# Nikki Haley's Post-Bid Retreat with Donors and David Trone's Costly Senate Primary Defeat Showcase Diverse Political Strategies



**Nikki Haley Reaches Out to Key Donors Following Presidential Bid Suspension**

Nikki Haley, former South Carolina governor, recently engaged with key donors during a two-day retreat in Charleston, South Carolina. The event took place in February 2024, over two months after Haley suspended her bid for the presidency. The retreat, described as an "investor conference," saw Haley and her aides discussing policy questions and the financial logistics of her campaign rather than addressing direct endorsements or her future political plans.

Haley refrained from discussing her position on former President Donald Trump or whether she would consider running for office again. Attendees of the event noted that she did not express clear intentions about potential endorsements or future political aspirations. Instead, she suggested that attendees "vote your conscience" in upcoming elections.

One of the topics covered during the retreat was the voting behavior of Haley's supporters, who continued to vote for her in primaries despite her withdrawal from the race. For instance, in the Maryland Republican primary, Haley received nearly 20% of the votes while Trump secured 80%.

Additionally, Haley's longtime advisers presented a detailed financial report of her 2024 campaign, highlighting how funds were raised and allocated. Questions from donors also touched on issues such as abortion, American democracy, the national debt, and her support for Israel in the ongoing war in Gaza.

**David Trone's Costly Senate Primary Defeat**

Rep. David Trone, a Democratic congressman from Maryland, spent $62 million of his own money on his U.S. Senate primary campaign but lost to Angela Alsobrooks, who spent only $6 million. Trone, a co-owner of Total Wine & More, sought to replace retiring Democratic Senator Ben Cardin. Despite his substantial financial investment, Trone was trailing Alsobrooks by about 12 points with 66% of the votes counted.

Trone's expenditure marks the highest amount of personal funds spent on a Senate primary in the 21st century. Trone, with an estimated net worth of $2.4 billion, conceded the race in Baltimore on primary night.

The phenomenon of self-funded campaigns is not new in American politics. Former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg spent around $1 billion on his 2020 presidential bid, which resulted in only one primary win — the American Samoa Democratic caucus. Similarly, Democratic candidate Tom Steyer invested over $340 million in his 2020 campaign, yielding a cost of approximately $1,315 per vote.

Another notable candidate, North Dakota Governor Doug Burgum, spent $14 million on his 2024 presidential campaign but dropped out before the Iowa caucuses, making his expenditure per vote the highest among all modern candidates, at $28,000 per vote.

Such examples illustrate the high financial stakes often involved in American political campaigns, while not necessarily guaranteeing electoral success.