

Rock Shock: Now This Celebrity Is Running for Public Office

With many Americans who oppose President Donald Trump clamoring for Duane “The Rock” Johnson to run for president in 2020, few probably knew there was another celebrity “Rock” ready to dip his toe in the political pond.

Robert James Ritchie, otherwise known to most of the world as “Kid Rock,” is officially attempting a run for U.S. Senate with the aim of competing against Sen. Debbie Stabenow, D-Mich., who is up for re-election in 2018. The 46-year-old native of Romeo, Michigan teased a “major announcement” on his official Twitter account late Wednesday afternoon.

It didn’t take long for social media to find his campaign website: . Asked about the website, he confirmed it was legitimate.

Ritchie started out as a hip-hop recording artist before moving on to other genres, most recently country music. Despite his notoriety for lyrics that are far from family-friendly in his early days, his more recent works have been a bit less profane, focusing more on issues that resonate with Middle America. He’s also become an ordained minister, although his personal views are considered moderate.

While he is a registered Republican, he has a definite libertarian streak. In an interview with the U.K.’s *The Guardian* newspaper in 2015, he said:

I am definitely a Republican on fiscal issues and the military, but I lean to the middle on social issues. I am no fan of abortion, but it’s not up to a man to tell a woman what to do. As an ordained minister, I don’t look

forward to marrying gay people, but I'm not opposed to it.

Ritchie has been a vocal advocate for the military and local law enforcement and is a reserve deputy in the Oakley, Michigan, police force.

In 2012, he endorsed former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney for the GOP presidential nomination. In 2016, he initially supported Dr. Ben Carson, but switched his support to President Donald Trump when the retired neurosurgeon—now secretary of housing and urban development—dropped out of the race and gave his own endorsement to the former real estate businessman.

He became one of the most prominent celebrity supporters of the president during the late stages of the campaign.

Stabenow is wrapping up her third term in the Senate and is the state's senior senator. She currently chairs the Senate Democratic Policy Committee and is ranking member of the Senate Agriculture Committee. Recently, however, she has drawn the ire of conservatives for using her blue-slip privileges to block Michigan Supreme Court Justice Joan Larsen, who was nominated to the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals by the president. {eoa}