



Written by [D. Michael DeRidder](#) on August 7, 2024

## Harris, Walz, and Vance Hold Events in Western Wisconsin

Vice President Kamala Harris and Minnesota Governor Tim Walz held an event in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, today. Former President Donald Trump's running mate, Senator J.D. Vance (R-Ohio), also held a campaign event in Eau Claire.

### Vance Criticizes Harris & Walz

Upon arriving at Chippewa Valley Regional Airport in Eau Claire, Vance walked across the tarmac to greet reporters traveling with Harris outside of Air Force Two, [stating on X](#), "I thought the reporters traveling with Kamala might be a little lonely given that she never answers questions from them, so I figured I'd come say hello and check out my new plane while I was at it."



YouTube

Tim Walz speaks in Eau Claire, Wisconsin

Earlier today, Vance criticized Walz for abandoning his National Guard unit, stating on X, "When the United States of America asked me to go to Iraq to serve my country, I did it.... When Tim Walz was asked by his country to go to Iraq, you know what he did? He dropped out of the Army and allowed his unit to go without him, a fact that he's been criticized for aggressively by a lot of the people that he served with. I think its shameful."

### Walz's Speech

Walz spoke today about his 24 years of military service, but did not address [criticism of his departure from the Minnesota Army National Guard in 2005](#) — shortly after the 1st Battalion, 125th Field Artillery received a warning order to mobilize for deployment to Iraq.

At the time, Walz was a command sergeant major — the regiment's highest-ranking non-commissioned officer. He was subsequently demoted to master sergeant, as his departure resulted in his failure to complete coursework at the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy located at Fort Bliss.

During his speech, Walz mentioned being Minnesota's governor and representing Minnesota's 1st Congressional District. He asked the crowd, "Are there Minnesotans in the house today?" He received loud, confirming applause, despite the rally being held in Wisconsin, about 90 minutes west of Minneapolis.

Walz paused his speech to call attention to someone in the audience in need of water. "Can we get somebody to help? Somebody's hot.... Can we get somebody to help? You okay? Drink some water folks, it is hot out." During the pause the audience chanted, "They're so weird, they're so weird, they're so weird, they're so weird."



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When Harris spoke, she confirmed that Walz still claims the rank of command sergeant major, saying:

On Monday I officially became the Democratic nominee for president of the United States, and yesterday I announced my running mate in this campaign, Governor Tim Walz.... To his fellow veterans he is Sergeant Major Walz.

## **Bon Iver Performance**

As at previous Harris campaign events with musical performances, Eau Claire-based band Bon Iver performed between speakers. Lead singer Justin Vernon didn't say much. He simply told the crowd, "We all know why we're here," before performing several songs in his distinctive, high-pitched falsetto style.

Vernon noted the decent-sized crowd at the Eau Claire Event District venue, saying, "My name is Justin Vernon, this is Michael Lewis, and Sean Carey. Mike's from Minnesota, but he might have one on us today. I don't know, this is a pretty good showing for Wisconsin I'd say."

Just before concluding the band's performance, Vernon said, "We're here for the right reasons. We all know what we're here for, so were going to do our thing, make this music, and make way for the people we need to hear from." He ended with what could be described as an earsplitting falsetto rendition of the iconic Civil War-era song "Battle Cry of Freedom."



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