**Johnson tries to steer state GOP on abortion policy**

By WisPolitics.com

Democrats are again counting on the abortion issue to help their candidates in the fall. And Republicans are trying to blunt the power of the issue.

U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson, who barely survived his reelection bid in 2022 to get another six-year term, took to the stage at the recent state GOP convention in Appleton to plead with GOP activists to put aside their differences on issues such as abortion and unify to deliver Wisconsin for Donald Trump this fall.

Johnson's pitch to Republicans at the state convention was that regardless of their personal feelings on abortion, the party must embrace allowing states to set reasonable limits on how late into a pregnancy an abortion may be performed because that’s where most voters are.

The Oshkosh Republican acknowledged “many people in the room don’t like what I’m saying.” That’s a nod to those in the party base who support a national ban as well as stricter regulations than states, like Wisconsin, which allow the procedure up to 20 weeks of pregnancy.

But Johnson argued it was the reality of the situation for Republicans, and they have to blunt the issue so they can win elections.

“If those of us who want to protect life, if we don’t win, the end result will be unrestricted abortion and infanticide up until the moment of birth,” Johnson warned, insisting Democrats are the ones who have the true “extreme” position on abortion.

Johnson acknowledged other “brush fires occurring throughout counties,” asking Republicans to stay unified in their mission to win.

“We can unite on that, can’t we?” Johnson said.

Johnson’s comments on abortion mirrored those of Trump during a campaign stop in Waukesha earlier this year. He told supporters, “You have to go with your heart. You have to do what’s right, but you also have to get elected because if you don’t get elected, a lot of bad things will happen beyond the abortion issue.”

Johnson told activists the stakes were too high this fall to be divided. He also laid out a mission statement he’s put together for Senate Republicans: “To fight and defeat the ideology and the policies of the radical left that are destroying this country.”

Also at the convention, U.S. Rep. Byron Donalds, R-Fla., slammed President Joe Biden as the “master of disaster” and Democrats as “crazy.”

Donalds, a frequent surrogate for Trump, told party activists they have a simple job in 2024—”to defeat the crazy, radical, Marxist left that has destroyed the Democrat Party.”

Donalds knocked Biden on foreign policy issues, including the billions spent on Ukraine aid, American deaths during the withdrawal of Afghanistan and Biden’s approach to the Israel-Hamas war.

He called Biden the “master of disaster,” adding the country deserves better than a disaster in the White House.

The state Democratic Party convention is June 8-9 in Milwaukee.

State Democratic Party Chair Ben Wikler blasted the Republican Party as “extreme” and “bankrupt” as party activists convened for the annual GOP state convention in Appleton.

Wikler made the comments during a state Democratic Party press call with Assembly Minority Leader Greta Neubauer, D-Racine, Senate Minority Leader Dianne Hesselbein, D-Middleton, and Milwaukee election commissioner and Latina community leader Patricia Ruiz-Cantu.

“The Republican Party of Wisconsin is bankrupt—in every sense of the word. They’re broke. They’re beholden to Donald Trump and his bankrupt ideas and they’re politically bankrupt, representing (an) extreme agenda that has no resonance with the people of Wisconsin,” Wikler said.

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