

OpenVoiceNews U.S.

Transparent. Unbiased. Yours.

Republican Senate Successors Face Smooth Path in Ohio and Florida

July 21, 2025

– Categories: Breaking News



[Download IPFS](#)

As JD Vance and Marco Rubio ascended to prominent roles in the new Trump administration, Vance as vice president and Rubio as secretary of state, Republicans in Ohio and Florida braced for potential chaos in replacing their Senate seats. The prospect of a vice president or a key cabinet member hailing from their state brought pride, but the risk of contentious primaries loomed large. Yet, the appointed successors, Jon Husted in Ohio

and Ashley Moody in Florida, are navigating surprisingly calm waters, avoiding the Republican infighting that often plagues such transitions.

In Ohio, Jon Husted, aged 57, has emerged as a stabilizing force. With a political career spanning over two decades, including roles as state House speaker and secretary of state, Husted commands a broad network of grassroots and donor support. His appointment by Governor Mike DeWine sidestepped a potential clash with Trump-aligned Vivek Ramaswamy in the gubernatorial race. Husted's early endorsement from Donald Trump, announced on Truth Social in April, has proven a formidable shield against primary challengers. "Trump's endorsement in an Ohio Republican primary is unbeatable," Husted told NBC News, highlighting the \$2.6 million his campaign had amassed by July.

Husted's conservative credentials, particularly on gun rights and school choice, resonate with the party's base. "Jon's record is rock-solid, earning him respect across Ohio's Republican spectrum," said Niraj Antani, a former state senator now running for state treasurer. The Ohio Republican Party and the Ohio Chamber of Commerce have also thrown their weight behind Husted, a rarity this early in a campaign. Brenton Temple, who managed DeWine's 2022 re-election, noted, "Husted's long-standing presence and Trump's backing have cleared the field."

However, the general election could pose challenges. Former Senator Sherrod Brown, ousted by businessman Bernie Moreno in 2024, is mulling a return to the Senate or a gubernatorial bid. Husted remains unfazed, stating, "We run our campaign and we'll win, regardless of who the Democrats nominate."

In Florida, Ashley Moody, aged 50, is equally well-positioned. Appointed to the Senate in January, the former attorney general has leveraged her statewide recognition from two dominant election victories. With \$2.2 million cash on hand and a super PAC raising \$7 million, Moody's financial strength deters potential challengers. "Any opponent would face a united Republican machine and find their candidacy crushed," said David Johnson, a seasoned Florida GOP operative.

Moody has deftly aligned herself with Trump's inner circle, hiring campaign heavyweights Chris LaCivita and Tony Fabrizio. This strategic move has neutralised doubts about her ability to navigate federal politics. Earlier murmurs of a challenge from Representative Cory Mills have fizzled, particularly amid Mills' controversies involving unpaid rent allegations in Washington, D.C.

The absence of primary drama in Ohio and Florida contrasts with the states' gubernatorial races, where term-limited Governors Mike DeWine and Ron DeSantis are stirring the pot for their 2026 successors. "Costly primaries waste resources when we have leaders like Jon, backed by Trump and a proven record," said Mehek Cooke, an Ohio conservative consultant. In Florida, Democrats struggle to field a competitive candidate, with Josh Weil, a recent congressional contender, entering the race but lacking the infrastructure to challenge a Republican juggernaut. "To compete in Florida, you need \$50 or \$60 million for TV alone, not small-dollar fundraising," Johnson noted, referencing the state's deep-red shift, underscored by Trump's 13-point victory in 2024.

With strong fundraising, Trump's endorsement, and established records, Husted and Moody are poised to dominate their primaries and enter the 2026 special elections as frontrunners. Ohio's race may hinge on Brown's decision, but Florida's Democratic prospects appear dim. For now, both senators benefit from a rare moment of Republican unity, a stark contrast to the factionalism that once threatened to derail their paths.