



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on February 26, 2024

The Numbers: Haley Can't Win. Trump Can Seal GOP Nod in March

The numbers just aren't there for GOP presidential candidate Nikki Haley. [Having lost](#) her home state in Saturday's GOP primary, Haley probably can't defeat Donald Trump for a shot at President Joe Biden on November 5.

Heading into tomorrow's primary in Michigan, which will also award delegates in caucuses on March 2, Trump has collected 110 delegates against Haley's 20, almost 10 percent of what he needs to lock the nomination.

But Trump's clean sweep of the state contests so far aren't Haley's only difficulties. In delegate-rich states ahead, she trails Trump in the Real Clear Politics polling average by a mile.

Indeed, such is Trump's strength that he could finish Haley on March 12, the day that GOP voters in Georgia, Mississippi, and Washington state head to the polls.

Analysis

After Haley's humiliation in her home state, the [New York Times's Nate Cohn explained](#) why Haley is doomed.

Though Trump didn't prevail by a "staggering landslide," he wrote, "Even losing candidates have usually managed to win their home states. Ted Cruz and John Kasich did so against Mr. Trump in 2016. John McCain (2000), Howard Dean (2004), John Edwards (2004), Newt Gingrich (2012) and others all pulled off home-state wins. For many of these candidates, their home state win was their only win. On Saturday, Ms. Haley didn't come close."

That, Cohn wrote, "says everything you need to know (and you probably knew already)."

Trump is light years ahead of Haley not only in the RCP national average of polls but also in its averages of state polls. She also trailed Trump in the RCP average for South Carolina.

[Continued Cohn:](#)

[That loss] deprived her of the last, best chance to claim even a hint of momentum ahead of Super Tuesday, when nearly half of the delegates to the Republican convention will be awarded.

As a consequence, this race is poised to come to an end — and soon. Oddly, it's not the final vote count in South Carolina that explains why the race might end so quickly. It's the



AP Images
Nikki Haley



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delegate count.

At Cohn's writing, Trump had 44 delegates, and Haley none. When the final numbers came in, Trump received six more delegates to Haley's three.

And, Cohn wrote, Trump could take all the delegates in plenty of states such as California, which offers 169, if he pulls more than 50 percent of the vote.

Trump's numbers in the primaries thus far suggest that will happen. [He has won](#) every primary with more than 50 percent of the vote.

Delegates Ahead

The forecast for Haley in the next few weeks is grim.

[The RCP average in Michigan](#), which will award 55 delegates this week — 16 tomorrow and 39 on March 2 — puts Trump ahead of Haley by 51.7 points, 69-17.3.

Looking ahead to March 5, Super Tuesday, [Trump leads](#) Haley in California by 52 points, 77.3-19.3

Delegate gold mine Texas with 161 delegates to prospect is even worse for Haley. [Trump leads](#) by 71 points.

In North Carolina, with 74 delegates to offer, [Haley trails](#) Trump by 54.7 points.

By Super Tuesday, 1,215 delegates will have [been awarded](#). Trump has lost 20, which means that even a clean sweep from now through March 5 to win the 874 delegates available won't put him over the top. If Trump wins all those contests and all the delegates, he'll have 1,173.

Should Trump prevail in Georgia (59 delegates) or Washington (43) on March 12, the race is over.

[Trump leads](#) Haley in Georgia, 83-17.

Yet She Won't Give Up

If the Trump-Haley race were a boxing match, her head cornerman would throw in the towel, and if he didn't, the referee would end it.

But alas, the five-time loser and her people apparently think continuing the fight is worth it because Haley believes she can win.

"Everyone wants to bring back the America we know and love," [she told](#) supporters after the beating in her home state:

That's the underlying message of what happened today.... America will come apart if we make the wrong choices.... I said earlier this week that no matter what happens in South Carolina, I would continue to run for president. I'm a woman of my word.... I'm not giving up this fight when a majority of Americans disapprove of both Donald Trump and Joe Biden.

Yet Haley apparently knew what would happen. Last week, she said that "South Carolina will vote on Saturday, but on Sunday I will still be running for president."

The question is why Haley won't quit.

One possibility is that the hate-Trump Deep State financiers, along with GOP establishment elites, think Trump might land in jail given the many state and federal legal troubles he's fighting. Trump [faces](#)



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[charges](#) in Florida, New York, Georgia, and Washington, D.C., the latter two in connection with the 2020 presidential election. Should he be convicted in those two cases, Haley supporters — along with Democrats — might argue that Trump cannot serve as president because [Section Three of 14th Amendment](#) to the U.S. Constitution prohibits those who “engaged in insurrection” from holding office without a two-thirds vote in the House of Representatives.

Thus, one or more state and/or federal criminal convictions might clear a path for Haley to face Biden.

But one or more convictions might not stop Trump from becoming president. A GOP-controlled House of Representatives could block an effort to stop a Trump presidency on 14th Amendment grounds.

And as well, as Harvard law professor emeritus Alan Dershowitz says, Trump can run for office from prison — and serve as president — from a prison cell. The latter would be unlikely.

“If he’s president, obviously he would not be able to serve” a prison sentence, Dershowitz has said. “The courts would hold that he has the right to delay his service of sentence until after his term of office is over.”

Dershowitz likened Trump’s running from prison to the candidacy of Eugene V. Debs in 1920. The socialist ran a campaign from prison.

“Many legal experts argue that a state-court sentence would have to be held in abeyance,” [Politico reported](#):

Whether a federal sentence would also have to be postponed is less clear, but the question might not matter if the new president used his pardon power to set himself free — or preemptively pardon himself from any pending federal charges. (The pardon power covers federal crimes, but not state crimes like the New York charges for which Trump was indicted this week.)



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