



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on August 28, 2019

Biden's Age a Growing Concern Among Top Democrats

If Joe Biden, born November 20, 1942, wins the Democratic nomination, on Election Day, November 3, he will be just about to open the door to his 78th year.

That has Democrats worried. [Old Joe has stumbled and stuttered](#) his way through campaign speeches, and now, even those who like the oldster think [he's too long in the tooth](#) to handle either a campaign against The Donald or the presidency.



To put Biden's age in perspective, when he was vice president, he was already 67, two years past the typical retirement age for most Americans. He is more than twice the age of one of his Democratic competitors, the homosexual mayor of South Bend, Indiana, 37-year-old Pete Buttigieg.

The day Joe Biden was born, the Allied landing on French North Africa, [Operation Torch](#), had just ended.

What They're Saying About Old Joe

Thus have three major publications — *Politico*, *Vanity Fair*, and the *New York Times* — dared to bring up what one Democrat consultant and pollster called “the 78-year-old elephant in the room,” as *Politico* reported.

Trump, the [webzine observed](#), isn't the only pol talking about Biden's three quarters of a century on Earth. “Democrats are beginning to publicly talk about it themselves”:

In overt and indirect ways, questions about the former vice president's age and vigor are increasingly surfacing within his own party, fueled by the former vice president's relatively light campaign schedule and attempts to limit his public exposure. If elected, Biden would be 78 upon entering the White House — making him the oldest president ever to take the office.

As Fernand Amandi, an Obama-Biden campaign vet who made the elephant crack, [told Politico](#), “there is no question that what has propelled Vice President Biden to clear front-runner status is his unparalleled experience ... but am I hearing gargantuan concerns among Democratic insiders about Biden's advanced age...? Absolutely, yes.”

Biden's been around so long, *Politico* noted, he voted for the Hyde Amendment that passed 43 years ago, before Buttigieg was born. Biden voted for that partial prohibition of federal funds for abortion.

Said former Obama handler David Axelrod of a question about Biden's vote on the Hyde measure, “when you are 76 and age is in question, you don't want to be in a situation where your campaign says you ‘misheard’ the question. This kind of story will raise issues.”

If he won in 2020, Biden would be eight years older than the oldest president ever to take office — Donald Trump, Axelrod emphasized. And he'd be two years older than the life expectancy for a male in the United States.

“This is one reason I think they've kept him on a relatively leisurely pace on the campaign trail and



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away from some of the major events and away from reporters, frankly, because they are worried about things just such as the one we have just seen,” Axelrod said in a separate interview on CNN.

[Politico noted](#) that Biden’s handlers are keeping a light schedule to reduce his exposure to possible foul-ups.

In a piece about Biden’s frequent gaffes, *Vanity Fair*, citing the *New York Times*, [reported that](#) Biden’s handlers “worry that the accumulation of gaffes is solidifying into a media narrative.”

They are “privately nervous,” the *Times* reported, that “his recent gaffe spree would become cemented into the larger narrative of the presidential race.”

[VF noted](#) that “few of Biden’s Democratic rivals have been willing to broach the subject of his seniority, except obliquely,” and no matter how Biden’s backers fight the narrative that Sleepy Joe is in rapid mental decline, the “rake-stepping won’t stop, and the attacks won’t go away, raising the question of whether there will come a tipping point for Biden.”

And that point riffs off the concern about Biden’s easy days on the campaign trail: “Biden and his team owe it to voters to put him on a real, rigorous public campaign schedule, like everyone else,” tweeted Adam Jentleson, Harry Reid’s former deputy chief of staff. “If he can hack it, great. If not, better to know sooner rather than later.”

Workout Buff

As for the *Times*, last month [it reported](#) that Biden’s aides and allies have been concerned since rival Kamala Harris leveled him about his connection to Old South “segregationists.”

It wasn’t just Mr. Biden’s halting answers that worried some of them. They thought he was showing his age — that, at 76, he appeared slow off the mark, uncertain about how to counterpunch as he allowed Ms. Harris to land clean hits without interruption.

Then again, the *Times* reported, Biden is something of a health nut who consumes a good diet and works out every day:

His aides insist that Mr. Biden has more energy than they do. At a South Carolina fish fry last month, allies note, he outlasted rivals in greeting voters late into the night. Senator Lindsey Graham, the South Carolina Republican, has also vouched for Mr. Biden’s vigor, saying on CBS in April, “if you travel with Joe Biden, you won’t think he’s too old.”

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