



[Former President Trump and Several High-Profile Republicans Make Remarks at the Conservative Political Action Conference](#)

This year's Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) was headlined by former President Donald Trump, who made his first post-presidential speech since leaving office back in January. In his remarks, Trump repeated false claims that he won the recent presidential election, expressed that he has no plans to start a new political party, and hinted at another run in 2024. While he does have some critics within the party, many GOP leaders have stood by Trump as state and local officials moved to censure Republican lawmakers who favored his second impeachment. The deference to the former president, even after the events of January 6th at the U.S. Capitol which stunned the world, has underscored Trump's firm command over the party. Despite much of the nation recoiling from his dangerous rhetoric questioning the legitimacy of the democratic process, Trump's prominence at CPAC highlights his standing in GOP circles. All told, the direction of the Republican Party remains to be seen, with many wondering what type of effect Trump's continued prevalence may have on its future electoral prospects.

Former President Trump appeared on stage at the 2021 Conservative Political Action Conference in Orlando, Florida for the first time since his electoral defeat, looking to reclaim his role as the Republican Party's kingmaker in the 2022 midterm elections and positioning himself for a 2024 presidential run. Trump repeated his baseless claims of electoral fraud, which have been rejected by independent courts across the country. He also contended that he was victorious in the presidential election back in November, despite the fact that Biden won resoundingly with over 300 electoral votes. Trump teased a White House run again in four years, saying "I may even decide to beat them for a third time" and encouraged people to support him in his political fight against his rivals. Outside of his baseless claims that the 2020 election was marred by fraud, Trump also attacked President Biden's legislative agenda, particularly his immigration policies. He claimed that Biden's immigration changes are triggering a new crisis at the southern border and subsequently creating a youth migrant crisis. He touted his own efforts to expand the border wall and said Biden was reversing his administration's accomplishments.

One lasting impression from former President Trump's comments at CPAC is his willingness to continue to spew falsehoods about the 2020 election. Trump was previously permanently blocked from social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter after making claims that the election was stolen by a vast conspiracy of fraud, but this did not dissuade him from continuing to use whatever platform available to him to perpetuate these fallacies. The fantasy of a stolen election has been rejected by courts across the country, which have confirmed President Biden's legitimate victory.

Some of the other notable speakers at CPAC included Sen. Ted Cruz (TX) and Gov. Kristi Noem (SD). Senator Cruz criticized the ongoing lockdown measures related to the COVID-19 pandemic and made light of the recent controversy surrounding his vacation to Cancun – which Cruz was forced to cut short after backlash emerged over his decision to abandon constituents in his home state of Texas who have been dealing with the devastating effects of a major power outage. Governor Noem, who is widely touted as a potential 2024 Republican presidential candidate, extolled her success in handling the pandemic in South Dakota despite the state being ranked 8th in the nation for per capita COVID-19 deaths. During the ongoing health crisis, Noem has refused to institute common preventive protocols, including mask wearing and social distancing measures.