



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on September 9, 2019

Former S.C. Governor Mark Sanford to Challenge Trump for 2020 Nomination

Former South Carolina governor and three-term representative Mark Sanford (shown) said on September 8 that he would enter the race for the 2020 Republican presidential nomination, in what is regarded as a long-shot challenge to President Trump. “I think as a Republican Party we have lost our way,” Sanford said in an interview with Fox News Sunday.



“The president has called himself the king of debt, has a familiarity and comfort level with debt that I think ultimately is leading us in the wrong direction,” Sanford added.

The *New York Times* quoted Sanford’s charges that neither Trump nor his Democratic challengers were speaking to the concerns of voters alarmed by our nation’s trillion-dollar deficits and “trade uncertainty” created by the president’s enthusiastic use of tariffs. “Those people that I dealt with in the Tea Party movement, all those people who just showed up year after year,” Sanford said. “I believe that those voters are still there and they haven’t been spoken to.”

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Sanford is the third Republican to announce plans to challenge Trump for the nomination. The others are former Representative Joe Walsh of Illinois, and former Massachusetts governor William F. Weld.

Sanford maintains that the cancellation of a number of Republican primary contests, including South Carolina’s, should be seen as a sign of weakness on the part of the president. “If the president’s really at 90 percent, then why in the world would you not want a stomping win in the first-in-the-South primary?” Sanford asked. “You would insist on there being a primary.”

Before serving as governor, Sanford spent six years in Congress where he earned straight “A” ratings from the National Taxpayers Association, the National Rifle Association, and the Gun Owners of America. He was also often one of the few dissenting votes alongside former Representative Ron Paul. While not as consistently constitutionalist as Paul (*The New American’s* “Freedom Index” — then referred to as the “Conservative Index”— gave him a cumulative 78 percent score, compared to Paul’s consistent scores of 100 percent), his record was nevertheless respectable. More recently, Sanford was praised by the American Conservative Union as the “Most Conservative Governor in America.” (He held that post from 2003–2011.)

In an [interview with *The New American*](#) in 2009, this magazine asked Sanford if he felt that most of the problems America now faces are because it has moved away from its constitutional restraints on government. He replied, in part:

Yes, I think the Founding Fathers were remarkably wise men who were painstakingly detailed in looking at the nature of man, looking at the needs for checks and balances within our political



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system and instituting them.... Once you move away from the playbook that says government is limited in these ways, there is no end to all the “good” that government can or might do. I do think that adhering to the constitutional moorings is not only important from a standpoint of a limited focus and functioning federal government, it’s also important to the sustainability of our Republic.

Image of Mark Sanford (left): [Screenshot of MSNBC interview](#)

Related article:

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Warren Mass has served The New American since its launch in 1985 in several capacities, including marketing, editing, and writing. Since retiring from the staff several years ago, he has been a regular contributor to the magazine. Warren writes from Texas and can be reached at wmass@thenewamerican.com.



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