

# The "Admit He's Unfit" Campaign



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Friend,

For those of us who think about national security, it is evident that Donald Trump's presidency would pose the gravest danger to the future of the United States of any candidate in our lifetime—graver even than Barry Goldwater. It is not merely because of policy disagreements that all of us may have with him. Rather, Trump's character and temperament are manifestly unsuited to the job of Commander-in-Chief.

Because of this, Republican leaders must be called upon to take a stand on a single, simple, defining question: Do you believe Donald Trump is fit to be commander-in-chief and be in charge of the nation's national security? To that end (and along with the work many are doing to defeat Donald Trump), *we ask you to join us and together demand that Republicans and their allies throughout the country "admit he's unfit."* This is the question Republicans are afraid to confront. It is the question that makes them most uncomfortable. And it is the question that if asked consistently and publicly

enough may help ensure that this dangerous, reckless, autocratic, xenophobe never has the opportunity to command troops, send the nation to war, and repel our allies.

## **Why an Admit He's Unfit Campaign?**

### **We Need to Make the Case Clearly and Memorably**

There are many reasons to oppose Donald Trump on domestic issues, and we are certain to hear all of them throughout the remainder of this campaign. But on national security, we *need* one reason and message that cuts through the clutter and that exposes the grave risks of a Trump presidency. And that reason is that he is unfit to be Commander-in-Chief. Trump has embraced many specific policies that are dangerous for our country—reinstating torture, weakening our alliances, and banning Muslims to name a few. *The Economist* [views](#) a Trump presidency as a Top 10 Global Risk, citing his “militaristic tendencies” and “indifference to global nuclear proliferation,” among other things. And military leaders and experts from the political right, center, and left, as well as those with no affiliation, have reacted with alarm and scorn at what he says and proposes.

But solely arguing each individual issue (as important as that is) will lead to an unintelligible cacophony that voters find confusing. Unless we are clear, united, and endlessly repetitive, we could witness a horrifying outcome on November 9th. Brexit provides a cautionary tale. As we see from post-vote surveys, the Leave campaign had a simple, clear, and unified message, while Remain offered a laundry list of real but confusing arguments. These came into sharper relief only after the referendum was over and it was too late.

We face a similar challenge on security and foreign policy in this election. In confronting the threat of Trump, we must have a simple, compelling case for the public, wrapping disparate security issues and concerns into one clear meme:

Trump is Unfit to be Commander-in-Chief. And we have a perfect opportunity to drive that message home, by demanding that any person or entity allied with Republicans (e.g. elected, former electeds, policy officials, think tankers, advocacy groups, columnists, etc.) admit that to be the case.

## **Trump Is Vulnerable on Fitness to be Commander-in-Chief**

Let's start with the bad news. In a post-Orlando *Bloomberg poll*, voters chose Trump over Clinton on the question of who would be better at combatting terrorism by 50%-45%. In an election where terrorism is certain to be a top concern, he currently has a slight advantage.

However, Trump is *far behind on questions of fitness for office*. In post-Orlando polls by *NBC/WSJ* and *CNN/ORC*, Secretary Clinton held a twelve-point lead on who would make a better Commander-in-Chief. And a *Washington Post/ABC poll* gave Clinton a 34-point lead on who had the better temperament in responding to Orlando, and a 19-point lead in who they had greater confidence in as President.

The bottom line is that while some voters like Trump's toughness and gruffness on terrorism, many are deeply worried that he does not have the temperament, maturity, or judgment to be Commander-in-Chief. They worry that he may be unfit.

## **Trump's Fitness to Serve is the last thing Republicans want to talk about**

The decision on whether to back Donald Trump's bid to be Commander-in-Chief is a fundamental indicator of judgment. Some Republicans who are abandoning Trump are driven by this issue: Mitt Romney has said his conscience will not allow him to vote for Trump. Senator Mark Kirk said he "does not have the temperament to command our military or our nuclear arsenal." Senator Jeff Flake called Trump "unserious." Senator Lindsay Graham called Trump's recent foreign policy speech "unnerving" and "pathetic." This list is growing—but not quickly enough.

Ambivalent Republicans and their allies can't have it both ways. Voters should know whether they are willing to set aside Trump's mercurial temperament, willful ignorance, consuming narcissism, and corrosive prejudice and give him stewardship of the mightiest arsenal in world history and command of our war fighters.

## How “Admit He’s Unfit” Would Work

This campaign can succeed if it is adopted broadly in the progressive movement. If enough of us are demanding an answer on this fundamental question—*Will you admit that Donald Trump is unfit for command?*—it will not only put Trump supporters on the defensive but will mostly crucially drive a meme that will help split more moderate Republicans, independents, and swing Democrats away from him. (And as they always say in politics, if you're explaining, you're losing.)

Each of you have unique platforms, organizations, and opportunities to take this challenge to Republicans and their allies directly. Here are a few examples of how this might work:

- Holding press conferences to demand that Republicans admit he's unfit
- Going on television to demand the same of Republican guests (or hosts)
- Confronting delegates in Cleveland with this question
- Challenging elected officials and candidates at town halls
- Urging ed boards and reporters to ask Republicans whether they believe Trump is fit for command
- Employing #admitthesunfit in your social media efforts
- Mobilizing your grass roots networks
- Including it in your op-eds and other media pieces

- Making it a part of any DC or local lobby day
- Amplifying it as part of your convention and debate rapid response
- Start a letter writing campaigns by your members
- Using the line in TV and online ads
- Pressing all elected officials, party officials and others to make this a key part of their case

However you make this demand, we are certain it will have real impact. It is clear and concise; it is enormously important; it is hard for Republicans to duck; and it plants a seed of doubt that will be difficult for Trump to overcome.

We would love to have your help, involvement, and collaboration, as well as your insights and ideas for this campaign. This is one way in which, together, we can make an enormous difference.

Sincerely,

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