

Biden bows out of presidential race, endorses Harris

WASHINGTON (BP) – After weeks of speculation, President Joe Biden announced Sunday (July 21) that he will not seek the Democratic Party's nomination for the November general election. It appears, however, Biden will stay on as president until his successor is inaugurated.

“It has been the greatest honor of my life to serve as your President,” Biden wrote in a letter posted on X. “And while it has been my intention to seek reelection, I believe it is in the best interest of my party and the country for me to stand down and to focus solely on fulfilling my duties as President for the remainder of my term.”

A little while after posting the letter, Biden then posted his support for Vice President Kamala Harris, who becomes the presumptive front runner for the nomination when Democrats meet for their national convention Aug. 19-22 in Chicago. The 3,896 Democratic delegates Biden garnered in the primaries will likely back Harris as the Democratic party nominee after Biden's endorsement.

“My very first decision as the party nominee in 2020 was to pick Kamala Harris as my Vice President,” Biden said in a post on X after his initial announcement. “And it's been the best decision I've made. Today I want to offer my full support and endorsement for Kamala to be the nominee of our party this year. Democrats – it's time to come together and beat Trump. Let's do this.”

The announcement comes as Biden has been isolated for several days after testing positive for COVID-19. The White House doctor said in a statement Sunday that Biden is recovering

well and is continuing to perform his presidential duties.

Biden's decision follows weeks of questions and concerns surrounding his age following the June 28 debate with former President Donald Trump, who was officially nominated by Republicans at last week's party convention in Milwaukee.

"Not only is this a historic decision, it is the right decision for our nation," Ethics & Religious Liberty President Brent Leatherwood said in written comments for Baptist Press. "The role of president takes a heavy toll and, based on what has been apparent for some time, it was unrealistic to ask President Biden to endure another four years of the incredible burdens placed on the one who occupies this office."

Concern from Democrats over the presidential race grew after Biden stumbled at the first presidential debate in which he rambled, spoke unconvincingly, stared into the void and seemed incoherent at times. Biden repeatedly blamed his poor performance on simply "having a bad night" as well as his recovering from a cold. However, since that night, he has faced increased pressure to withdraw from the race by Democratic political leaders, donors and the media.

While this was going on with the Democrats' candidate, the Republicans almost lost their candidate as well. Donald Trump survived an assassination attempt at a July 13 campaign rally in rural Pennsylvania, the weekend before the Republican National Convention. A lone gunman, 20-year-old Thomas Matthew Crooks, nicked Trump's ear, killed one spectator and left two others with serious injuries before being shot and killed by a counter-sniper.

"We should all express our appreciation that President Biden has put the needs of the nation above his personal ambition," Leatherwood said. "Despite what some partisans will say, to walk away from power is a selfless act – the kind that has become all too rare in our culture."

The presidential election will be held Tuesday, Nov. 5.