

WisDems: Former sheriff David Clarke dismisses national Republicans' backing of Eric Hovde for Senate

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MADISON, Wis. — After the [NRSC's rollout of megamillionaire California bank owner Eric Hovde's Senate campaign](#) was attacked by Hovde's possible primary rival [Scott Mayer](#) and right wing radio host [Vicki McKenna](#), the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* [reported](#) that one of Hovde's other possible primary opponents, former Milwaukee County Sheriff David Clarke, also attacked Hovde and the NRSC.

Clarke, who is set to announce his decision on running "[early in the new year](#)," attacked the NRSC for recruiting wealthy, self-funding candidates like Hovde, claiming the NRSC is "abysmal" and outlined his strategy for running in both the primary and general election.

Earlier in this election cycle, Clarke [attacked the NRSC](#) for being "against winning," saying they "abhor winning."

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[Milwaukee Journal Sentinel: Former sheriff David Clarke dismisses national Republicans' backing of Eric Hovde for Senate](#)

By: Lawrence Andrea

- **Former Milwaukee County Sheriff David A. Clarke Jr. is unconcerned with national Republicans' decision to throw their support behind Madison banking mogul Eric Hovde in the upcoming GOP Senate**

primary in Wisconsin.

- **Clarke, who has made noise for months about potentially launching a bid to unseat Democratic Sen. Tammy Baldwin, told the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel that groups like the National Republican Senatorial Committee “don’t understand” grassroots voters in the state.**
- “This race,” he said in an emailed statement last week, “won’t be won trying to match Baldwin’s money. It will be won pointing to her do-nothing record as a DC career politician and (with) an effective ground game.”
- **Clarke’s comments came just days after the NRSC Chairman Steve Daines told the Journal Sentinel that Hovde will formally enter the Senate race “in the not-too-distant future” and with the backing of Senate Republicans’ main campaign arm. They are also the latest instance of the former sheriff stoking speculation that he could jump into the race** even as he’s shown no signs of building out a future campaign.
- Clarke has done most of his talking on social media. He shared polling earlier this year showing himself leading a hypothetical Republican field and often rails against Democrats and his own party’s establishment on his podcast, which launched around the time his name appeared in Senate race discussions.
- Specifically, he’s said his party is “against winning” and accused top GOP campaign groups of seeking wealthy candidates who can self-fund their campaigns.
- **“That’s not surprising,” Clarke said when asked for comment on Daines’ decision to publicly throw his support behind Hovde, a multi-millionaire. He doubled down on his claim that the group is looking for “filthy rich guys.”**
- “That’s a bad look,” Clarke said. “That obviously excludes me. I don’t know any filthy rich Black people in Wisconsin who can run.”
- Daines has dismissed a potential Clarke candidacy, telling the Journal Sentinel in September that Republicans are “looking for candidates who can win primaries and general elections.” Democrats, meanwhile, would like to see the controversial former sheriff jump into the race. The state party frequently labels the yet-to-form Republican primary “messy” and “brutal.”
- A number of little-known political figures have launched campaigns in recent months, and **wealthy Franklin businessman Scott Mayer is still considering a run of his own.**
- **But Clarke, who last week said he would make his decision about running for Senate early in the New Year, has said his party needs to**

send “new blood” to Washington and expand its donor outreach efforts. In his statement, he called the NRSC’s track record “abysmal.”

- A spokesman for the NRSC declined to comment on Clarke’s remarks.
- Still, while Clarke dismisses the NRSC’s endorsement of Hovde and claims the race “won’t be won trying to match Baldwin’s money,” the 2024 Senate race in Wisconsin is expected to be expensive.
- Baldwin has raised nearly \$18 million since the start of 2019, according to the Federal Election Commission. She sits on a war chest of just under \$7 million.