

OUR MISSION

We strive to capture the spirit of the community through its stories while inspiring deeper conversations. Above all, we stand for integrity in our pursuit to inform and engage our readers.

THE RUBICON

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2023 CSPA Silver Crown Award Winner
2023 SNO Distinguished Site
2022 JEM All State Gold



EDITORIAL CARTOON: Annika Kim

LIAR LIAR. Politicians need to be held to a higher standard. They currently take advantage of the political system by flaunting their money and power. This shouldn't be the basis of our democracy; instead, it's crucial for politicians to take accountability for their actions in order to make the United States a safer place to live in.

100% of the staff agree

Hold the privileged accountable for an ethical political environment

EDITORIAL THE RUBICON STAFF

In the halls of power, the rich hold the court, wielding influence and privilege that shield them from the consequences of their actions. This is particularly true of politicians: perceived to be living by a different set of rules than the rest of us. With their immense wealth and resources, they can afford to take risks that would cripple others, knowing that they will never suffer the same fate as those they are supposed to represent. Who is supposed to hold politicians accountable when they are the dictators of accountability?

Since 2020, there have been 98 instances of members of the U.S. Congress being charged with misconduct (the House Office of Congressional Ethics). These charges of misconduct include, but are not limited to, bribery, sexual assault, harassment, ethics violations, and fraud. Of those 98, 75 instances received punishment, and of those 75 punishments, 68 were fines, of which a majority were less than \$100. These are the people that write the rules of our country.

In an ideal democracy, candidates are meant to be representatives of the people and their interests. However, the U.S. Congress falls far short of this ideal. As of 2023, only 26% of Americans say they have a favorable opinion of Congress (Pew Research Center). Recent revelations surrounding certain candidates demonstrate a disturbing pattern of hypocrisy within the U.S. political system. On May 9, Trump was charged \$5 million for sexual abuse in a civil case. On May 10, George Santos was indicted on charges of wire fraud. It is the same people in government that ridicule others for the wrongs the world doesn't know they have committed.

In an era of rampant misinformation and mistrust, it is critical for Congress to be an institution of truth, rather than the spreading virus of lies it embodies today. Candidates from all parties have been found to lie about their personal lives, investments, and pasts. The Pew Research Center recently found that politicians only tell the whole truth 25% of the time when debating major policy. While this gets rid of any sense of authority to an individual who has access to this information and spends time

studying the topics of debate, what can a person who doesn't have the time or resources to recognize these inaccuracies do?

In order to effectively serve the public and uphold the principles of democracy, candidates must prioritize the political process over their personal lives. This means recognizing that holding public office is a privilege, not a right, and that elected officials have a duty to their constituents to act with integrity and professionalism at all times. If a candidate's personal life interferes with their ability to do the job they were elected to do, whether it be ethical lapses, criminal activity or other factors, they should be prepared to step down from their position in order to protect the integrity of the political system. Why is it that politicians like Santos and Trump continue to grip U.S. politics after being proven guilty of crimes? Why can't they step down, like Al Franken did when he was accused of sexual assault?

It is more important than ever for candidates to be held accountable for their actions, and everyone can do their part to make it happen. As members of the SPA community, and constituents to their representatives, people have the power to reach out and express their concerns. As citizens of the United States, people have the power to question, educate themselves, educate others who may not have the resources many are privileged to have, and prove that justice is more than possible.

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