

## Anti-Trump senators bow out

November 10, 2017

Arizona Republican Sen. Jeff Flake announced he will not be seeking re-election in a speech from the floor of the Senate on Oct. 24. Referring to President Donald Trump's behavior as "outrageous and undignified," Flake pinned Trump as the primary reason for not seeking re-election.

"We must never allow ourselves to lapse into thinking that this is just the way things are now. If we simply become inured to this condition, thinking that this is just politics as usual, then heaven help us," said Flake.

Flake is not the only Senate Republican to share anti-Trump sentiment. Sen. Bob Corker of Tennessee also announced his retirement for reasons relating to the president.

Before Flake announced his retirement, polls in Arizona projected a loss to candidate Dr. Kelli Ward, a current member of the Arizona Senate, according to The Hill.

If Corker remained in the race, the Trump-supporting Rep. Marsha Blackburn was projected to run a close primary against Corker, according to polls back in the summer per The Tennessean.

Former Alabama Chief Justice Roy Moore succeeded in beating Luther Strange, a candidate hand-picked by Sen. Mitch McConnell. Strange was the appointed replacement to Attorney General Jeff Sessions' senate seat, but lost the primary after Moore coalesced around the evangelical Trump base in rural Alabama.

After all the defeats to the GOP "swamp creatures," as they have been nicknamed, Republican leadership has started to take notice of Steve Bannon. Bannon is a former White House adviser, who left Washington and took over the position of executive chairman of Breitbart News, a right-wing news site.

After the Flake announcement, Bannon said it was "another day, another scalp" in the Republican establishment which he claims is undermining Trump's agenda.

"Note to self, Mitch: Big Luther Strange and Little Bobby Corker are both going home," Bannon said at an Arizona rally last week. "The people of Alabama and the people of Tennessee have spoken. Your folks are going home, and their folks are making policy."

Bannon appeared at rallies supporting Ward and Moore in their respective states, and the former Trump adviser seems to be striking a chord with grassroots Americans more so than the politicians backed by McConnell.

Bannon also announced he will be targeting establishment Republican senatorial candidates in many other states. Wyoming Sen. John Barrasso, Nebraska Sen. Deb Fischer and Utah Sen. Orrin Hatch were added as likely incumbents to be targeted by Bannon.

“Nobody’s safe,” said Bannon.