

These Two Presidential Candidates Roll Out Dueling Endorsements

You may have heard of dueling pianos, and you've probably heard of dueling banjos, but have you ever heard of dueling endorsements?

Two Republican presidential front-runners—Ted Cruz and Marco Rubio—appear to have launched into an endorsement contest this week that had yet to reach its zenith on Wednesday. In the past 24 hours alone, the campaigns have rolled out more than a half-dozen endorsement announcements.

For Cruz:

- **Nevada Attorney General Adam Laxalt**, whom the Cruz camp calls “Nevada’s leading elected conservative,” is an Iraq War veteran and has accepted the role of Nevada state chairman for the campaign. He said, “After meeting with many of the Republican candidates for President and carefully considering their respective candidacies for office, I am proud to put my full faith, confidence and support behind Ted Cruz for President of the United States. Ted Cruz will fight to reverse the harmful trends of this administration. We can no longer sit back and watch Washington leaders—from both parties—continue running up record deficits and debt, while rapidly growing government and its overbearing encroachment into our daily lives. Taking on entrenched bureaucrats and special interests requires courage, focus and determination. Many of our federal programs are inefficient, unfocused and unaccountable. I believe Ted Cruz has the necessary courage, focus and determination to get the job done. Like Ronald Reagan did in 1980, Ted

Cruz will sweep in a new, courageous conservative movement and bring back the optimism and pride we once shared.”

- **Liberty Institute President and CEO Kelly Shackelford**, who leads one of the nation’s largest legal organizations dedicated entirely to defending and restoring religious liberty. He said: “For me, the number one issue is religious liberty, and on that issue the choice is easy. Ted Cruz not only believes in religious liberty, he champions it. I have fought alongside him and watched his willingness to sacrifice for our first freedoms. His brilliance, his understanding, and his proven commitment—not just words—are unequalled in this race. I don’t have to worry about what he will do: I’ve watched him do it in battle. As someone who has been committed to fighting for religious liberty for over 26 years, I wholeheartedly endorse Ted Cruz for President. He is the clear choice.”
- **Former South Carolina Attorney General Charlie Condon**, who served two terms of office in the Palmetto State, has led campaigns for John McCain, George W. Bush, and Bob Dole in the past. He said, “Ted Cruz’s fidelity to the Constitution and the rule of law makes him a welcome figure after eight years of Obama’s lawlessness. No one has fought harder to protect the rights and freedoms of Americans than Ted Cruz. From Texas to Washington, in the courtroom and on the Senate floor, he has been the leading voice opposing Obama’s unconstitutional executive orders, usurpation of legislative power, and selective enforcement of the law. With Ted Cruz as President, we will have someone in office who respects not only his constitutional authority but also the limitations of that power that guarantee our liberty. I am proud to support Cruz for President.”

For Rubio:

- **Southeast Iowa County Chairs**—includes State Rep. Bobby Kaufmann (R-Wilton), son of Iowa GOP chairman Jeff Kaufmann. He said: “Marco Rubio’s national security experience makes him the right choice for Southeast Iowa. He was ahead of the curve in calling for stronger policies to combat ISIS and all forms of terrorism around the globe. In these dangerous times we need Marco Rubio’s proven judgment in the White House.”
- **Iowa Business Leaders**—includes Don Decker, president of Fort Dodge based Decker Truck Line, one of the nation’s top trucking companies. He said: “Marco Rubio has the right plan to strengthen our economy. He is a next generation conservative who knows presidents don’t create jobs, but smart leadership in the White House will help our free enterprise system thrive. I encourage all Iowa Republicans to caucus for Marco Rubio on February 1 as a critical first step to getting the country back on the right track.”
- **Georgia Leaders**—includes U.S. Rep. Austin Scott, Rubio’s Peach State chairman. He said: “I’m proud to support Marco Rubio for president. As I speak to fellow conservatives in Georgia it’s been impossible to ignore the growing enthusiasm for Marco Rubio’s campaign, and I am glad to expand our team today. For the first time in a long time, even many young Americans and disaffected voters have a true conservative candidate that can connect with them about the challenges they face. With Marco Rubio as America’s next president, the future will be very bright.”
- **More to come**—Rubio is set to campaign in Iowa on Saturday and Monday with nine stops planned in the Hawkeye State. Joining him will be Sen. Cory Gardner (R-Colo.) and Rep. Kristi Noem (R-S.D.). While neither has officially endorsed him, past travel partners on the stump have used the appearances as opportunities to do so.

Rubio and Cruz have been engaged in a war of words over the past few months, triggered by differing views on national security and economics, and in no small measure by the latter's front-runner status in Iowa. Rubio's numbers in the first-in-the-nation caucus state are up slightly, while Cruz' have come down just a little in recent days.