

# DGA: Wisconsin GOP infighting makes headlines as candidates spar over election conspiracy theories

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The Wisconsin GOP is getting more divided each day as the gubernatorial primary candidates fight for [big donors](#), [Trump's endorsement](#), and the support of the conspiracy-driven far-right.

Timothy Ramthun entered the race last week on a platform of [overturning Wisconsin's 2020 election results](#). He and Kevin Nicholson have teamed up to [slam Rebecca Kleefisch](#) and Kleefisch-backer Robin Vos over their GOP insider statuses. Meanwhile, Ramthun's extremism has already forced [Kleefisch](#) to [further embrace](#) the Big Lie.

## **Here's what people are saying about the escalating GOP infighting:**

- [Wall Street Journal](#): "Mr. Ramthun's crusade is an in-kind donation to Mr. Evers's re-election ... Wisconsin Republicans will regret it for years."
- [Conservative Talk Show Host Mark Belling](#): "This disconnect between the state Republican leadership and the elected Republican officials could not be greater."
- [CBS 58](#): "Frustration is growing among members of the Republican party who are demanding new leadership at the Capitol and have concerns the party won't be able to unite heading into the 2022 primary elections."

- [The Dispatch](#): “Vos’ decision to punish Ramthun has earned the speaker a new cadre of enemies. Both Ramthun and former Marine Kevin Nicholson, who is also running for the GOP gubernatorial nomination, are making the ouster of Vos a primary campaign issue.”
- [WUWM](#): “[Ramthun’s] status as a party outsider will hurt Nicholson’s campaign ... Kleefisch will have to eventually respond to conservatives’ claims that the 2020 election in Wisconsin was stolen from Trump ... one thing to watch is whether Trump endorses Ramthun.”
- [Associated Press](#): “Republican gubernatorial candidate Rebecca Kleefisch said five months ago that President Joe Biden won Wisconsin, but on Thursday she dodged the question ... Another Republican candidate for governor, Kevin Nicholson, also appeared on WTMJ on Thursday and was asked if Trump had won Wisconsin. And like Kleefisch, he did not give a direct answer.”
- [Vice](#): “It’s notable that the front-runner for Wisconsin governor, former Wisconsin Lt. Gov. Rebecca Kleefisch, suddenly won’t say that Biden won the 2020 election, even though months ago her position was that he did (he did) ... This all shows not only Trump’s powerful grip on the right but also how much traction truly fringe characters have to gain by jumping on the Big Lie bandwagon — especially if they secure Trump’s endorsement.”
- [Marquette University Political Science Professor Paul Nolette](#): “The extent to which Trump kind of officially makes an endorsement in this race and tries to get involved with speeches and so forth, I think could really raise the temperature, and in many ways raise the difficulty level for Republicans on the more establishment mainstream side to try to turn away from these issues and relitigating the 2020 election.”
- [The Dispatch](#): “The Ramthun candidacy will force Kleefisch into a tight spot, as Ramthun supporters have already deemed her a “RINO” (Republican in Name Only) for refusing to call for revocation of the state’s electoral votes ... [Ramthun] will fundamentally transform the race when his competitors refuse to denounce his conspiracy theories.”

- [Wisconsin Examiner](#): “As Ramthun campaigns for the GOP nomination in the 2022 governor’s race, however, the doubts among a segment of the party’s voters seem likely to fester, regardless of the evidence.”

**“Timothy Ramthun is bringing more extremism and division to an already off-the-rails Wisconsin GOP primary, and Rebecca Kleefisch and Kevin Nicholson are leaning into far-right conspiracy theories to keep up,”** said DGA Senior Communications Advisor Christina Amestoy. **“Ramthun and the pro-Trump wing of the party are at war with insiders like Rebecca Kleefisch, and neither side will emerge from this primary unscathed.”**