

Vulnerable Democrat Josh Gottheimer Trying to Steer Republican Primary Toward Preferred Outcome

[Jacob Bliss](#) 8 May 2022



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New Jersey Democrat Rep. Josh Gottheimer appears to be trying to

steer the Republican primary in the Fifth Congressional District to his preferred candidate to run against in the general election.

The three-term congressman, who has four Republicans running to unseat him, has attempted to steer the GOP primary by sending out mailers to show off Frank Pallotta's ties to former President Donald Trump, [according](#) to the *New Jersey Globe*.

Gottheimer, who is running unopposed in the Democrat primary and has more than \$13 million on hand, is looking to have a rematch against Pallotta, who he previously won against in the 2020 election cycle.

The congressman's campaign mailer, first reported by the *Globe*, in an attempt to show voters where the Republican stands politically says on one side, "Frank Pallotta is too much like Trump."

Additionally, while Trump remains popular with the Republican base, Gottheimer also used the endorsement by the former president from 2020. Showing the famous Trump campaign design in the background, Gottheimer's mailer stated, "Frank Pallotta will be a great Congressman for the terrific people of New Jersey! Frank has my Complete and Total Endorsement!"

However, Trump has yet to take a stance on any Republican candidates in this primary race.

While a move like this is not unusual by an opponent of the opposite party, the move signals they the Democrat is trying to run against the person the mailer is for, such as Pallotta, as if they would be a weaker candidate.

In the 2020 election, Pallotta lost by roughly 32,000 — 53 percent to 46 percent. In the last cycle, Pallotta also spent about \$1.4 million. His Federal Election Commission (FEC) filings show he only raised

\$250,740 so far this cycle.

As the *Globe* reported, Pallotta's primary opponent, Nick De Gregorio, a U.S. Marine veteran who served in Afghanistan and Iraq, was one of the people who got the mailer.

"It is clear who Josh Gottheimer wants to win this Republican primary – and it's not the guy who served his country in four tours overseas and is now calling on him and others to sell off their stock portfolios to clean up Washington," De Gregorio said to the publication.

Accusing Gottheimer of meddling in the Republican primary, De Gregorio added, "using liberal special interest money to wage his own Putin-style disinformation campaign to confuse Republican primary voters about who the true conservative leader in this race is."

"It's dead wrong — and if Josh is the statesman he claims to be, he will immediately stop any spending in the CD5 Republican primary," De Gregorio continued. "I also call on my opponent, Frank Pallotta, to immediately disavow Gottheimer's attempt to put his thumb on the scale in this race."

De Gregorio's FEC filings show that he has raised more than \$700,000 since becoming a candidate for Congress.

"Josh is running scared with good reason. He knows that the cost of food and gas, along with the Biden Administration's abject failure to secure the border and support our cops is indefensible here," De Gregorio added. "But here's a message for you, Josh, man-to-man: I will never stop fighting for the future of this country against gutless cowards like you."