

Civil War in the Republican Party



By Cliff Kincaid

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When Republican Larry Hogan lost his Senate race against Democrat Angela Alsobrooks in Maryland, the conservatives in the Republican Party came out as the big winners. Hogan was a Never-Trump RINO, a Republican in Name Only, and he would have been a thorn in the side of President Donald Trump. He was a favorite of the ageing Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell, who is stepping down from his post. His successor will be chosen on November 13.

The contenders are Minority Whip John Thune of South Dakota, John Cornyn of Texas, and Rick Scott of Florida. Scott is the more conservative candidate and is campaigning for the post as the voice of MAGA.

Former Trump adviser David N. Bossie, President of Citizens United and a Maryland resident, is [backing](#) Scott. He was the deputy campaign manager to the Donald Trump presidential campaign in 2016.

The results of this race, conducted by secret ballot, will help determine whether Trump's agenda moves forward in a Republican Senate.

To understand current divisions in the Republican Party, consider the big money behind the pro-Hogan PAC called Maryland's Future. To help Hogan, it spent tens of millions telling Marylanders that Alsobrooks was a crook. Nevertheless,

she won, in part because conservatives in the Free State wouldn't vote for Hogan. The "popular" former governor got only 45 percent of the vote to Alsobrooks' 52.6 percent.

The Maryland Republican Party claimed it was "building the conservative base" but endorsed Hogan's pro-abortion extremism.

There is a lesson for Republicans as they contemplate how and why a dark money PAC called Maryland's Future spent more than \$20 million in a futile effort to elect Hogan. This is money that could have been spent on other Republicans in more important and winnable races.

The Open Secrets web site [names](#) the treasurer as Craig Mareno, an Alabama-based accountant, although the address of the PAC is said to be in Maryland. Axios [reported](#) one of its major contributors was billionaire financier Ken Griffin, founder and CEO of Citadel, a hedge fund.

Pamela Wood of the Baltimore Banner [reported](#) that the pro-Hogan super PAC also took in significant contributions from: James S. Davis, chairman of New Balance (\$1 million), Stephen A. Wynn of Wynn Resorts (\$1 million), Manzanita Action Fund in California (\$1 million), Stephen A. Schwarzman, chairman of the Blackstone Group investment management company (\$1.5 million), Thomas P. Peterffy, chairman of Interactive Brokers brokerage firm (\$1.5 million) and the Senate Leadership Fund (\$2 million).

The Senate Leadership Fund [describes](#) itself as "an independent Super PAC" with "one goal: to build a Republican Senate majority that will defend America from Chuck Schumer and Senate Democrats' destructive far-left agenda." It was established in 2015 by supporters of Senator Mitch McConnell.

In the case of Maryland, it was financing an anti-Trump RINO destined to lose.

Axios quoted an Alsobrooks adviser as saying that “Mitch McConnell is obsessed with flipping Maryland red and taking back the Senate majority for Republicans.”

This makes some sense, since McConnell has been behaving like an anti-Trump RINO as well. However, Hogan would have been an anti-Trump vote, like McConnell.

For his part, Griffin has some conservative instincts, as he runs a [foundation](#) dedicated to “Strengthening American freedoms and promoting civic engagement,” with some of the funds going to protecting free speech on campus, a worthy goal.

In the case of Larry Hogan, however, free speech suffered when he was Governor of Maryland. He was known as Lockdown Larry during COVID when he shut down churches and kept pot stores and liquor businesses open.

Conservative Republican Dan Cox, then a State Delegate, had filed [impeachment charges](#) against Hogan over the governor’s handling of COVID and related matters.

When Trump seemed to reluctantly endorse Hogan in the Senate race against Alsobrooks, Hogan’s team responded with contempt, saying, “Governor Hogan has been clear he is not supporting President Trump, just as he didn’t in 2016 and 2020.”

Conservatives in Maryland didn’t have a choice. Alsobrooks was an ideological extremist, while Hogan was exposed as a politician with no principles who sounded like a Democrat to get votes.

If he had by chance been elected, there was nothing to stop Hogan from changing party affiliations once he was elected, from Republican to Democrat or Independent. But he lost so the GOP was spared this embarrassment.

A PAC associated with Democrat Governor Wes Moore was

[attacking](#) Hogan as “the first governor in Maryland history to make millions of dollars while in office.” Described as the “Next Obama” and a future Democratic Party candidate for president, Moore favors sex-changes for children and made millions by serving on the board of a marijuana company.

What is more, he was exposed as a fraud by the New York Times, which noted that his previous claims to receiving the Bronze Star for military service and a Maryland College Football Hall of Fame Award were false.

This is the sad state of politics in Maryland today.

Conservatives believe the “Free State” of Maryland must be liberated. They are trying to do so through groups like the [Frederick County Conservative Club](#), not through the local and state Republican Party.

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