



Tom Gralish/AP Photo  
**Democratic presidential candidate and former Vice President Joe Biden speaks during his primary election night rally in Columbia, South Carolina, on Saturday.**

# Klobuchar, Buttigieg withdraw, back Biden

Boost for Super Tuesday

By STEVE PEOPLES, BILL BARROW and BRIAN SLODYSKO  
*Associated Press*

HOUSTON — Rivals no more, Amy Klobuchar and Pete Buttigieg united behind Joe Biden’s presidential bid on Monday as the Democratic Party’s moderate wing scrambled to boost the former vice president just hours before voting began across a series of high-stakes Super Tuesday states.

The urgency of the moment reflected deep concerns from the Democratic establishment that Bernie Sanders, a polarizing progressive, was positioned to seize a significant delegate lead when 14 states, one U.S. territory and Democrats abroad vote on Tuesday.

Klobuchar formally suspended her campaign and endorsed Biden on Monday, a day after Buttigieg announced his formal exit. Both Klobuchar and Buttigieg, who had been Biden’s chief competition for their party’s pool of more moderate voters over the last year, were set to announce their support for Biden later Monday at a rally in Dallas.

Buttigieg’s plans were confirmed by two people familiar with the decision who were not authorized to speak publicly and spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

Klobuchar and Buttigieg become the second and third Democrat to abandon their presidential bids since Biden scored a resounding victory in South Carolina, his first of the 2020 roller-coaster nomination fight.

Sanders’ senior strategist Jeff Weaver dismissed the importance of the new coalition, which he said would help highlight the divide between the true progressive wing of the party and those in the establishment.

“It’s becoming increasingly clear that the candidates funded by big money and super PACs are coalescing behind Joe Biden, and that’s not a surprise,” Weaver said. “I think it’ll add a lot of clarity to this race.”

A shrinking group of other Democrats vowed to press on, potentially toward a

contested convention.

The fast-moving developments came at a key crossroads in the Democratic Party’s turbulent primary season. The states that vote on Tuesday, led by California and Texas, offer almost 10 times as many delegates in a single day than have been awarded over the first month.

Sanders remained the undisputed front-runner. But the rest of the field was decidedly unsettled, even after Biden’s South Carolina blowout and the departures of Klobuchar, Buttigieg and billionaire activist Tom Steyer.

New York billionaire Mike Bloomberg in particular could create problems for Biden’s establishment appeal. Bloomberg, who will appear on a 2020 ballot for the first time on Tuesday, has invested more than a half billion dollars into his presidential bid and wracked up many high-profile endorsements of his own.

Yet Biden appeared to have the momentum on the eve of Super Tuesday after his blowout South Carolina victory.

The Biden campaign reported back-to-back days of \$5 million fundraising hauls, by far the best 48-hour stretch of his campaign. Biden himself touted the threshold Sunday night on a call with donors, according to one person on the call.

And the campaign highlights several new endorsements. Perhaps the most powerful endorsement would come from former President Barack Obama, who has a relationship with most of the candidates and has talked with several in recent weeks as primary voting has begun. He spoke with Biden to congratulate him after his South Carolina victory, but still has no plans to endorse in the primary at this point.

Yet a stream of new Biden backers stepped forward in the run-up to Tuesday, including former Nevada Sen. Harry Reid. The former Senate majority leader said, “I believe Biden is best able to defeat Donald Trump and enact the policies we all care about.”

Biden’s growing collection of endorsers also features Obama national security adviser Susan Rice; former Colorado Sen. Mark Udall; former California

Sen. Barbara Boxer; Rep. Jennifer Wexton, D-Va.; Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White; former Arkansas Sen. Blanche Lincoln; and Rep. Gil Cisneros, D-Calif.

Virginia Rep. Don Beyer, the first member of Congress to endorse Buttigieg, said he planned to endorse Biden and expected Buttigieg to as well.

“I do think it’s the most logical,” Beyer said of a Biden endorsement, given his echo of the former vice president’s call for civility, a mantra of the Buttigieg campaign. “I think Joe is the next best possibility.”

While Biden clearly has momentum, not everyone in his party’s moneyed establishment is convinced.

Across the country, some major donors remain skeptical and want to see what happens on Super Tuesday before deciding whether to support Biden.

Biden has struggled to raise money in Silicon Valley, for example. The area is dominated by the tech sector, and many of its wealthy donors prioritize executing a data-driven plan. Biden’s rocky campaign pushed many toward Buttigieg or Bloomberg in recent months, financiers say. Biden’s team is waging a quiet campaign to win them over, yet many are taking a wait-and-see approach.

“We need to see what happens tomorrow, which is going to be very telling,” said Alex Sink, a Democratic donor and former Florida gubernatorial candidate who endorsed Bloomberg.

During a round of weekend interviews, Biden pledged to improve his campaign organization, his fundraising operation and even his own performance.

His reliance on media coverage, instead of a round of Super Tuesday advertising, reflected a stark reality a day after his resounding primary victory in South Carolina: The former vice president was forced to rely on free media coverage because he was understaffed, underfunded and almost out of time as he fought to transform his sole win into a national movement.

Biden allies conceded that the post-South Carolina fundraising surge would have little impact on Super Tuesday.

# Couple: ‘We’re still learning’

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“They were closing all around, the restaurants,” Egaas said. “I just opened it and never looked back.”

Berry Patch has persisted, now turning out around 30 varieties of jams and jellies, along with syrups, chocolates and other sweets made with local berries. And there are the pies — Egaas prides himself on having sold 8,500 of them last year.

Cognizant of the impact of his restaurant on the community, Egaas looked in-house when it came time to sell the business, landing

on White.

“She’s from here,” he said. “She knows the people. I couldn’t ask for a better person to take it over and take it to the next phase.”

The Whites have been learning the network that Egaas has cultivated to supply Berry Patch with local ingredients, from regional berry pickers to Native Americans on the Olympic Peninsula who supply razor clams for chowder.

“We’re still learning,” White said. “Our main thing is not to change things.”

Their children, who grew up visiting Berry Patch, are

helping to build a new website for online commerce, an important aspect of a business with regular followers as far away as Seattle wanting the local, berry based products.

Never content to fully retire, Egaas is busy next door building up a newer business, Chef Edwin’s Soups, named after a former cook at Berry Patch. Egaas offers mushroom soup and tomato bisque, along with clam and smoked salmon chowders and other varieties he sells throughout western Oregon and Washington state.

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