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SPOTLIGHT

The Most Likely States to Redraw Maps

The redistricting road ahead.

By Kirk A. Bado

Who controls the House after the midterms might be decided in the next two months without the electorate casting a single vote.

The White House's aggressive power play pressuring red states to redraw their maps could put the narrowly divided House out of reach for Democrats. Republicans hold a narrow 220-215 advantage with every seat filled, but even the slightest change could keep the House in GOP hands given the large number of noncompetitive seats. As things stand right now, these are the states that could redraw their lines:

Will definitely change

- Ohio: The lines have to change before 2026 after a court declared the map unconstitutional. The Republican-dominated state Legislature will likely take up the pen when the process is all said and done, as our own James A. Downs reported last week. Possible change: Republicans +2.

Most likely will change

- Texas: Democratic state lawmakers fled the state to deny Republicans a quorum after they caved to pressure from President Trump. However, any Democratic resistance will likely be futile. Even if the AWOL legislators run out the clock on the special session, Gov. Greg Abbott (R) can call another one immediately after the previous one concludes. The redistricting sessions will continue until morale improves. Possible change: Republicans +5.

Depending on Texas, but the window is closing

- California: Despite Gov. Gavin Newsom's (D) best efforts, redistricting reforms muscled through nearly a decade ago make midcycle redraws nearly impossible. Newsom and his Democratic allies are pursuing a multi-step plan where the Democrat-dominated state Legislature would draft new lines, pass a proposal, finalize a ballot measure, and take public comment before an Aug. 22 deadline to get that measure on the November ballot. Possible change: Democrats +5.

Toss-ups

- Missouri: In a late-breaking addition to Republicans' redistricting plans, Gov. Mike Kehoe (R) expressed openness to examining the map, and he has initial support from legislative leaders. Possible change: Republicans +1.
- Louisiana: A change in the Louisiana map is dependent on a still-pending decision over a legal challenge to the 2024 map that netted Democrats a seat after the redraw. A recent filing set the stage for arguments over the Voting Rights Act, which requires states to provide minority communities with an opportunity to elect the candidates of their choice. Watch this space, because a change to VRA protections could have major impacts across the country. The X-factor here is timing. The candidate filing deadline for 2026 is in December, and a Supreme Court decision is expected sometime in the fall. Possible change: Republicans +1.

— *Kirk A. Bado*

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Quote of the Day

"I wish you didn't ask me that question." — Sen. Markwayne Mullin (R-OK) when asked about convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein in a tele-town hall, NOTUS, 8/11.

HOTLINE LATEST EDITION

Trump deploys National Guard in DC

By Erika Filter

WHITE HOUSE: Trump Deploys National Guard in D.C.

President Trump placed D.C.'s Metropolitan Police Department under federal control, deploying the National Guard "to help reestablish law, order, and public safety."

- **ASTERISK.** The operational specifics of what troops will do in the city, where they will be posted, and how long they will remain are still unclear.
- **TRUMP SAYS:** "This is liberation day in D.C. and we're going to take our capital back."
- **SCOPE.** Roughly 800 troops of the DC National Guard are expected to be activated.
- **WILLING TO ESCALATE.** Trump said he "will bring in the military, if needed." (CNN/*Hotline* reporting)

2028 WATCH: Ruben Gallego Attends Iowa State Fair

Sen. Ruben Gallego (D-AZ) "toured the Iowa State Fairgrounds," telling state Democrats "to focus on working-class issues, 'stop going for the easy votes' and reach out to Republicans."

- **STILL ON THE FENCE.** He said it's "too early" to decide whether to run for president in 2028.
- **CALENDAR DRAMA.** Conservative activists dogged Gallego for his past posts disparaging the Iowa caucuses and suggesting it should not be first in the nation. Gallego said the DNC will have to decide the order of the primaries, and "if Iowa is back in front, then it's Iowa."
- **FUELING BUZZ.** Iowa Democratic Party Chair Rita Hart said she is "thrilled" candidates have an interest in visiting the Hawkeye State, adding, "It gives you an idea of what the pulse of the nation is." (*Des Moines Register*)
- **HOTLINE ANALYSIS.** Gallego has refined the swing-state playbook for Democrats, advising party members to engage with Republicans and get out of their comfort zones. This approach, as shown by Gallego's Senate campaign last cycle, has potential in redder states. But in more safely blue areas, Gallego's strategy might not reap the same rewards; Democrats in blue areas want to see their politicians put up more of a fight. In polling, a majority of Democrats voiced support for their representatives to stick to their policy positions, even if that means not compromising to get things done in Congress. There may be some middle-ground areas where Democrats can engage with Republicans while still channeling the frustrations of their base, but it will be a difficult tightrope for candidates to walk if their constituents don't want to see compromise.
- **BESHEAR PAC BRINGS IN \$1.4M.** Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear's (D) super PAC raised \$1.4 million in the first half of the year.
- **TEAM PLAYER.** The In This Together PAC supported Wisconsin Supreme Court Justice Susan Crawford's campaign and sent money to the PAC supporting Arizona Gov. Katie Hobbs (D). (*Kentucky Lantern*)
- **2028 HOPEFULS OWN THE LIBS.** "As prominent Democrats begin testing the waters for potential 2028 presidential runs, some have been explicitly rejecting tenets of liberal orthodoxy in high-profile ways, often in venues that might attract" supporters of President Trump or independents.
- **HINDSIGHT IS 2024.** "Some Democrats say" former Vice President Kamala Harris "should have delivered a speech repudiating one or more progressive positions—on immigration or trans athletes or covid-related school closures—that allowed Republicans to portray her as an out-of-touch liberal."
- **CAN'T PLEASE EVERYONE.** These statements "are concerning liberals who say they risk caving in to objectionable, even bigoted, views rather than fighting against them, and that Democrats will never win by presenting themselves as diluted Republicans." (*Washington Post*)
- **IN THE WHITE HOUSE.** Trump "is leaving his options open," on the 2028 front, declining "to formally crown Vice President JD Vance as the successor to the MAGA movement."
- **THE DARK HORSE.** "Behind the scenes, Trump has at times appeared to stoke competition between Vance and" Secretary of State Marco Rubio, "teasing them about their well-known political ambitions."
- **CAN THEY HANDLE IT?** "Republicans are looking ahead to the end of the president's transformative political tenure with trepidation, unsure whether the GOP's rising stars can keep hold of the movement that Trump has commanded for the past decade." (*Wall Street Journal*)

SUNDAY SCARIES: Governors Squabble Over Texas Redistricting

As the White House ratchets up pressure on states to redraw the congressional lines, governors are taking center stage.

- **MEET THE PRESS.** Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker (D) called President Trump a "cheater" for trying to redraw Texas' congressional districts. He also said Texas Gov. Greg Abbott (R) is "licking the boots" of Trump.
- **MONEY TALKS.** Pritzker responded to New York Assemblyman Zohran Mamdani's (D) claim that billionaires should not exist, saying, "How much money you have doesn't determine what your values are."
- **WHAT ABOUT YOU?** Pritzker said he "can't rule anything out" when it comes to a 2028 presidential run.

- **PRITZKER SAYS:** “No matter what decisions I make, and I mean in particular about what I do here in the State of Illinois, is about the people of Illinois. Indeed, any future decisions of mine will always be guided by that.”
- **FOX NEWS SUNDAY.** Abbott called Texas Democrats’ flight from the state to avoid a vote on redistricting “the most un-Texan thing we’ve ever seen in Texas.”
- **HOW LONG IS THIS GOING TO TAKE?** Abbott said the process “could literally last years,” pledging to continually call special legislative sessions.
- **FACE THE NATION.** Sen. Mark Kelly (D-AZ) criticized Trump’s handling of immigration.
- **KELLY SAYS:** “The border security issue under [former] President Biden was not working. And I pushed the administration on that. But we have now swung drastically in another direction. And I don’t think this is what the American people want either.”

HOTLINE LATEST EDITION

Barr and Cameron look for pathway amid Morris' anti-McConnell pitch

By Nicholas Anastácio

KENTUCKY: Republicans Jockey for GOP Approval, McConnell Disapproval

Republicans jockeying to succeed retiring Sen. Mitch McConnell (R) made their pitches at the state GOP’s Lincoln Day Dinner on Saturday night.

- **COOKIE CUTTER.** Rep. Andy Barr (R-06) and 2023 GOV nominee Daniel Cameron (R) touted their records and voiced their opposition to transgender athletes competing in women’s sports.
- **SENATOR SHADER.** Waste removal entrepreneur Nate Morris (R) namelessly referred to McConnell, who was in attendance, as one of the “career politicians ... who stabbed us in the back.” Morris also took credit for denying McConnell a lifetime achievement award, one the senator bestowed to the state party treasurer. (*Kentucky Lantern*)
- **STANDOUT.** The three Republicans are all seeking President Trump’s endorsement, but differ on how they approach McConnell’s legacy. Morris focuses on the senator’s skepticism about the president in an effort to attract MAGA Republicans to his bid.
- **NOT MORRIS.** Cameron is taking a calmer approach, “running with nothing to lose” after losing to Gov. Andy Beshear (D) in the 2023 governor’s race. Barr is also taking a more traditional approach to his campaign, often holding back attacks against his opponents. (WHAS)
- **TEAM UP?** Some allies of Cameron pitched Barr’s team on a super PAC to take down Morris. Jonathan Duke—who is involved with Cameron’s super PAC, Kentucky First Action, and whose firm was a longtime vendor for SLF under McConnell—is spearheading the idea.
- **NOT EQUAL.** Kentucky First Action only raised \$15,000 during the first half of the year. Keep America Great PAC, Barr’s super PAC, raised \$702,000 during the same period.
- **BARR’S NOT BITING.** “One source close to Barr told *NOTUS* that Duke approached them about starting a super PAC together to go after Morris, but said no one had reached an agreement.”
- **CAMERON ISN’T EITHER.** Cameron campaign spokesperson Brandon Moody called the joint PAC “a spectacularly stupid idea.” (*NOTUS*)

NORTH CAROLINA: Andy Nilsson Exits Race Following RNC Chairman’s Entry

Businessman Andy Nilsson (R) suspended his campaign to replace retiring Sen. Thom Tillis (R) on Friday, citing President Trump's endorsement of RNC Chairman Michael Whatley as a "central role" to his decision in a letter to his supporters. He added that he had "questions" about the president's pick, stopping short of an endorsement.

- **ONE MORE.** Whatley faces 2024 NC-08 candidate Don Brown (R) in the GOP primary. (WRAL)

OHIO: Sherrod Brown's Seniority Not Guaranteed

Former Sen. Sherrod Brown (D) could return to the Senate if he defeats Sen. Jon Husted (R) next year, but he's unlikely to retain his post as top Democrat on the Banking Committee. Senate Democrats' current rules determine a member's seniority based on their most recent entry into the party's caucus, not their first entrance into the Senate.

- **NOT HELPING.** "Democrats can always change their rules, or cut a deal on seniority, to entice Brown to run; however, we're told there's been no such deal at this point." (*Semafor*)

SOUTH CAROLINA: André Bauer Suspends Campaign After One Month

Former Lt. Gov. André Bauer (R) suspended his campaign against Sen. Lindsey Graham (R) after one month in the race. Bauer said in a Friday X post that he didn't want to "be part of a political climate that rewards deception over honesty, or ambition over unity."

- **BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE.** Graham faces Project 2025 architect Paul Dans (R) and businessman Mark Lynch (R) in the Republican primary. (*Greenville News*)

TEXAS: James Talarico Explores Senate Bid Away From State

State Rep. James Talarico (D) "inquired with television stations about potential Senate ad rates, according to two sources with knowledge of his requests—the most concrete step he has taken yet toward running for statewide office."

- **REMOTE WORK.** Talarico is currently away from the Lone Star State, protesting GOP efforts to gerrymander the state's congressional districts in Illinois alongside Texas House Democrats. Talarico has been present across various media platforms, logging 25 interviews in the first 24 hours of the quorum break.
- **EXTENSION.** Talarico intended to decide about the Senate race last week, but the quorum break pushed back his deadline and kept him undecided.
- **THREE'S COMPANY.** If Talarico enters the race, he would join 2024 nominee Colin Allred (D) and astronaut Terry Virts (D) in the Democratic primary. (*Texas Tribune*)
- **ALLRED'S ATTENTION.** Allred will launch "Unrig Texas," a statewide series of town halls focused on "unrigging the economy and rooting out corruption" during August. The series will kick off in Denton on Tuesday. (release)

HOTLINE LATEST EDITION

California mapmakers set to unveil plan this week

By James A. Downs and Amelia Monroe

REDISTRICTING ROUNDUP: California Set to Respond This Week

California Democrats plan to release their draft proposal this week, which is contingent on Texas Republicans continuing with their process to redraw the state's congressional lines. The California plan targets five Republicans: Reps. Doug LaMalfa (R-01), Kevin Kiley (R-03), David Valadao (R-22), Ken Calvert (R-41), and Darrell Issa (R-48).

- **LOGISTICS.** The map, drawn by legislators, will be put to the voters for a special election and, if passed, kept in place through the next apportionment period after the 2030 Census. (KCRA)
- **INTRAPARTY OPPOSITION.** LaMalfa said on a recent House Republican Conference call that most members oppose mid-cycle redistricting efforts across the country. Most of the public outcry has so far come from blue-state Republicans, such as LaMalfa, Kiley, and Rep. Mike Lawler (R-NY 17). They could see their lines change to face more competitive seats or risk losing it altogether. (*The Hill*)
- **A STRONGLY WORDED LETTER.** California Gov. Gavin Newsom (D) sent a letter to President Trump urging him to call off national redistricting efforts. In the letter, Newsom wrote, "You are playing with fire, risking the destabilization of our democracy, while knowing that California can neutralize any gains you hope to make." (KCRA)
- **NH SAYS NO.** On the other coast, New Hampshire Gov. Kelly Ayotte (R) remains opposed to a redraw, even as the White House pressures states around the country to change the map. She said the "timing is off" to reconsider the lines. Democrats control both congressional districts in the Granite State. (WMUR)
- **THREADING THE NEEDLE.** Democrats leading the way on counter-redistricting efforts deny the "notion that Democrats' gerrymandering efforts bear any resemblance to Republican plans to extract five new seats in Texas." Illinois Gov. JB Pritzker (D) said this weekend that Democrats are fighting Republicans trying to "steal seats." The governor said Republicans see the writing on the wall for 2026 and want to ensure they don't lose.
- **FIGHTING FIRE WITH FIRE.** Former Attorney General Eric Holder, who chairs the National Democratic Redistricting Committee, said his organization supports "temporary" actions by Democrats to counter Republicans. The committee typically supports anti-gerrymandering policies. (*Politico*)
- **HOLDING A CALL.** Holder "will hold a call with House Democrats on Wednesday" hosted by the DCCC. (*Punchbowl News*)
- **NO GOING DOWN IN SOUTH CAROLINA.** Despite calls from Rep. Ralph Norman (R-05) to redraw the South Carolina map, Republican Palmetto State legislators show no appetite to add it to the agenda. House Majority Leader Davey Hiott (R) said, "Is (there) anything less than zero?" when asked about the potential odds of a remap. The current map is before the state Supreme Court right now and was previously affirmed by the U.S. Supreme Court. Hiott said "constituents would rather have the roads and bridges fixed instead of the map drawn." (*Columbia State*)
- **TEXAS LEGAL BATTLES.** Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton (R) asked the state Supreme Court to expel 13 Democratic lawmakers for breaking quorum. Paxton "argued that these representatives effectively abandoned their offices." Paxton had previously suggested that lawsuits would have to originate in members' district courts after Gov. Greg Abbott (R) asked the Supreme Court to remove the Democratic House leader. But, late last week, Paxton "argued that the Texas Supreme Court has the right to rule directly on this case, especially when there is a need to swiftly resolve the matter." (*Texas Tribune*)

- **REDISTRICTING SPARKS THE AGE-OLD QUESTION.** Rep. Lloyd Doggett (D-TX 37) was the first Democrat in Congress to ask former President Biden step down from the race. Now Doggett, 78, will likely be drawn into an Austin-area district with Rep. Greg Casar (D-TX 35), 36, and may face similar calls from Democrats.
- **NOW HERE'S THE TWIST.** Both Doggett and Casar say they are planning to run for reelection in Austin. That would put them on a collision course in a member-on-member primary as Texas Republicans dismantle the current map.
- **VIEW FROM ABOVE.** "To discuss this matchup remains taboo among Texas Democrats. Every Democrat we spoke to stressed that their main objective is to stop redistricting from happening at all." Doggett said Casar should not abandon the new district outside of San Antonio, which would have voted for Trump by about 10 points. (*Washington Post*)
- **IN ENEMY TERRITORY.** New York Gov. Kathy Hochul (D) appeared on Fox News this weekend to defend Democratic redistricting efforts around the country. Hochul supports "disbanding the voter-approved redistricting commission," but she says she only favors taking these steps to counter the GOP efforts around the country. "It's not clear what specific changes Hochul will seek to the state constitution in order to erase the redistricting changes that prohibited gerrymandering. The governor, though, expressed confidence a proposal will pass muster with voters, who previously rejected efforts to weaken the commission." Any changes would not take effect until after the 2026 elections. (*New York Playbook*)

MICHIGAN 10: First GOP Candidate Officially Enters the Race

Attorney Robert Luljguraj (R) is vying to replace Rep. John James (R), who is opting for a governor bid in 2026. The now-open seat is a top target for both parties.

- **THE FIELD.** So far, only one other GOP candidate has filed paperwork to enter the race. On the other side of the aisle there's at least four Democratic candidates looking to get the party nomination: Army veteran Alex Hawkins, former Commerce Department official Eric Chung, former special victims prosecutor Christina Hines, and Pontiac Mayor Tim Greimel.
- **UNEASE.** James' withdrawal from a reelection campaign leaves President Trump less confident about his party's ability to pick-up the seat, especially as Democrats mobilize behind their candidates. (*Detroit News*)

NEW JERSEY 09: Andre Sayegh Isn't Ruling Out a Bid for Congress

Paterson Mayor Andre Sayegh (D) is eyeing a primary against freshman Rep. Nellie Pou (D). Speculation has swirled about the incumbent mayor's potential bid for Congress since at least the spring.

- **SAYEGH SAYS:** "I do keep my options open," he said on his way to a golf outing fundraiser for his mayoral campaign. (*Politico New Jersey*)

NEW YORK 22: Republican Declines to Run for Congress

Onondaga County Legislator Julie Abbott (R) officially declined to run against Rep. John Mannion (D). Abbott told Republican leaders who recruited her for the race "that the timing wasn't right." Instead, the lawmaker is looking to spend more time with family and start a new career in real estate.

- **UNCERTAINTY.** Without a Republican challenger, Mannion's seat officially stays off of the party's target list in 2026. The NRCC announced earlier this cycle that it will target 26 Democratic-held seats to broaden their chances of increasing their slim House majority. So far, Republicans are going

after at least three seats in the state: Reps. Tom Suozzi (D-03), Laura Gillen (D-04), and Josh Riley (D-19). (*Syracuse.com/Syracuse.com*)

PENNSYLVANIA 07: Democratic Poll Shows Unsettled Field

A Public Policy Poll survey (July 29-30; 518 LVs; +/-4.3%) for Northampton County Executive Lamont McClure (D) found McClure leading the Democratic field with 23%. Energy engineering manager Carol Obando-Derstine (D) and Lehigh County Controller Mark Pinsley (D) were each at 7%, followed by former Justice Department official Ryan Crosswell (D) and firefighter Bob Brooks (D) at 3%. 58% were undecided. (release)

- **HOTLINE ANALYSIS.** Notwithstanding the fact that it's an internal poll, it's not surprising McClure leading a crowded field at this point since he's an elected official. That said, more than half remain undecided, and no one appears to be a runaway favorite. McClure has struggled mightily to gain fundraising traction, and he could quickly find himself losing steam if that doesn't change. The winner takes on Rep. Ryan Mackenzie (R) in a high-profile district. He flipped the seat by a point last year.

HOTLINE LATEST EDITION

Silicon Valley wades into California governor's race

By Abby Turner

CALIFORNIA: Silicon Valley Creeps Into Governor's Race

"Silicon Valley is barely dipping its toes into the California governor's race," but some in the industry are starting to back former Rep. Katie Porter (D).

- **NOT ALWAYS A FRIEND.** In the House, Porter's "whiteboard-wielding takedowns made her a scourge of corporate boardrooms." In her run for Senate last year, a super PAC backed by the crypto industry spent \$10 million to run ads against her.
- **STARTING OFF.** Crypto executive Chris Larsen "maxed out with a \$39,200 check in June after" Porter "showed a 'willingness to learn and engage' in recent conversations."
- **NOT A BIG DEAL YET.** Still, "tech sources represented but a small fraction of her total fundraising, as is the case across the entire field so far." Porter's campaign said she raised \$250,000 in the 36 hours after former Vice President Kamala Harris announced she would not run for governor. (*California Playbook*)
- **ATKINS RAMPS UP.** Former state Senate leader Toni Atkins (D) "is ramping up her campaign for governor" after Harris' announcement. She launched her San Diego campaign office on Saturday alongside state Democrats.
- **GAINING ON PORTER.** "Porter gained an early edge by outraising the field between March and June, as *Politico* reported, but the Atkins campaign in an internal memo argued she has more resources than most of her opponents, despite raising less in the most recent reporting period." (*Axios San Diego*)

- **TROUBLE AHEAD.** Atkins may face a conflict of interest if she wins the Golden State's governor's seat. The California Department of General Services hired her spouse's consulting firm to "help prioritize sites, conduct market research and evaluate applications from contractors" to develop "state-owned properties for affordable housing."
- **STATE CASH.** The \$1 million contract "has been worth tens of thousands of dollars to Atkins, according to financial disclosures." Atkins and her spouse "received more than \$10,000 in income last year" from entities including the Department of General Services through multiple firms her spouse oversees.
- **WHAT WILL HAPPEN.** "Atkins earns hundreds of thousands of dollars annually from entities that could soon be asking for her signature or veto on priority legislation, requesting funding in her state budget proposals or applying for contracts with her administration." (*CalMatters*)

MICHIGAN: First Woman Enters GOP Primary

Businesswoman Karla Wagner (R), "the leader of a ballot proposal campaign to do away with property taxes in Michigan," announced she will run in the GOP primary for governor.

- **TRUMPING TAXES.** "Wagner has spearheaded the AxMITax campaign, which launched in 2023, and aims to get voters to approve a prohibition on property taxes, which currently fund schools, community colleges and parks in Michigan."
- **A WOMAN'S WORLD.** She is the first woman to enter the GOP primary, joining a field of six candidates that includes Rep. John James (R-10), former Attorney General Mike Cox (R), and state Senate Minority Leader Aric Nesbitt (R). (*Detroit News*)

NEW JERSEY: Mikie Sherrill Navigates Zohran Mamdani Endorsement

New York Assemblyman Zohran Mamdani (D) "said he 'absolutely' would support" Rep. Mikie Sherrill's (D-11) bid for governor, but she "has not offered an outright endorsement of Mamdani—though her opponent," 2021 nominee Jack Ciattarelli (R), "has sought to tie her to the democratic socialist." Still, Mamdani's race is "not an issue that is as top of mind for New Jersey voters compared to affordability and the economy." (*Politico*)

- **OVER THE WEEKEND.** Ciattarelli rallied with conservative activist Scott Presler, who "may help motivate Trump loyalists to show up in a year the president isn't on the ballot."
- **PRESLER'S RECORD.** Democrats criticized "Presler's past involvement with efforts to overturn the 2020 election, support of the Jan. 6 attack on the Capitol, and organizing a nationwide protest criticized as anti-Muslim."
- **WHERE JACK STANDS.** Ciattarelli spoke out against election denialism but said he supports pardons for those "who were at the Capitol on Jan. 6." (*Philadelphia Inquirer*)

SOUTH CAROLINA: First Democrat Enters Governor's Race

Trial lawyer Mullins McLeod (D) officially announced his run for governor today, marking the first Democrat to enter the race. (WCSC)

- **UH OH.** McLeod was arrested and charged with public disorderly conduct in May after reportedly yelling while wearing just underwear and shoes in downtown Charleston.

VIRGINIA: Winsome Earle-Sears Casts Campaign as Military Operation

Lt. Gov. Winsome Earle-Sears (R) has “told voters she was running her campaign for governor like a military-style operation,” but her words, “while cast in military terms, reflected a campaign on the defensive.”

- **LACKING THE MONEY.** Her campaign “has failed to gain traction with big money donors,” raising “nearly as much money” Attorney General Jason Miyares (R). The RGA gave Earle-Sears a fraction of what they had given Gov. Glenn Youngkin (R) by this time in his race. Youngkin “has offered more than \$21,000 in support to Earle-Sears through his political action committee between March and June.” (AP)

OVERLOOKED

As Seen On TV

By Amelia Monroe

Over the course of the last three decades, the lines between TV personality, political commentator, and politician have blurred. Former daytime therapist Dr. Phil is the latest example, as he brings MAGA stories and themes to his news and entertainment network. Dr. Phil, like many others, have ridden the reality television wave to bridge into politics: Podcaster Joe Rogan was once a notable television host for *Fear Factor*. Beyond the political commentary space, numerous daytime television icons have followed in the footsteps of President Trump and used their likeness to gain access to political offices. Former Olympian and *Keeping Up With The Kardashians* star Caitlyn Jenner opted for a bid against California Gov. Newsom (D) in 2021 and *American Idol* runner-up Clay Aiken went for a House seat in North Carolina. Celebrity Dr. Mehmet Oz (R) might have come up short in his 2022 Pennsylvania Senate bid, but now he’s with the Trump administration.