



Written by [Luis Miguel](#) on April 3, 2022

Rick Scott's Continued Agenda Push Has GOP Leaders Worried

The infighting within the GOP establishment leadership continues.

Sen. Rick Scott (R-Fla.), who chairs the National Republican Senatorial Committee (NRSC), is shaking heads within party circles by continuing to [push a controversial policy agenda](#) even when Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) has refrained from putting out a legislative program ahead of the 2022 midterms.

Scott's activities have earned him flak from Senate Republican leaders, who fear his "Rescue America" agenda gives Democrats ammunition to attack the party in what is otherwise an opportune year for the GOP to pick up seats.

Democrats, in fact, have already capitalized on Scott's plan to steer away criticism of the Biden administration.

An ad launched last week by the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee (DSCC) featured *Fox News Sunday's* John Roberts discussing Scott's "11-point plan to raise taxes on half of Americans and potentially sunset programs like Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security."

When McConnell tweeted that Biden's budget would "dramatically increase liberal spending and slap the biggest tax hikes [in] American history on top," the White House struck back by pointing to Scott's plan.

"Actually, the biggest tax hike of the century would be the Senate GOP plan, which would be around \$100 billion in 2022 alone," White House press secretary Jen Psaki tweeted at McConnell.

According to Republican senators with knowledge of a leadership meeting at McConnell's office on Feb. 28, the Senate GOP leader warned Scott that his agenda would become a liability to the party.

One senator (who requested anonymity) called Scott's insistence on the agenda despite warnings from his colleagues "baffling."

He also said Scott was told by leaders he risked "morphing" his Rescue America plan with the Senate GOP's messaging because he is the leader of the NRSC.

The senator in question speculated that Scott has grown impatient with the seeming lack of progress on major issues.

"I think he's frustrated. He's been in office for a few years and hasn't been able to move the dial," the source said.

Another senator accused Scott of "giving the middle finger" to leadership.



AP Images
Senator Rick Scott



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“He doesn’t like being slapped around and maybe he feels like he has been,” said the lawmaker.

Scott has said he’s focusing on his reelection in 2024 and not laying groundwork for a presidential bid, dispelling speculation that he wants to be president. He has also stated he does not plan to challenge McConnell for the Senate GOP leader’s spot.

McConnell maintains he wants to keep public attention on Biden, and for that reason has discarded the notion of publishing a specific policy agenda of what Republicans will do if they win back the Senate in November.

Scott pushed his plan again publicly on Thursday. Speaking at a question-and-answer session about it at the Heritage Foundation, he told reporters, “this is not the time to be timid.”

“Now is the time we need to be bold,” he said. “Our nation’s future can be bright. We’ve got to have a plan to take this country back.”

He also took aim at fellow Republicans who have criticized his plan for “parroting” attack rhetoric employed by Democrats, including the accusation that Scott’s proposal would raise taxes on half of all Americans and end Social Security and Medicare.

“I’m not going to raise taxes. Democrats are lying about the plan, we got Republicans that are parroting what they’re saying.”

Scott explained that putting together plans has been at the heart of his past success in business and politics.

“I’ve started a lot of businesses, I’ve built businesses. Every time we had a written plan,” he said.

“When I ran for governor, I had a seven-step plan to get 700,000 jobs. Every economist said we couldn’t do it.”

“We won. I think we won because [voters] said ‘I don’t know that guy ... but that guy’s at least got a plan,’” he recalled.

The Hill notes:

He then appeared to take a shot at Washington leaders by remarking on what he sees as the failure to clearly define problems and come up with solutions.

“I’ve been up here for three years. What’s the plan?” he said, noting the federal budget has increased by nearly 400 percent over the past 20 years while the U.S. population has increased by only 16 percent.

“[Scott] definitely has his own way of doing things. I think he desperately believes Republicans need an agenda to run on. I think that there are elements of that agenda, obviously, that are very susceptible to attacks by Democrats,” said Senate Minority Whip John Thune (R-S.D.), the Number 2 ranking Republican in the chamber after McConnell.

Thune added, “I think he’s aware of that but seems intent on charging forward. In his case, when he speaks it has added weight because he’s the chair of the NRSC.”



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