

GLENDALE CHERRY CREEK CHRONICLE

<https://glendalecherrycreek.com/2022/05/june-28-primary-could-be-critical-for-one-party/>



June 28 is fast approaching which is primary day for both Democrats and Republicans. For Democrats it is no big deal. A few races with more progressives versus less progressives' candidates, but very little controversy or heartburn. For the Republican Party it is the seismic clash between two wings of the party that has been going on for decades, and may spell the end of the Republican Party as a viable political force in the state, assuming it still is one.

Across the country, the establishment of the Republican Party personified by Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell and former President George W. Bush, are battling in primaries with former President Donald Trump advocates who believe the 2020 election was stolen. While today's battle in Republican circles in Colorado has some of the same battle lines, the war is far deeper. The Colorado Republican Party has been controlled for over 50 years, if not longer, behind the scenes by businessmen like billionaire Phil Anschutz. They have always looked down their noses at the grassroots of the party who do almost all of the volunteer hard work for the party but have little money. They view them as crude and unsophisticated but then need them to till the fields like serfs in imperial Russia. To keep them in line, the Colorado Republican establishment uses a small army of consultants to whom no amount of viciousness and corruption is too much. They are always the overseers of the Colorado Republican plantation with bull whips in hand.

Pursuant to the Republican Bylaws, as re-written by the establishment, the party chair is almost all powerful over the state party organization and thus the establishment feels it must control that position. The grassroots have successfully elected the party chair in 2015 with Steve House and 2021 with Kristi Burton Brown over establishment candidates only to find the establishment was able to turn their candidates against them. In 2017 the grassroots appeared to be on the cusp of electing State Representative Susan Beckman as chair so the establishment, in a panic, went to Washington and rushed in Republican Congressman Ken Buck to be party chair. The fight for party chair was a truly dirty one by the establishment in which the grassroots believed the overseers consultants corrupted the proxy voting process and then destroyed dirty work evidence right after the election.

The Republican Party has a hybrid nomination process. You can get on the ballot if 30% or more of the delegates to the applicable assembly vote for you. Alternatively, you can pay a signature gatherer firm to get enough Republican signatures vis a vis a petition to get on the nomination ballot. It's costly but establishment candidates far prefer it rather than having to talk and convince lowly delegates for their votes. In their view it is so much more civilized.



In this primary season, grassroots candidates won overwhelmingly in the respective congressional and state assemblies, with establishment candidates by and large gaining access to the ballot by petition. Because of a statewide referendum supported by establishment Republicans, unaffiliated voters get both a Republican and a Democrat ballot and can vote either one but not both, and the unaffiliated voters by numbers dwarf the number of Republican voters. Establishment candidates who have all the money hope by a dent of advertising dollars to overwhelm the grassroots with non-Republican voters to win the Republican nominations. If they don't win a contest, they will refuse to contribute to any grassroots candidates in the general election and when they lose claim they were unelectable anyway in a general election.

The grassroots have indicated they have had enough and if establishment candidates win the positions, they will not do any of the grunt work to get them elected, thereby also dooming their chances in a general election. Phil Anschutz and the establishment are willing to call what they see as a bluff by the grassroots. Thus, even though with President Joe Biden having an approval rating in the 30s in Colorado, and the Republicans having their best chance in a long time, it may not make a difference. Set forth below are the key races in the Republican primary on June 28 with the leading grassroots candidates listed first in italics and the leading establishment ones in regular font so you can see on election night who prevails if you so desire.

Governor: *Greg Lopez* – Heidi Ganahl
 U.S. Senator: *Ron Hanks* – Joe O'Dae
 Secretary of State: *Tina Peters* – Pam Anderson
 U.S. Rep (C.D. 3): *Lauren Boebert* – Don Coram
 U.S. Rep (C.D. 5): *Dave Williams* – Doug Lamborn
 U.S. Rep (C.D. 7): *Laurel Imer* – Erik Aadland
 U.S. Rep (C.D. 8): *Lori Saine* – Barb Kirkmeyer
 U.S. Rep (C.D. 4): *Bob Lewis* – Ken Buck
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