

Democrats Should Run Incumbent President Biden, Political Historian Says

Incumbent Presidents win 2/3rds of the time they run, history podcast says.

POMONA, NJ, UNITED STATES, December 21, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- There is a lot of discussion about whether Democrats should run President Biden for a second term or consider other options. According to a recent episode of "My History Can Beat Up Your Politics" Podcast, the party should run Biden for a simple reason: he's the incumbent President. And despite the negatives of Biden's age and current polls, incumbent Presidents win 2/3rds of the time.

"History could not be clearer – run the incumbent," said the host of the podcast, Bruce Carlson. "Switching candidates is the riskier move for either party."

What about current polls that show Biden behind Trump, Haley, and other rivals for the Presidency?

"Ask President Dukakis or President Kerry about polls," said Carlson. "Clinton was a goner at the end of 1995, Obama was thought to be a goner in 2011. George W. Bush was thought to be a goner - ask his campaign manager Karl Rove - they never felt safe. But they won."

But what about Carter, Bush I, and Trump, who lost the election?

"Incumbents lose, and Biden could lose, but since radio was invented, they lose only when there's a recession or when there's intense intra-party fighting - of the level of Democratic Convention 1968 or the Reagan-Ford divided convention," Carlson said. "And usually, it's a recession."

For this reason, Carlson does not think Biden's age is a factor.

"I realize it's being talked about," Carlson says. "I also acknowledge that many Democrats and most Republicans wish they had someone else. An election is different from wishes."

More importantly, the cure is not easy. Picking another candidate is super-risky when you look at history. Carlson says if the party picks a governor or a Senator hoping for a fresh face, that person can't give a State of the Union, issue a veto, or command the armed forces. They'll fly on a rented plane, and their press conferences are held from offices and hotels instead of The

White House.

"It's risky. No one is focusing on how risky that switch from Biden to a Whitmer, a Newsom, or a Polis would be," Carlson said. "Reagan pulled it off. But Lyndon Johnson, Harry Truman, Dwight Eisenhower, Bill Clinton, and George W. Bush failed. Some of those guys were master politicians, and they couldn't pull off this tricky maneuver."

But there's another reason to keep President Biden: he'll be running anyway, in a sense.

"Doesn't matter who you pick - Whitmer, Newsom, Polis. They might have a different style and walk around faster, but they will be running on the Biden-Harris record. They will be questioned on it, attacked on it, and judged on it," he said. "If they dodge it, that's a new set of problems for them."

Carlson points to candidates like Al Gore, John McCain, and Hubert Humphrey that tried to run away from the incumbent President and lost. He contrasted with George H.W. Bush, who won in 1988 running closely on Reagan's coattails and eschewing the message of primary rivals (such as Bob Dole and Pat Robertson) that wanted to have a different message from the Reagan presidency.

"My History Can Beat Up Your Politics," routinely podcasting since 2006, is a podcast that uses history to better understand the politics of today. The podcast has approximately 100,000 listens per month and is available on Spotify and Apple Podcasts, or on its website at www.myhistorycanbeatupyourpolitics.com. Bruce Carlson, the podcast's host since 2006, has been featured on C-SPAN, Columbia Journalism Review, and Reason Magazine. He is happy to be interviewed about his podcast episode and his thesis. The podcast is not partisan and would make the same statement if the President were an incumbent Republican.

The episode, "History Favors Running Incumbent Presidents, Wherever Possible," can be found at: <https://myhistorycanbeatupyourpolitics.wordpress.com/2023/09/26/history-favors-running-incumbent-presidents-wherever-possible/>

Bruce Carlson

My History Can Beat Up Your Politics Podcast

+1 201-693-8325

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