

## Tim Michels' Trump Endorsement Came With Strings Attached

Written by WisDems Press, Hannah Menchhoff  
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**MADISON, Wis.** — New reporting from [the New York Times](#) on Friday revealed that Trump's endorsement of Tim Michels during the Republican primary came with one condition: that Michels had to embrace Trump's baseless election conspiracies and denial of the 2020 election results.

According to the New York Times, after word came from Mar-a-Lago that Trump was displeased with Michels' noncommittal answers on elections in Wisconsin, Michels changed his tune in order to appease the disgraced former president. Michels has said that “[President Trump would probably be president right now if we had election integrity](#)” despite the fact that both [nonpartisan](#) and [Republican-led election](#) investigations into Wisconsin's 2020 election have uncovered no evidence of widespread voter fraud.

By August, Michels had leaned into Trump's preferred conspiracy theory, saying illegally decertifying the 2020 election will be “[on the table](#)” if he becomes governor. Regarding upcoming elections, Michels has toed Trump's line, just this month [refusing to commit](#) to accepting the results of his own election in November.

*Read more about the strings attached to Michels' Trump endorsement:*

**The New York Times:** [Over 370 Republican Candidates Have Cast Doubt on the 2020 Election](#)

[...]

“For Republican candidates who would rather talk about something other than the last

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presidential election, some have learned that the party's base, and its unofficial leader, Mr. Trump, won't let them drop the issue. It has become, in many cases, the price of entry to the Republican ticket.

"Wisconsin Republicans learned this lesson the hard way.

"In early June, Mr. Trump upended the Republican primary for governor in Wisconsin by endorsing Tim Michels, a wealthy construction magnate, over Rebecca Kleefisch, a former lieutenant governor of the state and a favorite of local Republicans.

"The endorsement apparently came with strings.

"During a July debate, Mr. Michels said he would not prioritize decertifying the 2020 election in Wisconsin, a legally implausible process that nonetheless remained a fixation of Mr. Trump.

"I have to focus on beating Tony Evers this fall,' he said, referring to Wisconsin's incumbent Democratic governor.

"A roar came from Mar-a-Lago, communicated through aides to Mr. Michels, demanding that he embrace the decertification movement, according to people familiar with the conversations.

"Mr. Michels reversed course, saying that he was 'very, very fired up about this election integrity issue' and pledging to consider signing a decertification bill if legislators passed one.

"By the final days of the primary, Mr. Michels was promoting the election conspiracy theory amplified in the film '2000 Mules' and was promising to consider signing legislation clawing back Wisconsin's 10 electoral votes from the 2020 election.

[...]