

After fascist Matt Gaetz withdraws, Trump names another Florida reactionary, Pam Bondi, for Attorney General

Jacob Crosse
21 November 2024

Eight days after he was nominated by President-elect Donald Trump to serve as Attorney General, Matt Gaetz announced he would be withdrawing from consideration.

The former Florida representative, a Trump-loyalist and friend to the Proud Boys militia group, posted on his Twitter/X account Thursday morning, “While the momentum was strong, it is clear that my confirmation was unfairly becoming a distraction to the critical work of the Trump/Vance Transition.”

Hated by his Republican and Democratic colleagues alike, but for different reasons, Gaetz faced an uphill confirmation battle in the Senate. While Republicans will hold a 53-47 majority in the chamber after incumbent Pennsylvania Democrat Bob Casey conceded to Republican Dave McCormick on Thursday, CBS News reported that at least eight Republicans and every Democrat opposed Gaetz’s nomination.

Posting on his social media site Thursday, Trump accepted Gaetz’s withdrawal, writing, “I greatly appreciate the recent efforts of Matt Gaetz in seeking approval to be Attorney General. He was doing very well but, at the same time, did not want to be a distraction for the Administration, for which he has much respect.”

The “distraction” referred to by Gaetz and Trump is a currently suppressed House Ethics Committee report which the Committee, in a party-line vote, voted to keep secret on Wednesday. A second vote on whether to release the report is currently scheduled for December 5.

Cable news programs and the capitalist press have

carried dozens of stories alleging what may or may not be included in the report, and whether or not it will be released. Predictably, there has been saturation coverage of alleged sex and drug crimes, drowning out any discussion of Gaetz’s fascist political views and the reasons Trump selected him to serve as a legal hit man against his opponents..

The main allegation in the report is that Gaetz, 42, paid for one or more sexual encounters with a 17-year-old in 2017, the first year he served in Congress. There are also allegations of accepting improper gifts and obstructing government investigations into his own conduct.

In addition to the House Ethics Committee investigation, Gaetz had previously been subjected to a three-year investigation by the Department of Justice related to allegations of child sex trafficking, statutory rape and illicit drug use. The DoJ closed its investigation without bringing any charges.

The use of the sex scandal to take down Gaetz follows a long pattern of both capitalist parties settling their internecine conflicts by avoiding any intervention by the masses, or discussion of the actual political and democratic issues at stake. The same playbook is currently being used against Trump’s fascist pick for Secretary of Defense, Pete Hegseth. The former Fox News personality and defender of war criminals is currently fending off accusations that he raped an unconscious woman in 2017. Hegseth subsequently paid an undisclosed sum for the woman’s silence.

In the case of Gaetz, Democrats and their allies in the press have focused their opposition based on the

allegations in the ethics report. There has been virtually no discussion, or objection, to the fact that Gaetz was among the 147 Republicans who voted to overturn the 2020 election following the attack on the Capitol.

Gaetz publicly blamed “antifa” for the attack while privately he sought a “blanket pardon” from Trump. After President Joe Biden was inaugurated, Gaetz and Georgia Rep. Majorie Taylor Greene embarked on the “America First Tour” in support Trump’s “stolen election” lies.

Serving as Trump’s proxy in the House last year, Gaetz filed the motion to unseat then-Speaker of the House Kevin McCarthy for agreeing to a government spending package Trump opposed. Removing McCarthy paved the way, with the help of the Democrats, for the ascension of current ultra-right Speaker Mike Johnson. Johnson authored the pseudo-legal theory Republicans used to justify voting to overturn the election results *after* the attack on the Capitol.

Gaetz is not currently a member of the House, since on November 13, hours after Trump announced his selection for AG, he resigned from Congress “effective immediately.” In a letter delivered to Speaker Johnson, Gaetz wrote that in addition to resigning, “I do not intend to take the oath of office for the same office in the 119th Congress, to pursue the position of Attorney General in the Trump Administration.”

There is some speculation that Gaetz withdrew as a nominee to block the release of the ethics report, but it is also possible that he stepped back to accept a job within the Trump White House that does not require Senate confirmation hearing.

While Gaetz has been sidelined for now, there has been no change in the fascist trajectory of the Trump administration. Within hours, Trump announced on Truth Social that his replacement for Gaetz would be former Florida Attorney General Pam Bondi. Trump boasted that Bondi, “was prosecutor for nearly 20 years, where she was very tough on Violent Criminals,” and that she is “an AMERICA FIRST Fighter.”

Bondi was Florida’s attorney general from 2011

through 2019 and served on Trump’s defense during his first impeachment trial in February 2020. While running for attorney general in 2013, Bondi received a \$25,000 donation from the Donald J. Trump Foundation, after which Bondi declined to join in a lawsuit against the for-profit scam known as Trump University.

A regular on Fox News, Newsmax and at CPAC, in November 2020 Bondi repeated Trump’s claims of “voter fraud” on Fox. In service of Trump’s coup, she joined the legal arm of the America First Policy Institute, which became known as America First Legal, in 2020.

Through America First Legal, Bondi advanced Trump’s agenda, such as filing lawsuits against schools that teach sex education. She also helped coordinate Trump’s legal defense and his various Super PACs.

In an attempt to cultivate a fascist base of support among anti-science soldiers, the legal organization also sought to block the Biden administration from discharging soldiers who refused to get the COVID-19 vaccine.

In the lead-up to the 2024 election, Bondi traveled the country with other Republicans, such as Representative Greene, on a “voter integrity” tour aimed at whipping up militia elements to challenge the vote had the election been closer.

On Thursday, *New York Times* reporter Kenneth Vogel reported that Bondi is currently lobbying for the Ballard Firm, “the lobbying shop of top Trump fundraiser Brian Ballard.” The *Times* previously reported that Ballard helped raise more than \$50 million for the Trump campaign and that he had personally given Trump more than a quarter million dollars.

Vogel noted that Bondi has previously lobbied on behalf of major corporations including Amazon, General Motors and Uber.



To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact