Two African-Americans fight for Speaker's post

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The Republicans have nominated African-American Byron Donalds after six rounds of endless balloting in the US House of Representatives failed to elect California Congressman Kevin McCarthy as Speaker despite former President Donald Trump backing him and appealing to party members to vote for him.

McCarthy, who pledged to bring an impeachment motion against President Joe Biden and probes against the latter's son Hunter Biden for his China trade links, found he had chinks in his armour as 20 extreme right-wingers from the deep south frustrated his bid to get to 218 to hold the gavel.

The Congressman did not meet their demands in the House earlier on: putting their members in the Ways and Means committee that controls funds, health care and taxes, Appropriation committee that monitors and controls the flow of cash from the treasury.

It was endgame for McCarthy as Texas representative Chip Roy nominated Donalds to hold the Speaker's gavel against fellow African-American Hakeem Jefferies of the Democratic Party, as the latter stood united throughout six ballots of voting, all 213 democrats voted as en bloc against the Republican.

But who is Donalds, why was he nominated is what the US media and the general people are asking.

Hard-right Republicans nominated Donalds of Florida to be House Speaker on Wednesday night, making it the first time in history that both major parties nominated an African-American to lead the lower chamber of Congress, media reports said.

"Byron is a dear friend, a solid conservative but most importantly a family man who loves dearly his wife, Erika, his three children; has a proven track record as a businessman, public service in the Florida legislature and now as a member of the United States Congress," said Ro, who put him up to end the stalemate caused by the rebels.

Opponents of McCarthy's bid to become speaker rallied to Donalds's candidacy with a standing ovation after Roy noted the historic nature of the nomination.

Democrats have nominated Jeffries, who is on track to become the first Black person to lead a party in Congress, the Washington Post reported.

Donalds, who voted for McCarthy on the first two ballots Tuesday, ultimately received 20 votes on Wednesday's fourth, fifth and sixth ballots, again blocking McCarthy's attempt at becoming House speaker, the Post reported.

Roy referred to civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech while nominating Donalds.

Donalds' journey in life and into politics, from growing up in Brooklyn as a Democrat, to being one of the few Black Republicans on Capitol Hill was recalled with a sense of alacrity by Roy to woo GOP voters to end the gridlock in the house, an unprecedented one.

"We do not seek to judge people by the color of their skin, but rather the content of their character," the Texan said. "Byron Donalds is a good man raised by a single mom who moved past adversity, became a Christian man at the age of 21 and has devoted his life to advancing the cause for his family and his country and he has done it admirably."

The 44-year-old often hit the campaign trail talking about adversities he had to overcome as a younger man, particularly being arrested for distributing marijuana as an 18-year-old. Three years later he was arrested and charged with bribery - a charge that was later expunged.

"These were the actions of a young kid," Donalds told a local Fox affiliate in 2014.

"I can't undo that. I can't undo my mistakes. The only thing I can do is show and become the man that I am today for my family and the community that I love."

A graduate of the Florida State University, Donalds eventually launched his career in business before getting into politics.

Florida Governor Rick Scott appointed Donalds to the board of trustees of a state college, which helped increase his profile in the state's Republican Party, the post recalled.

Donalds went on to seek a congressional seat for the first time in 2012, two years after becoming a Republican and getting involved in the TEA Party movement. Initially a failed bid, he got elected to the Florida legislature four years later.

He was first elected to the House in 2020 after Representative Francis Rooney retired from Congress.

The question now being asked is does any Republican have the votes to become Speaker as the democrats stand united and balk at the Republicans who vowed to unseat Biden, launch investigations and impeach the President.

Poll strategists analysing the trends after the chaos in the house with deep fissures in the GOP and no unanimity to elect a speaker of choice, said it augurs badly for the party trying hard to retake the White House in the 2024 presidential run, where itself it has no clear idea of who should run, Trump or Ron DeSantis.

Ever since his entry into the Congress, Donalds has hit the headlines defending the Republicans and Trump from accusations of racism.

He dismissed liberal lawmakers,and specifically the Congressional Black Caucus, for its stances on racial matters, the Post said.

"As a Black man in America, I'm allowed to have my own thoughts on who I choose to support and who I choose not to support," he previously told CNN while discussing his refusal to accept the results of the 2020 presidential election.

"My support of President Trump has been consistent, but at the same time, I've had the ability to advocate for issues, ideas, proposals and funding that have helped the Black community in my state."