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**WASHINGTON**, July 31, 2024 — The dynamic landscape of the 2024 presidential election is set to witness another significant development as Vice President Kamala Harris is expected to announce her running mate "within the next six, seven days," according to Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer. This announcement comes following President Joe Biden’s recent withdrawal from the race, endorsing Harris as his successor.

In a campaign laden with unexpected twists, Democratic strategist Doug Thornell, CEO of SKDK, noted that such rapid and substantial changes in the political arena are without precedent. Just days after an assassination attempt on former President Donald Trump and his subsequent nomination for the Republican Party, the political scene was upended further by Biden’s exit and Harris’s ascension as the presumptive Democratic nominee.

As the Democratic National Convention approaches in August, set to take place in Chicago, Harris's vice-presidential pick will play a crucial role in shaping the Democrats’ campaign strategy against the Republican ticket of Donald Trump and his running mate, Senator JD Vance of Ohio. Harris’s campaign is already buoyant, showing increased excitement and enthusiasm among Democratic voters, reminiscent of the fervor seen during Barack Obama's campaign in 2008.

Reports indicate that Harris has narrowed her VP shortlist to three primary candidates: Senator Mark Kelly of Arizona, Governor Tim Walz of Minnesota, and Governor Josh Shapiro of Pennsylvania. This selection is driven by the strategic need to bolster support in battleground states, each of which could prove pivotal in the upcoming election.

### The Contenders

**Senator Mark Kelly**  
- **Pros**: Kelly, a former navy pilot and astronaut, represents a border state crucial to immigration discussions. He has a favourable public image, scoring +10 net favourability in recent polls, and brings significant military credentials, which could augment Harris's campaign on national security issues.  
- **Cons**: Despite his positive standing, he remains relatively unknown to a large portion of the electorate.

**Governor Tim Walz**  
- **Pros**: Walz, a former teacher and National Guard sergeant, has a background that appeals to working-class voters. He has actively attacked the Republican strategy, notably calling the GOP “weird and erratic.”  
- **Cons**: His shift from a pro-gun rural Democrat to a more progressive governor may raise questions among certain voter demographics.

**Governor Josh Shapiro**  
- **Pros**: Shapiro governs the pivotal state of Pennsylvania and has a robust history as state attorney general, which could offer a legal and regulatory edge. He is also well-known in his state, which could prove critical in securing Pennsylvania’s electoral votes.  
- **Cons**: Shapiro’s support for private school vouchers may alienate some Democratic voters, particularly those aligned with public education groups.

### Democratic Momentum

Since Harris stepped up as the Democratic frontrunner, her campaign has seen a remarkable surge in donations and support. The campaign raised over $200 million in the past week alone and enlisted 170,000 new volunteers. This resurgence in enthusiasm is partially attributed to Harris’s strategic communication and targeted grassroots efforts.

Polling data reveals a notable shift in voter sentiment. Harris’s favourable rating has improved across multiple polls. An ABC News/Ipsos poll shows her favourability at 43%, a notable eight-point increase from the previous month. Additional surveys reflect an uplift in support among key demographics, including significant gains with independents, women, and voters under 35.

### Republicans on the Defensive

The Republican campaign, following Trump’s nomination, has had to recalibrate its strategy in light of these developments. Senator JD Vance, Trump’s running mate, has faced scrutiny and attacks from Democratic figures. His controversial past comments and recent political pivots have added to the contention.

Moreover, Vance’s favourability rating presents challenges; the ABC/Ipsos poll indicated a net favourability of -15, surpassing even Trump’s -16. This has led to internal debates within the Republican Party regarding Vance’s positioning and potential impact on swing states.

### Looking Ahead

As both parties prepare for their respective conventions, the anticipation surrounding Harris’s vice-presidential pick is palpable. Governor Whitmer’s recent remarks underscore the critical nature of the upcoming decision, with Harris's team emphasising the importance of selecting a candidate ready to lead and bolster the ticket.

The impending announcement and the subsequent Democratic National Convention will set the tone for the final stretch of the campaign. With Election Day slated for November 5, 2024, the selection of a running mate will be a defining moment for Harris as she aims to solidify her leadership and present a compelling alternative to the electorate.

The unfolding political drama promises further twists, keeping voters and analysts alike on their toes as the 2024 race continues to heat up.