**

"ERA if it does not pass this time and to continue to fight for people who are marginalized by society. I feel I owe a debt of gratitude to those who came before me and have fought to pave the way for me."

The ERA is an Equal Rights Amendment that creates equal rights for all citizens, regardless of their gender or sexual orientation. To learn more about the work that ERA is doing, visit <https://www.equalrightsamendment.org/>

**What advice would you offer for someone seeking public office someday?**

1. "Don't listen to anyone who tells you can't."
2. "Contact Lillian's list, Local Women's group in your area."
3. "Work on campaigns, volunteer and participate in your precincts and your party."
4. "Find other women in government and give them a call. We all love to talk about our stories and want to share. During my run, I spoke to lots of women who had run before and held or were holding office. They were all very encouraging."
5. "Don't be afraid; just put your name in and run for office. By putting your name in and registering for office you have already won. Stepping up to serve is a great accomplishment and it takes guts."

## Your Guide to the 2020 Presidential Candidates (So Far)

By Olivia Slack, Features Editor, and Huma Hashmi, Staff Writer

The 2020 presidential election is shaping up to be a difficult fight between the two major parties. So far, the only Republican who has officially announced their candidacy is the incumbent, President Trump. However, the Democratic side already has a crowded field of candidates lined up, so here is a brief guide to each of these candidates' positions on a handful of important issues. Sources primarily include candidates' websites, NBC, and PBS.

### Democrats

*Cory Booker, New Jersey Senator*

**Education:** supports school choice and privatization of schools, i.e. charter schools, school vouchers, and

merit pay for teachers

**Environmental:** supports a carbon tax to help deal with climate change-causing greenhouse gas emissions

**Health care:** supports expanding Medicare and transitioning to a "Medicare-for-all" system of single-payer healthcare

**Immigration and minority rights:** does not support a border wall with Mexico and has supported bills to protect DACA recipients

**Guns:** has supported legislation to ban assault weapons and has voted to prohibit those on terror watchlists from buying guns, but has also said that he believes that law-abiding citizens should be able to own guns  
**Abortion:** pro-choice and opposes overturning *Roe v. Wade*

*Pete Buttigieg, Mayor of South Bend, Indiana*

Platform not yet announced, but according to an interview with NBC it will focus on "freedom, democracy and security."

*Julián Castro, former Housing Secretary under Obama admin.*

**Education:** supports making pre-kindergarten publicly funded and available to all children; has also expressed interest in making the first two years of higher education free  
**Environmental:** supports the Paris Climate Agreement, the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and a transition to renewable energy, but has also said that he'd like an energy plan that includes fossil fuels

**Health care:** supports universal healthcare and "Medicare-for-all" as well as the Affordable Care Act  
**Immigration and minority rights:** supports a pathway to citizenship for most undocumented immigrants and does not support the border wall with Mexico  
**Guns:** supports a ban on assault weapons and limits on high-capacity magazines  
**Abortion:** pro-choice

**For a comprehensive list and full description of all candidates, visit [www.meredithherald.wordpress.com](http://www.meredithherald.wordpress.com)**