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## Biden pushes ‘ultra-MAGA’ label on GOP as he defends record

*Д. Байден просуває клеймо «ultra-MAGA» на Республіканську партію, виправдовуючи ситуацію*

*Президент США Джо Байден попередив виборців, незадоволених стрімким зростанням інфляції та зупинкою внутрішнього порядку денного, не передавати владу «республіканцям ультра-МАГА» на проміжних виборах. Д. Байден все частіше намагається показати колишнього президента Дональда Трампа та його прихильників політичним підлогом. Виступаючи в Білому домі менш ніж за шість місяців до виборів, Д. Байден визнав, що може «відчутти смак» невдоволення країни Вашингтоном, зокрема через зростання цін, але намагався направити гнів проти Республіканської партії. Д. Байден переконував виборців, що «республіканці МАГА» розраховують на те, що виборці будуть настільки розчаровані темпом прогресу, і зробили все можливе, щоб його уповільнити, що передадуть їм владу... щоб вони могли впровадити свій екстремістський план». Заклеймлення Д. Байденом опозиції «республіканцями ультра-МАГА» — посилення на гасло кампанії Д. Трампа «Make America Great Again (Зробимо Америку знову великою)» — з'явилося останніми тижнями, оскільки Білий дім сподівається на перезавантаження демократів перед проміжними виборами до парламенту.*

<https://apnews.com/article/2022-midterm-elections-biden-business-donald-trump-economy-accd1a895105377a3e4350067c56b64d>



*President Joe Biden speaks about inflation in the South Court Auditorium on the White House complex in Washington, Tuesday, May 10, 2022. (AP Photo/Manuel Balce Ceneta)*

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Joe Biden on Tuesday warned voters unhappy with soaring inflation and his stalled domestic agenda against turning power over to “ultra-MAGA” Republicans in the midterm elections as he increasingly tries to cast former President Donald Trump and his adherents as a political foil.

Speaking at the White House less than six months before the elections, Biden acknowledged that he could “taste” the country’s dissatisfaction with Washington, particularly over [rising prices](#), but he sought to channel the anger against the GOP.

“Look, I know you’ve got to be frustrated,” he said. “I know, I can taste it. Frustrated by high prices, by gridlock in Congress, by the time it takes to get anything done.

“The MAGA Republicans are counting on you to be as frustrated by the pace of progress, which they’ve done everything they can to slow down, that you will hand power over to them ... so they can enact their extreme agenda,” Biden said.

Biden’s branding of his opposition as “ultra-MAGA Republicans” — a reference to Trump’s “Make America Great Again” campaign slogan — has emerged as a White House trope in recent weeks as the White House hopes for a pre-midterms reset for Democrats, who face stiff headwinds heading into the November elections. White House press secretary Jen Psaki said Tuesday that “it’s the president’s phrase.”

It is a message seemingly aimed directly at the listless and divided base of Biden’s own party, as Democrats struggle to keep their voters motivated, as well as at some moderate voters who still recoil at the memory of Trump’s tumultuous tenure in office.

“Look, I think Biden needs to motivate his base ahead of the midterms. And nothing motivates Democrats like voting against Trump,” said GOP strategist Alex Conant. “Trump’s not on the ballot this fall. But Biden is going to try to convince voters that he is.”

Biden, Conant argued, has little choice.

“They’re not going to run on his record. They’re not going to make big, bold policy promises,” he said, so that leaves villainizing the opponent “and the best way to do that is to tie him to Trump.”



For Democrats, who have unified control of Washington, running against the minority party is risky, as even Biden acknowledged that voters tend to blame those in control for the nation’s state of affairs.

But the White House believes Republicans have thrown them a lifeline, in the form of [GOP Sen. Rick Scott’s 11-point plan](#), released in late February, that would impose a modest tax increase on many of the lowest-paid Americans, while opening the door for cutting Social Security and Medicare.

The plan, meant as a draft governing agenda for when the GOP retakes power, has been rejected by many Republicans, including Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell. But that is not stopping Biden and Democrats from trying to tie Republicans to it more broadly. Scott, R-Fla., is the chairman of the Senate Republicans’ campaign arm and a member of Senate GOP leadership.

“That’s a plan in writing and he’s in the leadership,” Biden said.

Biden argued that the potential tax hikes would make it even harder for families struggling with inflation to afford food, housing and transportation, as prices rise at the fastest pace in four decades.

“I want every American to know that I’m taking inflation very seriously, and it’s my top domestic priority,” Biden said.

Scott fired back in comments Tuesday, calling on Biden to resign, and deeming him “unfit” for the job.

“I have a plan. I mean, it’s real simple,” he told reporters. “I put out my ideas and how we need to rescue this country. He doesn’t have a plan. And you didn’t hear any ideas today. I mean, he says he was going to come up with his ideas and fix inflation.”

In recent days, the White House has extended the “ultra-MAGA” label to broader criticism of Republicans on other matters, including the push to overturn the constitutional right to an abortion established in the *Roe v. Wade* decision of the Supreme Court.

Biden believes most general election voters haven’t yet tuned in to the midterms and are missing what it views as “extreme” positions taken by GOP candidates and lawmakers, particularly in primaries, according to two people familiar with the White House’s thinking who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss internal deliberations. They said the president’s new branding for Republicans is meant to spotlight candidates and policies that may energize the GOP’s grassroots but that he believes are out of step with the majority of voters, sharpening the choice facing voters this November.

Speaking Monday night at a Democratic fundraiser, Biden tested out the “ultra-MAGA” messaging with donors, referencing Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis’ moves to restrict some textbooks from being used in the classroom and Scott’s plan to require regular congressional reauthorization of social safety net programs.

“This is not your father’s Republican Party,” Biden said. This is a MAGA party. This is the MAGA party. And the head of their Republican campaign committee, Senator Rick Scott, the Ultra-MAGA agenda he put forward, he raises taxes on 70 million people who make well less than \$100,000.”

On Capitol Hill, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., was echoing Biden’s line as he pushed for Congress to enshrine abortion rights into law.

“Now the MAGA Republicans have taken over,” he said. “If MAGA Republicans get their way, pregnant women can lose their lives because there will be no exception if the life of the mother is at risk.”

John Anzalone, a Democratic pollster who has worked for Biden, said it’s important to draw sharp contrasts with political opponents.”

“Whether you’re in a governor’s race in Michigan or you’re in a Senate race in New Hampshire, those contrasts become really important, because it’s good for voters to know what each side stands for,” he said. “You’re talking to swing voters, without a doubt, because at the end of the

day, independents, swing voters, moderates can make or break a cycle for Democrats and Republicans.”

Speaking Tuesday, Biden, who ran for office aiming to heal the nation’s divisions, said, “I never expected the ultra-MAGA Republicans who seem to control the Republican Party now to have been able to control the Republican Party. I never anticipated that happening.”

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Associated Press writer Jill Colvin contributed to this report.