Why Christians should plan to vote

By Jesse Hughes
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Politics, for better or for worse, is something every single person will have some kind of interaction with in their lifetime. Many Christians bemoan this fact, seeing anything to do with politics as unnecessarily divisive, and choose to abstain from any political processes, including voting. But is this the right approach to take, or should Christians exercise their right to vote in the United States?

Some Christians today view all governments as evil and demonic and choose not to participate in the political process, but theologian Wayne Grudem sees this as the wrong way to view government. In his book "Politics – According to the Bible," Grudem points out that Romans 13 teaches all governing authority in this world comes from God and God alone. We are therefore subject to that authority and should seek to give "honor to whom honor is owed" as the passage teaches.

It is firmly established that Christians are to obey and honor the government, but what about politics? Should Christians be involved in the political process? Should Christians vote in seemingly divisive elections?

Politics, at its core, is nothing more than how human beings interact with one another in order to shape society. Whether you realize it or not, you participate in localized politics with many of the actions you take in your day-to-day life, whether it be eating at certain restaurants, participating in local gatherings or interacting with your neighbors. Politics should not be viewed as something to fear or avoid, but as an everyday part of life.

Since politics is unavoidable, it follows then that we as Christians should have some say or influence in political decisions through voting. Voting is a right we are given as citizens of the United States, and it is one we should take seriously. We should view this right in three main ways: as an act of loving our neighbor, as an act of stewardship and as a way of pursuing justice.

All men and women are made in the image of God, so it naturally follows that all political decisions which affect people should be issues we care about. Jesus tells us in Matthew 22 that one of the two great commandments is to "love your neighbor as yourself." One way to love our neighbor is to vote for candidates and policies that will uphold and respect our dignity and natural rights as image bearers.

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Voting should also be seen as an act of stewardship. By virtue of living in the United States, God has blessed us with the ability and right to vote for candidates who will uphold policies that make our country better and glorify God. The parable of the talents in Matthew 25 warns against us wasting the gifts that God has given us, so we should be diligent not only to use our right to vote but to use it in an educated manner.

Lastly, for the Christian, voting can be a useful method of upholding the command to seek justice found in Micah 6:8. This is done by voting for candidates who promote equal treatment under the law for all people in the nation and who will appoint and confirm judges and justices who will respect and uphold the Constitution.

Voting may seem like a hassle to many Christians, but it is absolutely necessary to take part in this important political action. Our own rights and those of our neighbors are determined by our voting for the right candidates to uphold our liberty and human dignity.

HUGHES is an opinion writer.

Monumental disrespect

By Mc'Kayla Carter
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The Washington Monument, the sky-scraping obelisk in remembrance of our first president, was found splattered with red paint and a profane message just days ago.

Defacing our nation's monuments has become a trend in recent years. People suddenly decide the individual or idea the monument stands for does not deserve the honor of a memorial and set out to destroy it. The most recent occurrence of this was the defacing of the Washington Monument.

According to The New York Times, red paint was splattered onto the monument by a man who is anti-government, and he wrote crude statements about the government with the paint. Workers will have to clean for several days in order to restore the famous monument to its original state.

Standing in the heart of Washington, D.C., the monument is also a well-known symbol of our nation and what it took to secure our freedom here.

According to The Art Newspaper, a primary catalyst in the recent surge of the defacing of monuments was the death of George Floyd in 2020. The website reports that in Alabama, the National Guard was called to protect local Confederate monuments. However, those actions led to others taking it upon themselves to remove national statues that honored people they believed were racist and oppressive.

Statues of Confederate soldiers, Christopher Columbus, former Vice President John C. Calhoun and many others were vandalized or removed during the summer protests, according to The Atlantic. While some of these men may have stood for the wrong things during their lives, their statues stood as a lesson to be learned. They lived in a different time period, and it is important that we learn from their accomplishments as well as their mistakes and strive to be better in the ways they failed.

Instead of taking up their complaints with local governments and requesting a statue to be removed, many people took it to the extreme. According to BBC News, some leaders agreed to remove the statues in a safe manner while leaders in other cities sought to educate people on why the statues were there.

The Maltz Museum suggests the idea that it is important to surface the issues a controversial statue brings up and not attempt to hide them. The museum discusses giving context to the statues and allowing the statue to start conversations. This approach does not deny a historical figure's positive qualities, but it provides a catalyst to understand their negative qualities.

Many of these people who have statues in their honor did amazing things for the building of our nation. They paved the way for Americans to have freedom and the choices we have today. No one is perfect, and while we should not necessarily idolize them, we should honor what they did for us and learn from their mistakes.

CARTER is an opinion writer.

You can't always get what you want

Managing the expectations of the pro-life movement

By Keaton Browder
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In the 2008 Batman film "The Dark Knight," the Joker described his seemingly chaotic nature, saying, "I'm a dog chasing cars. I wouldn't know what to do with one if I caught it." The pro-life movement is the dog that caught the car. After 50 years of chasing, Roe v. Wade got overturned, but now they don't know what to do.

The overturning of Roe v. Wade was a monumental victory for the movement, but it also created a sort of illusion. Behind all the smoke and mirrors, many Americans still like abortion.

According to the Pew Research Center, 61% of U.S. adults believe abortion should be legal in all or most cases while 37% believe it should be illegal in all or most cases. Every poll using every possible wording shows that the majority of Americans want at least some abortion access.

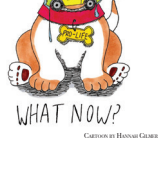
The pro-life side needs to win over public opinion on abortion before they can implement far-reaching pro-life legislation. Anything before that will fail.

Pragmatism is key for pro-lifers, and it is imperative they remember this axiom: Politics is the art of compromise. When you use politics to further your moral beliefs, there will have to be compromise – it's just the nature of politics.

Compromising politically is not compromising principally, but it is facing the facts of the current political environment. The facts are that many Americans like abortion with some limits. Abortion laws are legally under state – not national – jurisdictions now, and you can't always get what you want in American politics.

This is not to say that the pro-life movement should give up or that all hope is lost. Far from it, actually. It does mean they shouldn't step on a land mine trying to run to their finish line. If the end goal is to make abortion eradicated and unthinkable, there is a tremendous amount of work to do, and the current political environment surrounding abortion must be carefully navigated so as not to undermine all the previous work that has been accomplished.

Part of navigating this fragile environment is recognizing where there are opportunities and where there are roadblocks.



At the state level, there are many opportunities to protect unborn children. Since abortion is a state issue, many pro-life states can and already have implemented abortion bans. A total ban won't work in a moderate state like Virginia, but it would be welcomed with open arms in a place such as Oklahoma, which has already implemented almost a full ban with ease.

Nationally, abortion has been a losing political issue for pro-life politicians since the Dobbs decision, with backlisters support at several abortion state referendums such as in Kansas and Democrats winning special congressional elections, running almost solely on abortion rights. Making abortion a national campaign issue could actively hinder the chances that some pro-life candidates will snag a seat in Congress, especially those in toss-up elections in moderate areas.

A national total abortion ban is off the table – it would be impossible to pass, and abortion was just ruled a state issue. Most Americans don't want one either, but they are open to limiting late-term abortions. Another poll by Pew Research Center shows that Americans are more evenly split on a 14-week ban and that a majority actually support a 24-week ban.

Now let's revisit Virginia. Being a Democratic leaning state apart from last year's once-in-a-red-moon election, the state would be ground for a more moderate ban at either 15 or 24 weeks. Is it the preferred ban for pro-lifers? No. Is it better than the status quo? Absolutely. Could it lead to more preferred restrictions? That's the point.

America is not ready to get rid of abortion yet. If the pro-life movement wants to make abortion unthinkable, they have to win public opinion first.

Activists should not be suggesting idealistic proposals that are principled but unpassable. There needs to be a pragmatic, strategic approach to ending abortion.

Cartoon by Hannah Gilmer

BROWDER is the opinion editor.

Convo Worship Production

PRO

Lights, camera, action. From the introduction music that signals the start of Convocation to the glowing lights and smoke that appear as the Worship Collective begins to lead thousands of students in praise, it is no question that this is a notable event.

By Hannah Daniel
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Convocation is a semiweekly gathering that not only draws in the Liberty University student body, but it also attracts people around the city of Lynchburg and those who tune in via livestream.

However, the lingering debate among some spectators is whether the theatrics of it all hinders the message the school is trying to promote.

Some are concerned that the lights and special effects serve as a distraction that moves people away from the central focus of worship, yet the Convocation crowd often mistakes passion for performance. Unintelligible the two words is key to understanding the intentions behind the special effects during Convocation.

Liberty University carries the mission of training champions for Christ.

How does this affect the quality of the work done by Liberty? This means that everything the university does is done with excellence.

In the effort to raise up champions for Christ, Liberty utilizes the education students are receiving and invites them to use their skills and talents as a way of ministry and an opportunity to serve – from digital media students to instrumentalists and vocalists. The production for Convocation offers an opportunity for a variety of majors to bring glory to the kingdom through their gifts.

Additionally, the university's Convocation is the largest gathering of Christian students in the world, with over 10,000 students and people from around Lynchburg attending the twice-weekly event.

As a result, Convocation is a main point of attraction for prospective students when ever they tour the campus. This does not mean that Convocation is for show. On the contrary, the event showcases that whatever Liberty does, it does well.

Because this renowned Christian university has the means and ability to produce such a large event with high-quality technology and lights, it continually makes an effort to do so. These efforts are not for the sake of making the school known but for the sake of glorifying God.

Everything comes back to the posture of the heart. No matter how big or small a worship event may be, if the singers, speakers and musicians are doing it for their own glory, then it means nothing, and it takes away from the purpose of it all.

Yet if those on stage have a heart positioned toward worshiping God, then all the lights, cameras and even occasional smoke will not be a deterrent to the program but an enhancement of the message.

Some may view the special effects during Convocation as a distraction or as nothing more than a performance. This may stem from the way they were raised or the type of church they grew up in. While it is okay to have preferences on how you worship, don't mistake passion for performance.

Every event produced by Liberty University, no matter the size, is done with a genuine heart and a desire to bring glory and honor to God's heavenly kingdom.

DANIEL is an opinion writer.

CON

Convocation is the largest weekly gathering of Christian young people in the world. I think we have all been blessed in some capacity by this staple of Liberty University student life. Unfortunately, Convocation is not as accessible as one might imagine.

By Emmy Van Horn
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Liberty has always done its best to create an enriching and entertaining experience for students during Convocation. I remember certain days when the speaker was impactful or the song was just right. I truly appreciate all the hours of work that go into designing an event like Convocation and the concern that the staff at Liberty has for the students.

With all of that in mind, something must be changed about this event – the lights and the volume. My President Shepherd friend has directly helped with and heard reports of people who have passed out or had a seizure during worship. I've seen firsthand multiple people in the crowd who wear sunglasses and noise-canceling headphones to be able to make it through the event.

This is not an environment that is conducive to worship. While I understand not all of us deal with being overstimulated, many of our brothers and sisters are not able to worship because of the uncomfortably high decibel levels.

As a student body, many of us have differing views on what worship should look like in general. I am not advocating for the style or content of Convocation to change. I am simply suggesting minor adjustments to increase the comfort of those attending.

I implore the LU Stages production team to invest some time figuring out how we can work together to make Convocation a welcoming environment to all. If this is not achieved, we run the risk of turning students away from the rich messages that are heard from the Vines Center stage.

Being flashed in the eyes by bright stage lights is challenging for anyone trying to posture their heart for worship. We know the enemy already works overtime to distract us from spending time worshiping the Lord. Should the presentation of the worship in Convocation be placed above the students' hearts we are trying to reach?

> I long for my friends who struggle with overstimulation to enjoy the blessing of Convocation in the same way I do.

VAN HORN is an opinion writer.

Trump caused this midterm mess

By Keaton Browder
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Well, that was an embarrassment.

In what is and should be the death of the Trump era, Republicans fell flat on their faces in a midterm election that should have been a red wave with record inflation, crime and illegal immigration on the minds of voters.

This means starts and ends with former President Donald Trump – this was his red failure. The former president made this entire midterm about himself, and it's time for the Make America Great Again movement to die.

Trump spent a whopping $14.8 million on Senate races this midterm election despite raising $161 million that he can now use for whatever he wants – another losing presidential bid, perhaps. Mitch McConnell spent $238 million on candidates, yet Trump has the nerve to label McConnell a "RINO" – a Republican in name only – call for him to be impeached and mock his wife.

McConnell accomplished one of Trump's objectives – the overturning of Roe v. Wade – and propped up Trump's horrible candidates for him. How is he the RINO? Trump's attempt at a mutiny to remove McConnell from Republican Senate leadership is really his attempt to put the blame on somebody else.

Trump also picked other political fights with fellow Republicans, trying to play kingmaker in several primaries just for his handpicked candidates to lose. There are too many to list, but a quick Google search on Pennsylvania tells you all you need to know.

"Well, I think if they (Republicans) win, I should get all the credit. If they lose, I should not be blamed at all," Trump said in an election night interview with NewsNation.

When he wasn't avoiding blame on election night, Trump was "truthing" celebrations of losing Republican candidates on his failed social media site Truth Social.

"Joe O'Dea lost BIG! MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN!!!" Trump wrote.

He was referring to the moderate Republican Senate candidate Joe O'Dea, who lost to incumbent Sen. Michael Bennet in Colorado. O'Dea, a vocal Trump critic, as is the blue state he was running to represent, clashed with the former president many times on the campaign trail. It looks like Trump's idea of making American great again means electing a Democratic senator over a Republican who doesn't lick his boots.

One of these disagreements stemmed from Trump's requirement that his endorsees go along with his "Big Lie" claim that the 2020 election was stolen from him. Election-denying candidates up and down ballots across the country were strongly repudiated this midterm – again, too many to list. Voters outside the Trump base think those people are bonkers and simply did not vote for them.

How can anyone still think Trump is an asset to the Republican Party after this midterm? Heck, make that Jan. 6, 2021.

As kingmaker of the current Republican Party, Trump is responsible for this red recession. His fingerprints are all over this GOP disaster. This midterm was a clear rejection of the MAGA movement and election-denialism.

Not a single one of Trump's yes-men performed well – not a single one.

Do you want to know which Republican dominated election day without Trump's help? Ron "DeFunte" DeSantis coasted to a 20% win in the Florida governor's race in a state Trump won by 3% in 2020.

And just a year ago, Gov. Glenn Youngkin won when Trump sat quietly on the sidelines during his shocking win in Virginia. Yet, in a last-ditch attempt to keep himself at the top of the party he destroyed, Trump has gone on a smear campaign against these two successful Republican governors and countless other Republicans.

This loss was worse for Republicans than anyone might think – the unintended consequences are astounding and far-reaching. This outcome gives Democrats and the Biden administration the impression that the American people are happy with what they have done to the country, which is far from true.

When Biden was recently asked what he will do differently after the elections, he said, "Nothing."

Democrats still have a majority in the Senate, and they will likely only be a few-seat minority in the House against a fractured GOP. They walk away with hardly a scratch after these midterm elections.

The Republican Party needs to wake up. It is long past time to move on from former President Donald Trump. Republicans have fallen flat in 2018, 2020, 2022 and potentially 2024 because of Trump. Reverse course, or else the party is doomed.

This isn't "something a Democrat would say." This is calling out the person that has actively butchered Republicans' chances at success in election cycles time after time. How could this be any more pro-Trump? Because of Trump's upcoming "big announcement" needs to be announcing his retirement from politics forever.

Cartoon by Hannah Gilmer

BROWDER is the opinion editor.

CORRECTION:

Keaton made many incorrect predictions about the midterm elections last issue. He had too much faith in the American people and the Republican Party. He is very sorry.

Kanye canceled

Adidas has ended its yearslong business deal with Kanye West, who is now known as "Ye," due to his recent antisemitic remarks. The Washington Post reports that the antisemitic tweets paired with Ye's recent outrage-sparking "White Lives Matter" apparel gave grounds for Adidas to end its partnership with him and the sale of his Yeezy sneakers, which "cost him most of his empire."

By Justin Bower
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Ye has been unpredictable and problematic in the last few years. The general public and health officials should show concern for him and should refrain from using him as a poster child for a political agenda.

It is no small secret that Ye has struggled with mental health, namely bipolar disorder, which the New York Post ascribes to his "erratic behavior long before he went public with his diagnosis." From his 2018 album "Ye" with the words "I hate being bipolar / it's awesome" on the cover to his 2020 presidential campaign, it seems that Ye's outlandish behavior is a combination of bipolar disorder and the easy means to money and power that he's had for decades. His profession of Christianity and subsequent album release in 2019 – "JESUS IS KING" – his first overtly Christian musical effort – solidified his unpredictability as a celebrity.

> The general public and health officials should show concern for him and should refrain from using him as a poster child for a political agenda.

This trend of unpredictability and uncharacteristic behavior continues with tweets regarding hatred for Jews ("I'm going death con 3 on JEWISH PEOPLE"), which he attempted to claim immunity for by virtue of being Black. Twitter nonetheless suspended his account. Since this remark, Billboard's timeline reveals that Gap, Foot Locker and other companies have pulled any Ye-related products from their shelves in solidarity with the Jewish community.

While free speech is something that must be constitutionally afforded to all Americans, hate speech is neither permissible in the social media realm – which has drop-down boxes hateful conduct online – or reflective of the Christianity that Ye claims. If he is a Christian, he must be held accountable as one. The hope is that he is surrounded by many well-grounded Christians possessing the ability and compassion to disciple him into a "life worthy of (his) calling" (Ephesians 4:1).

Though he claims Christianity and seems to be standing up to what many would deem "woke" establishments, Christians and Conservatives should not use him as a poster child for their political agendas. As someone with bipolar disorder and a relatively "new" Christian, Ye should be looked on with compassion and love, not taken advantage of as an example of celebrities resisting the progressive movement in America.

David Saxbayova | Google Images

ALBUM – Kanye West's 2019 project "JESUS IS KING" was popular among Christians.

Ye's comments are, frankly, irredeemable. Context does not make his tweets less hateful or his "White Lives Matter" apparel less problematic. In the month of October, Ye was effectively canceled by every major company and a host of celebrities. It would not be fair of me to argue that "cancel culture" is a good thing or a right means of discipline, but I am hopeful that the loss of capital and influence will drive him to what he's claimed before: the Christian God.

Whatever the world may do to Ye's reputation and assets, Christ can offer salvation and sanctification so sweet and undying that Ye may rest amid the chaos he's caused. In Christ alone, Ye may find the deepest sincerity to repent of his hate speech and to become a better person inwardly. This is the way of true change: Christ's inward refreshing will have the most profound outward expression, should it be his will to work in Ye.

BOWER is an opinion writer.

Ted Eytan | Google Images

PROTEST – The Supreme Court decision to overturn Roe v. Wade was met with much protest.

Democrats vow to codify Roe v. Wade

By Jesse Hughes
@jhughes776

The midterm elections will be here before you know it, and if you go by recent swings in polling, Democrats are in serious trouble. Several key swing states such as Arizona and Georgia that were believed to be safe for Democrats just months ago are now seen as toss-ups that the Republican Party will sweep. In a desperate attempt to reverse these trends, Democrats have decided to hedge their bets by doubling down on abortion.

Leftist politicians, including President Joe Biden, have continued to make the same promise to the American people: "If you elect us and keep us in power, we will codify Roe v. Wade." This talking point is present everywhere you look: with Democratic candidates like John Fetterman and Charlie Crist using Roe as their mantra for restrictions in debates. No matter how many times they repeat this line, however, the polls show that it is not working.

Multiple polls have shown time and time again that abortion is not among the top issues for voters in this election. The top issues voters care about are inflation, the economy and, in many key swing states, crime. While this may seem somewhat discouraging to pro-life individuals such as myself that more people don't care about the unborn, the silver lining of this is that Republicans, the party of life, are leading on all of these top issues.

Despite the plea of Democratic candidates to "look at these scary Republicans who are trying to strip women's rights away," the American people are choosing to focus on their pocket books. To quote a Clinton-era Democratic strategist, "It's the economy, stupid." Democrats are just not getting this message and instead are digging in on abortion, and it's just not working.

One of the places this has been best seen is in the New York governor's race between incumbent Democrat Kathy Hochul and Republican Rep. Lee Zeldin. While Zeldin has been pushing the issue of crime very successfully, Hochul has been pouring money nonstop into ads attacking Zeldin's stance on abortion. During a debate between the two, the governor said to Zeldin, "I don't know why that (crime) is so important to you."

The governor of New York, a state where crime has increased by 30% over the last year, is so out of touch with her own constituents that she doesn't know why crime is so important. This lack of awareness is reflected in the polls in New York, with the latest polls indicating that Hochul only has a six-point lead on Zeldin, a stark drop from the 17-point lead just a month ago and the 24-point lead she held in June. While it remains doubtful that the GOP will flip the state, I am not too surprised Zeldin continues to give Hochul a run for her money.

Just a month ago, the midterms looked like a red splash rather than a red wave, but in just a few short weeks, the polls have shifted so much it appears the massive tsunami expected in the spring could be plausible after all.

As long as Republicans continue to hamper the Biden administration on its bundling of the economy while subsequently tying Democratic candidates to those positions, the GOP has this election in the bag. As we have seen time and time again, the Democrats have no answers other than to pivot to abortion, but it's not going to work for them.

HUGHES is an opinion writer.

Winning a race with a foot injury

Republicans have shot themselves in the foot with bad candidates

By Keaton Browder
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Everything is at stake in this midterm election. Both houses of Congress are up for grabs, and control of the most powerful legislature in the world hinges on a few tight elections. What does the Republican Party – and Democrats in one major instance – bring to the table? A few of bad candidates that could cost valuable elections and potentially shift the balance of power.

The presidency and Congress are both Democrat-controlled, and inflation is near a 40-year high, meaning the national environment should heavily favor Republicans because Americans love gridlock in a divided government. However, many bad candidates in Senate, House and governor's elections throughout the country are directly costing the GOP election victories – even potential control of the U.S. Senate.

Much of this responsibility falls on two "Make America Great Again" Republicans – former President Donald Trump and venture capitalist Peter Thiel. Trump has cast a wider net due to his political reign in the Republican Party, but Paypal cofounder Thiel may have unintentionally butchered the GOP's chances to retake the Senate majority.

During the Republican primaries, Thiel gave $15 million each to the senatorial campaigns of Blake Masters in Arizona and J.D. Vance in Ohio, who both won their respective primaries with Thiel's help and the ever-valuable Trump endorsement. After both of his hand-picked candidates won their primaries, he stopped funding them for their general elections, expecting Mitch McConnell and Republican donors to carry his golden boys to the finish line for him.

Now, Thiel has said he will spend $5 million in Arizona to prop up his poorly polling candidate, who will likely cost Republicans a valuable Senate flip opportunity. Meanwhile, Vance has been a money sump in what should have been an easy win, requiring tens of millions of scarce GOP dollars to keep his seat safe when that money should have been spent in other races. Vance is expected to win in a race that was much closer than it needed to be, while Masters is still pulling behind his incumbent opponent Sen. Mark Kelly.

Trump's active involvement in Republican success is affecting even more races outside of Thiel's messes in Arizona and Ohio.

In some cases, his endorsement of bad candidates in Republican primaries have even guaranteed Republican losses in winnable seats. In Pennsylvania and Maryland, neither Republican nominee for governor even has a chance in those very winnable races, as Trump's terrible, hand-picked candidates in Doug Mastriano and Dan Cox, respectively, are projected to get crushed in their general elections.

The Senate is much more of a mess and affects the lives of people in all 50 states.

After all, this mess started when Trump's voter fraud claims tanked Republican turnout in the 2021 Georgia Senate runoff elections, costing Republicans two Senate seats held by Kelly Loeffler and David Perdue. Had the 250,000 Republicans absent in the runoff election (after voting in the general election) returned to vote in the runoff, the Senate would currently be 52-48 for Republicans, and the Herschel Walker campaign wouldn't exist.

Speaking of Walker, his nomination as Trump's past football buddy is another one of the former president's blunders that is hurting Republicans' chances. After countless scandals, such as claiming he was a police officer, being accused of paying for abortions and threatening to shoot his ex-wife, Walker has found himself in a coin toss race trying to flip the Democrat-held seat back to the GOP. Any no-name button-up, or even Walker's Heisman Trophy by itself, could beat the incumbent Democrat, but Walker's scandals and lack of senatorial vibe have Georgians reasonably hesitant.

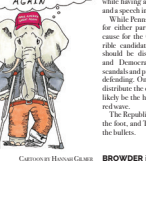
Now for the granddaddy of them all: Pennsylvania. Trump chose his television friend, Dr. Mehmet Oz of Oprah Winfrey fame, and Republicans barely nominated him in their primary. Oz struggled in the campaign, polling as low as 37% in what should be a 50-50 nail-biter, until experiencing a recent surge due to funding, the shifting national political environment and another big reason – his opponent Lt. Gov. John Fetterman.

Despite many Republican misses this midterm, Fetterman is the Democrats' airballed free throw in front of a packed gym to lose the game. After suffering from a stroke days before the Democratic primary, Democrats decided to stick with Fetterman as their candidate despite a big question mark about his health, and he still has yet to release clear medical records showing his capability of serving in the U.S. Senate, regardless of his health. Unsurprisingly, Fast-forward to the lone debate between Oz and Fetterman on Oct. 25. It was hard to watch. Picture Michael and Jim's dinner party from "The Office."

Democrats irresponsibly forced Fetterman to stay on the campaign trail in one of the tightest Senate elections this year when he should be recovering from a stroke. Then, he had to agree to debate a television personality for an hour while having auditory processing issues and a speech impediment. Irresponsible.

While Pennsylvania is not a lost cause for either party nor the Senate a lost cause for the GOP, the number of terrible candidates in this election cycle should be disheartening. Republicans and Democrats alike are defending scandals and problems nobody should be defending. Only Nov. 8 will adequately distribute the consequences in what will likely be the hindrance of a prospective red wave.

The Republican Party has shot itself in the foot, and Thiel and Trump provided the bullets.



Cartoon by Hannah Gilmer

BROWDER is the opinion editor.