

# Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost is running for governor to replace Mike DeWine

By **Jessie Balmert**  
**Columbus Dispatch**

Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost announced Thursday that he's running for governor to replace term-limited Gov. Mike DeWine.

Yost, 68, of Columbus, is pitching himself as the candidate who knows Ohio best after serving as state attorney general, state auditor and a Delaware County elected official. He wants to tackle the state's big challenges, such as Ohio's graying and stagnant population and children struggling to read.

"I've been in every county, every corner of this state. They all matter and I think it's important for someone who wishes to lead to know Ohio at that kind of a deep granular level," Yost told the statehouse bureau.

Yost could face a crowded Republican primary as former presidential candidate Vivek Ramaswamy, Ohio Treasurer Robert Sprague and Morgan County Republican Heather Hill, among others, prepare to launch bids. Former Lt. Gov. Jon Husted, who was planning to run for governor, was recently appointed to the U.S. Senate to replace Vice President JD Vance.

All will be vying for President Donald Trump's support. Yost initially had some misgivings about Trump, writing in 2016 that "Mr. Trump is not merely flawed – his thirst for power at any cost makes him unfit for public trust."

Yost said his position has changed, much like Vance's. Trump endorsed Yost's reelection bid for Ohio attorney general in 2022. "I would welcome his endorsement again if he offered it."

The sole Democrat running for Ohio governor currently is former Ohio Department of Health Director Dr. Amy Acton. The Ohio Democratic Party criticized Yost's gubernatorial bid, saying he was too extreme for the state.

## **Who is Dave Yost?**

Yost began his political career as a Delaware County auditor before winning the county prosecutor's job. He won his first statewide race in 2010, becoming Ohio's auditor before being elected state attorney general in 2018.

Yost said he has a proven record as an independent thinker, willing to challenge fellow Republicans when necessary. He faced off with former Ohio Gov. John Kasich over the governor's privatized economic development agency, JobsOhio. Yost also investigated a troubled online charter school called the Electronic Classroom of Tomorrow.

As attorney general, Yost charged Akron-based FirstEnergy executives and a former Ohio House speaker for their roles in a statewide bribery scandal. He sued the NCAA to allow college athletes to transfer to other schools without repercussions. He fought against Columbus' gun restrictions and opposed federal limits on firearms.

Yost, who opposes abortion personally, has enforced Ohio's restrictions and bans on abortion. He publicly questioned whether a young rape victim traveled to Indiana to have an abortion when Ohio restricted the procedure after the fall of Roe v. Wade, saying it was likely a "fabrication." Shortly after, a man was arrested and later sentenced to life in prison for the crime, with the possibility of parole after 25 years.

In 2023, Ohioans voted to enshrine access to abortion and other reproductive health care decisions in the state constitution.

"I haven't changed my mind on what I view as the profound moral issue," Yost said. "On the same token, the people of Ohio have spoken. Our highest law of the land has established a right and neither the attorney general nor the governor has the right to change that."

Yost graduated from Ohio State University with a law degree from Capital University. Yost and his wife, Darlene, live in Columbus. They have three children and several grandchildren.

Yost initially intended to announce his gubernatorial bid in late February, but Husted's appointment, which triggered a slew of governor hopefuls announcing their plans, sped up that timeline.

"Things have started changing after last Friday and moving very quickly," Yost said. "There simply wasn't a reason to wait and I wanted to keep going."