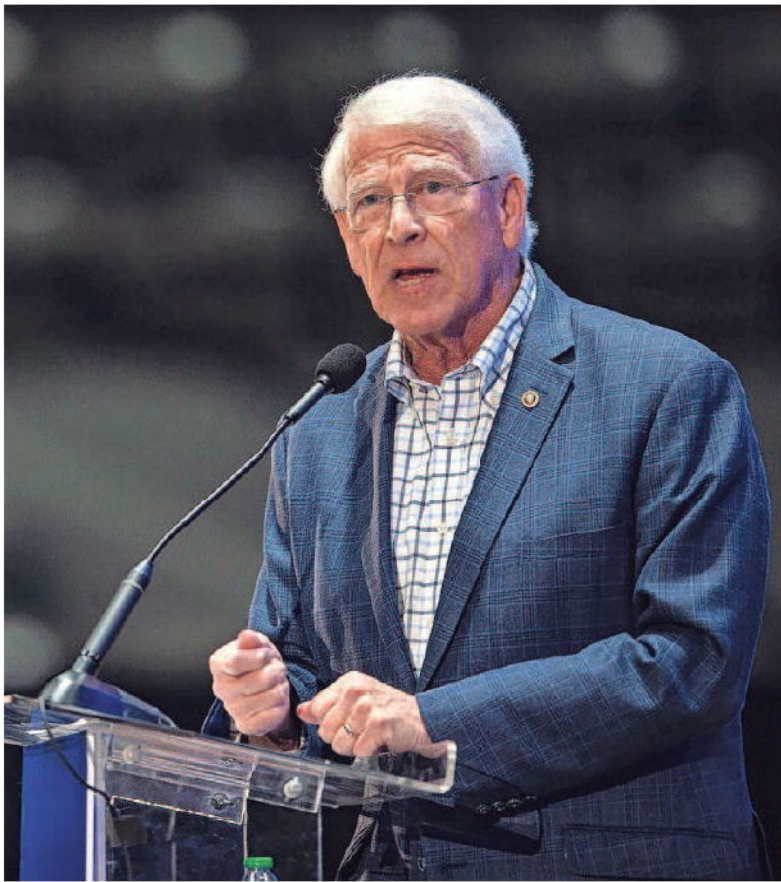




Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith, top, and U.S. Rep. Michael Guest, above, have voiced their support for President Trump's decision to bomb Iran.
CLARION LEDGER FILE PHOTOS



Republican Sen. Roger Wicker wrote on a social media post that "Our commander-in-chief has made a deliberate — and correct — decision to eliminate the existential threat posed by the Iranian regime. We now have very serious choices ahead to provide security for our citizens and our allies and stability for the middle east. Well-done to our military personnel. You're the best." LAUREN WITTE/CLARION LEDGER

SHOW OF SUPPORT

MS Republicans praise Trump for ordering airstrikes on Iran

Grant McLaughlin
Mississippi Clarion Ledger
USA TODAY NETWORK

Mississippi's conservative leadership is sticking by President Donald Trump's decision to militarily engage with Iran after several Iranian nuclear development sites were bombed over the weekend.

Mississippi's two U.S. Sens., Cindy Hyde Smith and Roger Wicker, both Republicans, chose to congratulate the president and supported his decision to strike Iranian nuclear sites.

"Our commander-in-chief has made a deliberate — and correct — decision to eliminate the existential threat posed by the Iranian regime," Wicker wrote in a social media post. "We now have very serious choices ahead to provide security for our citizens and our allies and stability for the middle east. Well-done to our military personnel. You're the best."

Republican U.S. Reps. Trent Kelly,

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Attorney General Lynn Fitch posted on social media: "This is the pathway to sustainable peace in the Middle East. Thank you, (Donald Trump), for showing how to deal with a bully. May God watch over the men and women in uniform and may God continue to bless the USA." LAUREN WITTE/CLARION LEDGER

Michael Guest and Mike Ezell also expressed support in Trump's attempt to knock out Iran's nuclear capabilities.

U.S. Rep. Bennie Thompson, D-District 2, was the only Mississippi delegate to voice disapproval of Trump's decision.

"Donald Trump launched strikes on Iran without Congressional approval. I condemn this illegal act of war," Thompson posted on social media on Saturday. "This is something very serious that puts U.S. troops at risk and undermines our Constitution. We must stand against nuclear threats and dictators."

Background on U.S. strikes in Iran, backlash from MAGA

On Saturday, Trump green lit a targeted bombing of several Iranian Nuclear weapon development sites. Hours later, he told the nation he would order more U.S. strikes if the Iranian government doesn't pursue a diplomatic end to the conflict.

Trump had been hinting at further U.S. involvement in a war between Iran and Israel, which began on June 13 when Israel conducted several airstrikes on Iranian military sites, nuclear scientists and military leaders.

Many within the MAGA movement have since June 13 been opposing further American involvement in a war between Israel and Iran, former Trump Administration strategist Steve Bannon said on a Saturday podcast, according to USA Today reporting.

However, most of the elected members of the Republican Party have rallied to Trump's side, even his former Vice President Mike Pence.

What do state leaders think about Iran situation?

Republican Gov. Tate Reeves, Attorney General Lynn Fitch, Secretary of State Michael Watson, State Auditor



Shad White, Agriculture Commissioner Andy Gipson also posted on social media in support of Trump.

"This is the pathway to sustainable peace in the Middle East," Fitch said. "Thank you, (Donald Trump), for showing how to deal with a bully. May God watch over the men and women in uniform and may God continue to bless the USA."

Lt. Gov. Delbert Hosemann told the Clarion Ledger on Monday morning he was also standing with the president.

"President Trump has firmly exercised his constitutional authority to deter nuclear development in Iran," Hosemann said. "We are neither surprised by his strong position on this critical issue nor by the exceptional bravery and competency of our armed forces. We must continue to pray for our President, our military, and for peace in the Middle East."

GOP opposition to the move

On Saturday, June 21, as the news came in throughout the nation that the military had struck several Iranian sites, some leaders within the Repub-

lican Party began to pipe up, not with support, but with disapproval.

One of Trump's most historically outspoken supporters in the House of Representatives, Marjorie Taylor Greene, R-Georgia, said conflict with Iran was not

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the United States' fight.

"MAGA is not for foreign wars," Greene said in a social media post on Monday. "We are not for regime change. We are for AMERICA FIRST. The United States should not be involved in fighting nuclear-armed Israel's war with Iran."

Another House member, Rep. Thomas Massie, R-Kentucky, called Trump's decision to strike Iran's sites "unconstitutional."

Grant McLaughlin covers the Legislature and state government for the Clarion Ledger. He can be reached at gmclaughlin@gannett.com or 972-571-2335.