



Report: Is Justin Amash Considering a 2020 Primary Challenge To Trump?

Eduardo Rivero

August 9, 2017

Rep. Justin Amash (R-MI) was recently mentioned in a list of potential 2020 Republican primary challengers to President Donald Trump by *The Hill*'s Jonathan Easley and Scott Wong.

The report, which largely dismissed Amash's prospects, stated, "National Republicans are skeptical, noting that Amash lacks name recognition and a national fundraising network and hails from the libertarian wing of the party, which has historically underperformed in GOP primaries."

"Through his spokeswoman, Amash had no comment," the report added, further fueling speculation about his future steps.

If Amash were to run, he would start with strong support from anti-Trump segments of the libertarian movement. Many in libertarian organizations such as the Cato Institute, the Foundation for Economic Education, and Reason magazine have been harshly critical of the Trump presidency. He could also have appeal to 'Never Trump' Republicans who dismissed Trump as a profane individual and a break from Republican orthodoxy. So far, he has drawn praise from moderate Republican commentators such as Louise Mensch, Jennifer Rubin, as well as former Gov. Jeb Bush (R-FL), all of whom were previously critical of the libertarian faction of the party.

Rumors about Amash's presidential ambitions have been widespread within libertarian circles, although this is the first time a mainstream publication has mentioned him as a possible contender. As the '*Draft Amash*' effort notes, Amash did suggest in 2016 that he could run for President in 2020, but that was at a time when Trump was considered unlikely to win. Since Trump's election, Amash has not made any public comments about the possibility of a future presidential campaign.

If Amash were to challenge Trump, it would certainly complicate things for Sen. Rand Paul (R-KY), an Amash ally who has lately developed a strong rapprochement with Trump. Amash's run may also be complicated by his opposition to legislation such as Kate's Law, which is popular among the conservative grassroots and received the support of all other Republican members of Congress.

Other candidates mentioned include Gov. John Kasich (R-OH), Sen. Ben Sasse (R-NE), Sen. Jeff Flake (R-AZ), and businessman Mark Cuban, who could also run as a Democratic or Independent candidate. Flake is said to have a friendly relationship with Amash, so there is a possibility Amash could support his campaign if he chooses to run. Alternatively, some have suggested Amash could run for President as the candidate of the Libertarian Party, particularly if a primary challenge attempt against Trump by another candidate is unsuccessful.