



Written by [Luis Miguel](#) on May 9, 2023

## Those Who Say Trump Can't Win Have Forgotten 2016

Don't count him out just yet.

There's one word that keeps getting thrown around in discussions about Donald Trump's viability as a candidate in 2024, especially in Republican circles.

That word is "baggage."

The now-common refrain among the 45th president's detractors from within the party is that the list of controversies that assailed him in the past and that continue to pile up now are too much for any candidate to survive, and have doomed his shot at victory in the upcoming presidential election.



Luis Miguel

Certainly, there are grounds to be concerned. It's true, the level of controversy that surrounds Trump is unlike that which has confronted any other political aspirant, former president or not, in history.

Only on Tuesday, Trump's legal ordeals were once again top headlines after a federal jury in New York City found Trump not liable for the alleged rape of magazine columnist E. Jean Carroll, but *did* find him liable for sexual assault and defamation, ordering him to pay \$5 million for an incident that allegedly happened in 1996.

But is the "baggage" argument against a Trump nomination a reasonable one?

At least for Republicans, the general consensus is that much of the legal action being thrown at Trump, particularly Manhattan DA Alvin Bragg's, is politically motivated. Most Republican voters will likewise acknowledge that the two impeachments against Trump were political maneuvering by Democrats eager to try to prevent a future Trump White House bid.

If this is true — if the legal woes in which Trump presently finds himself are merely a witch hunt, then why should Republicans back down from supporting him? On the contrary, shouldn't that, instead, provide greater incentive to support Trump in order to resist the weaponization of our legal process against opponents of the Left?

Do any of us want to live in a country in which Democrats have all the confidence in the world to ruin the finances and reputation of their rivals and even put them in prison, knowing that the mere threat of doing so will dissuade Republicans from challenging them?

And if one acknowledges the politicization of the legal system against Trump, then isn't it logical to suppose that Democrats will eventually use the same tactics against whichever other Republican succeeds Trump?

If they did it to Trump, they will do it to Ron DeSantis. They will do it to Nikki Haley and Vivek Ramaswamy and anyone else the GOP dares to put up — unless they're controlled opposition. After all, if Democrats decide not to go on a full assault against a Republican president or presidential candidate, it may be because they don't consider that person much of a threat.

Nevertheless, as critical as the situation may appear for Trump, the odds are not impossible.



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In fact, Trump has demonstrated his capacity for overcoming such odds at least once before — in 2016.

Trump detractors in the GOP forget that the position Trump finds himself in now — the Republican frontrunner but with a world of hate from the Left and major skepticism within the party owing to a long list of scandals damaging his personal reputation — is incredibly similar to what it was in 2016.

Remember when the Mexican “rapists” comment was seen as the end of Donald Trump’s presidential aspirations? Remember when they said his candidacy was over when he talked about the “Mexican” judge or when he had the feud with Megyn Kelly?

And who can forget the doom and gloom surrounding Trump when the October Surprise “Billy Bush” tape came out in the eleventh hour? Even members of Trump’s campaign were urging him to drop out of the race, or face the humiliation of losing in a landslide, after that one.

Yet Trump managed to overcome each of those hurdles to the White House against all odds.

Despite his penchant for courting controversy, Trump’s political instincts remain stronger than those of most people in American politics today. Among those instincts is the understanding that, when it comes to facing the Left and their allies in the mainstream media, one must never back down or give in to their narrative. Trump has remained defiant in the face of his legal battles and, as a result, has preserved his image among his base as the stalwart champion against the Deep State.

That support among the base is as important as ever, and Trump still has them on his train.

Although Trump’s Republican critics would point to many who say they are tired of him and want a new candidate with less “baggage,” the reality is that most of the people who say they’re “off” the Trump train were never really on it to begin with. Many such voices didn’t see him as their first pick in the 2016 primary and only voted for him in the general because the alternative would have been letting the Democrat, Hillary Clinton, win.

And here’s the thing: Those people, though they are now saying they are “done” with Trump, will also vote for him yet again in the general election this time around just because he is the Republican candidate. They may not like Trump, but they will vote the party line.

And when it gets to the general election, Trump will have the advantage this time around of understanding how to combat ballot harvesting and other techniques Democrats used in 2016. Furthermore, Biden will not have the Covid crisis to use to his advantage against Trump this time around.

But before he gets to that point, Trump needs to win the primary. And since Trump already has the base, as well as the most charisma and name recognition of any other GOP candidate, he remains the unquestioned favorite for the primary.



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