

Ryan Owens: Why I support Adam Jarchow for attorney general

Posted on Wednesday, Aug 3, 2022

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For months, I was a leading Republican candidate for Wisconsin Attorney General. It was a humbling and gratifying experience for which I am eternally grateful. During that time, I asked people two simple questions: are you freer today than you were four years ago? And are you safer today than you were four years ago? For nearly everyone, the answer to both questions was no.

On August 9, Republican voters will choose whom to nominate as our Attorney General candidate. From my vantage point, one candidate is best able to protect those twin pillars of freedom and safety: Adam Jarchow.

Jarchow is the only candidate who understands the office's potential. If the state bureaucracy seeks to take away our freedoms, the AG must protect us. If the federal government gets too big for its britches, the state AG must push back. The AG can protect parents against left-wing assaults on their rights, block radical attacks on our business community, and prevent unconstitutional efforts to label and divide us. Jarchow gets it.

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His primary opponent, however, fails to grasp the office's potential. He sees the AG's office as a gussied-up District Attorney's office. That view is seriously outdated and leaves us exposed. Radicals are using all the levers of power to pursue their agenda. Conservatives must nominate someone who has the wherewithal to oppose them wherever they appear—whether in the civil or criminal realm. Jarchow understands that. His opponent does not appear to.

What's more, Jarchow has a better record of defending freedom. When the Evers-Kaul administration imposed unconstitutional lockdowns, Jarchow fought back in court and in the public. As others have reported, his primary opponent, Eric Toney, took a different route and charged people in Fond du Lac County for violating those unconstitutional orders. I trust Jarchow to make the right decisions.

Only Jarchow can go toe-to-toe with the Evers-Kaul administration. Whoever emerges from our primary must be able to raise substantial sums of money to match the Evers-Kaul juggernaut. Jarchow has outraised his primary opponent by large sums. That speaks volumes about which candidate can inspire and compete. We need someone who can motivate the base, the donors, and independents. Only Jarchow seems capable of doing so.

Republicans must nominate candidates who are conservative, whom we can trust, and who can win the general election. That's why I'm supporting Adam Jarchow. Both candidates have strengths, to be sure. But Jarchow understands the potential the office holds, has the better record of defending our freedoms, and can take his message to the people of Wisconsin.

- Owens is a professor of political science at UW-Madison and a former GOP candidate for attorney general.