

Vivek Ramaswamy files paperwork to run for Ohio governor, plans statewide tour

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COLUMBUS, Ohio—Vivek Ramaswamy filed paperwork Saturday to run for Ohio governor in 2026, ahead of a planned multi-city campaign rollout next week.

The 39-year-old from suburban Columbus, who gained national prominence as a 2024 presidential candidate, is the second major Republican to join the race to succeed term-limited Gov. Mike DeWine, after Attorney General Dave Yost.

Ramaswamy created a gubernatorial campaign committee on Saturday, according to the Ohio secretary of state's website. He also launched a website, vivekannouncement.com, with details about planned campaign stops, including in Cincinnati and suburban Columbus on Monday, Feb. 24, and in Toledo and Strongsville the following day.

Ramaswamy's run for governor, [while talked about for more than a year](#), has particularly been expected since he belatedly popped up last month as President Donald Trump's reported favorite to be appointed to now-Vice President JD Vance's open U.S. Senate seat. [DeWine appointed his lieutenant governor, Jon Husted](#), instead.

Since then, Ramaswamy has assembled a political team with close ties to Vance, [Trump's political heir](#) and Ramaswamy's friend since they attended Yale Law School together.

Should Ramaswamy get Trump's endorsement -- an uncertainty that his supporters hope for -- [that could make him a heavy favorite](#) to win the May 2026 GOP gubernatorial primary. The winner of that primary is expected to be the favorite in the November 2026 general election, given Ohio's rightward turn in recent years.

Ramaswamy, who hasn't run for office in Ohio before, starts with good name ID built up from his presidential run and frequent media appearances, as well as a likely ability to capitalize on that name recognition to raise money. However, political experts say his job now is to travel around the state to build relationships with local Republican leaders and activists.

Yost, meanwhile, is in the opposite situation: He's spent the last 15 years networking around Ohio during his four campaigns for statewide office (twice for state auditor, twice for attorney general). Yost's task now is to expand his name ID among the general public, which will require him to raise significant amounts of money for TV ads.

Besides Yost, [Heather Hill](#), a Morgan County businessowner and former county school board member, has also entered the GOP gubernatorial primary race, though she's considered a longshot. The only Democrat to enter the race so far [is Dr. Amy Acton](#), a former state health director.

On [the "Shawn Ryan Show" last week](#), Ramaswamy called for merit-based pay for teachers and universal eligibility for publicly funded vouchers for private K-12 schools. He also called for changing Ohio's economic and tax policies along the lines of what Argentine President Javier Milei has done in his country, lowering local property and state income taxes, as well as reducing state regulations.

While Ramaswamy frequently opines on political issues, he's been focused much more on federal policies than the Ohio-centric issues central to the governor's office.

As a presidential candidate, Ramaswamy was a cheerleader for Trump, his ostensible opponent, backing many of the president's proposals -- such as deporting millions of immigrants living in the country illegally and [ending birthright citizenship](#).

He has [opposed continued military support for Ukraine](#), [proposed raising the voting age to 25](#) except for those who serve in the military or pass a written test, and [called for the complete elimination](#) of the FBI, U.S. Department of Education, and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Ramaswamy has also [suggested](#) that the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol was an "inside job," [claimed falsely](#) that the 2020 presidential election was stolen by "big tech," and [asserted](#) that Democrats are intentionally trying to replace white Americans with minorities.