

WisDems: “Knives Out” — March 17th

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A Weekly Roundup of the Hot Mess That Is the Republican Primary for Governor



MADISON, Wis. — Welcome to “Knives Out”— Rebecca Kleefisch’s favorite phrase and a weekly roundup of the infighting between the radical Republicans running for Wisconsin governor.

The GOP is locked in a heated and brutal primary for governor, where Rebecca Kleefisch, Kevin Nicholson, and Tim Ramthun are trying to prove they are the most divisive candidate in the race. What’s going on in the Republican Party is so outrageous, it’s hard to keep track of all of their blunders — so we’ve got you covered:

GOP Primary Gets Physical

When Rebecca Kleefisch said “knives out” — she claimed she meant it rhetorically.

But some Republicans are literally getting ready to throw punches at each other.

After Tim Ramthun was tossed out of Speaker Robin Vos's caucus meeting, he told reporters he wanted to punch Vos in the face:

["It was the perfect opportunity to punch him right in the nose and say, 'Go pound sand.'"](#)

There's no love lost between these two. Vos and Ramthun have been in disagreement about which way to decertify the 2020 election for the past few months and it all came to a head at a chaotic Capitol meeting — more on that below.

#TimTime Picks Up Steam

Tim Ramthun's message to decertify the 2020 election is gaining momentum — landing him two headlines in national media and a conversation with Vicki McKenna in which he gleefully proclaims he would welcome a constitutional crisis.

(His name is even in this ~headline~ of this one!: [Ramthun goes all-in on election integrity for Wisconsin governor bid](#)).

Not to mention, Ramthun now claims [he has the requisite \\$100,000](#) necessary to compete for the Republican Party's endorsement at this summer's convention. With his threats to punch the party's leader in the nose, he's not off to a great start.

It's just the coverage Ramthun needs to impress Trump [ahead of a trip to Mar-a-](#)

[Lago in April.](#)

Ramthun, whose campaign is based solely on disenfranchising the votes of over 1.6 million Wisconsinites, is detrimental for our democracy — just the sort of thing Donald Trump loves.

Ramthun told [the Washington Post](#), “As a nation, we have to stop saying it’s unconstitutional to reclaim the electors, because constitutional experts are saying it is [...] I think that the excuse makers are running out of excuses.”

Yes, right. What does a constitutional expert know anyway?

But seriously, it’s this logic that may have led him to the particularly dangerous sentiment that he told [the Vicki McKenna Show](#) that if it’s a constitutional crisis that brings Ramthun’s imagined voter fraud to light, “bring it on.”



Tim capped off the week by getting himself thrown out of a meeting by Assembly Speaker Robin Vos. In a closed door meeting, Vos met with individuals who want to see the 2020 election overturned.

Before it started, he exerted one of the last means of authority he has over Tim Ranthum by kicking [him out of the meeting](#). As a Kleefisch supporter, Vos also doesn’t love how much free press Ramthun is getting. He’s also surely unhappy that [Ramthun is supporting Vos’s primary opponent](#).

Watch #TimTime's reaction to getting tossed out here:



So far though, every candidate has only amplified the ridiculous conspiracy theories in an attempt to prove they are the most radical candidate in the race. Each candidate would be a perilous choice for Wisconsin's free and fair elections.

As her campaign flails, Kleefisch continues to position herself further to the right. She now refuses to say whether she would have certified the election herself, despite previous (and factual) statements that President Biden won the election.

But Kleefisch knows she has no choice if she wants the Trump endorsement. Interestingly, [she hasn't admitted to meeting with Trump last week](#), so if anyone wants to ask her about it, we would appreciate it.

Nicholson Slams Kleefisch On Public Safety

Kevin Nicholson is really sharpening those knives for Rebecca Kleefisch. Again, he slammed her public safety solutions as "not serious."

He told [the Jay Weber Show](#) that after talking to sheriffs about Kleefisch's plan to send state police to high crime areas that [they don't even understand her plan](#). "It's them saying, 'I don't even understand why anyone would say we'd surge the State Patrol, what I need to do is to get young people to actually want to do the job.'"



As lieutenant governor, Kleefisch's administration slashed shared revenue to localities, which is a crucial funding stream for various programs, including police departments, by \$76 million in 2011 alone. Then she made the situation worse by [cutting off the lifelines](#) from localities that might have allowed them to make up the difference.

Endorsement Wars

Apparently, Nicholson hasn't aggravated Rebecca Kleefisch enough yet already, so he announced this week that some of the sheriffs who Kleefisch claim endorsed her, have actually privately endorsed him. Huh?

Nicholson tweeted out a list of sheriffs on his "[Law Enforcement Advisory Team](#)" who [he says support his candidacy](#) — and a number of them are also listed on [Rebecca Kleefisch's endorsement list](#). Someone is not telling the truth. Maybe the law enforcement advisory team can get to the bottom of it.

In a typical race, this would be super confusing, front page news. But in this GOP primary, it's just another blurb on page six of this ridiculously long newsletter.

Does Kevin Nicholson Know What a Battery Is?

We don't think Kevin Nicholson understands how solar energy works... in an interview with [The Schroeder Show](#) he claimed that we don't have the technology to make the Wisconsin economy carbon neutral by 2050.

We were a bit confused by what technology he was referring to and [thankfully he](#)

[later explained that](#) “someday, we may be able to develop technology that can store the power of the sun. That’s the holy grail of energy production. We’re not there, and we’re not even really close to it.”



There are two things we need to address here, Kevin:

1. The technology does exist. In the simplest explanation, you capture the solar energy with the solar panels and you store it through batteries.
2. It’s not the technology standing in the way of being carbon neutral by 2050, it’s the inaction of Republicans.