# Conservative Party Faces Challenge in Finding Candidates for Snap General Election



On May 24, 2024, UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's announcement of a snap general election caught the Conservative Party unprepared, leaving them scrambling to find candidates for about a third of the 650 constituencies. This sudden call to action impacted 191 constituencies initially, with further vacancies as more MPs announced their retirement, including Michael Gove, bringing the total to 77. Conservative Party headquarters urgently sought prospective candidates and advertised numerous constituencies over the weekend.

Reaction within the Conservative Party was mixed, with former ministers like David Jones questioning the timing of the election announcement given the incomplete slate of candidates. Meanwhile, the opposition parties appeared better organized. Labour had 80 candidates pending and aimed to complete selections by early June. Similarly, the Liberal Democrats had pre-selected candidates for 564 seats prior to the election announcement, including their top target areas, and Reform UK had 500 candidates ready.

The election campaign also saw Lib Dem leader Sir Ed Davey in Eastbourne, emphasizing the party's strategy to overturn Conservative seats, bolstered by the news that prominent Conservative MP Sir John Redwood wouldn't be seeking re-election. Sir Keir Starmer, Labour leader, toured Scotland promoting a publicly-owned Great British Energy company, while Sunak highlighted economic achievements, despite setbacks such as the stalled Tobacco and Vapes Bill and no imminent deportation flights to Rwanda.

As of Friday, nearly 80 Conservative MPs had stepped down, a record for the post-war era, illustrating the significant internal strains within the party as it prepares for the election on July 4.