

Rep. Janel Brandtjen, election denier who backed Robin Vos challenger, barred from Assembly GOP caucus

[Molly Beck](#) Milwaukee Journal Sentinel 11/16/22/

MADISON - Republicans in the state Assembly have exiled one of their own members who campaigned against Speaker Robin Vos and promoted false claims about the 2020 election.

GOP caucus members voted to bar Rep. Janel Brandtjen, who leads the Assembly elections committee, from meeting with them in private, citing a loss of trust, according to a letter first obtained by [Wispolitics.com](#) to Brandtjen from Assembly Caucus chairman Rep. Rob Summerfield dated Nov. 11.

"Yesterday, at our caucus, the members voted to no longer allow you to participate in closed caucus. The continual issues from the past have led our caucus to lose trust in you. For this reason, this vote was taken," Summerfield wrote.

Brandtjen said Wednesday her colleagues' actions were "petty."

"There was no specification as to what these 'continual issues' were, and neither Rep Summerfield, nor any other caucus leaders, had the integrity to discuss this with me either in person, privately, or in caucus last week," she said in a statement.

Brandtjen said the move proves "that many members of the caucus are willing to ignore their constituents to stay in good standing with caucus leadership and keep their committee chairmanships."

A spokeswoman for Vos did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

In a previous statement released Tuesday, Brandtjen said she left a caucus meeting last week early citing family commitments. Later, she learned from a conservative radio talk show host that she had been expelled because she had "investigated the 2020 election beyond what Speaker Vos and leaders thought was appropriate."

"I will support whoever I deem the best candidate for any race that may be on the ballot. If speaker Vos wanted my support, he should have earned it like any other candidate," Brandtjen said. "I supported Robin Vos' opponent because I don't feel Robin Vos can unify this party."

The move to expel Brandtjen comes after the Menomonee Falls Republican [campaigned for Vos' opponent Adam Steen in the primary and general election](#) and publicly criticized Vos for not doing more to litigate the 2020 election, including overturning its result – an illegal and impossible act.

Since former President Donald Trump began falsely claiming his 2020 loss in Wisconsin was a result of massive voter fraud, Brandtjen has promoted baseless conspiracy theories about the state's election system and given a platform in the state Capitol to election deniers through committee hearings. Brandtjen received an endorsement and public praise from Trump as a result.

Expelling Brandtjen from GOP caucus meetings means she will no longer be privy to discussions regarding potential legislation or political strategies.

Vos has also said it's unlikely she will retain her seat as chair of the Assembly's elections committee.

<https://www.jsonline.com/story/news/politics/2022/11/16/wisconsin-assembly-gop-boots-election-denier-from-caucus-meetings/69654248007/>