

2020 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Tempers flare as Congress rejects objections to Pennsylvania electoral votes

By 6abc Digital Staff

Thursday, January 7, 2021

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The objections to the Pennsylvania electoral votes failed in both the House and Senate.

WASHINGTON -- Objections to Pennsylvania's electoral votes failed in Congress on Thursday as tempers flared during an early morning debate.

Republican Rep. Scott Perry of Pennsylvania and Republican Sen. Josh Hawley of Missouri objected to the counting of Pennsylvania's electoral votes, triggering up to two hours of debate in the House and Senate.

*The Joint Session of Congress is now on hold after Rep. Scott Perry of Pennsylvania objected to the electoral count and Sen. Josh Hawley objected for the Senate. <https://t.co/lBJBhUSyVH>
pic.twitter.com/lCFgX9kM40*

— ABC News Politics (@ABCPolitics) January 7, 2021

The objections came 11 hours after the congressional count to confirm Democrat Joe Biden's presidential victory began, and after lawmakers had to evacuate both chambers for several hours to escape a mob that had violently breached the Capitol.

Hawley said last week that he would object to Pennsylvania's electoral votes, saying Congress should investigate voter fraud. President Donald Trump has falsely said since his defeat that there was widespread fraud in the election.

Biden won Pennsylvania by just over 80,000 votes. Since the Nov. 3 election, Trump and his allies filed at least a half-dozen lawsuits challenging Biden's win on various grounds, including that many or all of the state's mail-in ballots were illegal.

SEE ALSO: Congress validates Biden's presidential victory; 4 dead after Trump mob storms US Capitol

Before dawn Thursday, lawmakers completed their work, confirming Biden won the presidential election.

The lawsuits failed as judge after judge found no violation of state law or constitutional rights, or no grounds to grant an immediate halt to certifying the election.

Senate Rejects

Pennsylvania Republican Senator Pat Toomey said he was disappointed at Trump's loss, but he would not set aside the will of the people of the Commonwealth.

He also rejected the election lies that spurred the violence at the Capitol.

"We witnessed today the damage that can result when men in power and responsibility refuse to acknowledge the truth. We saw bloodshed because a demagogue chose to spread falsehoods and sow distrust of his own fellow Americans. Let's not abet such deception. Let's reject this motion," Toomey said.

Pennsylvania's senior senator, Democrat Bob Casey, also stood to defend the state's voters and election officials.

"Republicans and Democrats from red counties and blue counties - they did their jobs. They are patriots and these objections are an attack on these Pennsylvanian public servants," Casey said.

I rise tonight to defend the people of Pennsylvania against a lie — the same lie that sowed the seed of violence. Watch my full remarks: <https://t.co/oN2MBQOe10>

— Senator Bob Casey (@SenBobCasey) January 7, 2021

The Senate quickly killed Republican objections to Pennsylvania's electoral vote for Biden.

Senators voted 92-7 after midnight to derail the GOP attempt to overturn Pennsylvania's support for the Democrat.

LATEST: Senate rejects objections to counting Pennsylvania's Electoral College votes. <https://t.co/MtNbXL5CXO> [pic.twitter.com/cS25k0oZp7](https://t.co/cS25k0oZp7)

— ABC News (@ABC) January 7, 2021

The Senate rejected the effort to cancel Pennsylvania's votes without any debate.

It was then the House of Representatives' turn.

Heated confrontation between House members amid debate over Pennsylvania electoral vote count

A brief but tense confrontation unfolded on the floor of the House of Representatives early Thursday morning, with some members appearing ready to come to blows while debating challenges put forth by Republican lawmakers seeking to reverse Biden's win.

Rep. Conor Lamb, D-Pa., used his five minutes to give an impassioned speech during the debate over the Electoral College votes from Pennsylvania.

"These objections don't deserve an ounce of respect. Not an ounce," Lamb said, aiming his comments towards the Republicans in the room. "A woman died out there tonight, and you're making these objections!"

"That attack today, it didn't materialize out of nowhere. It was inspired by lies. The same lies that you are hearing in this room tonight," he continued. "The members who are repeating those lies should be ashamed of themselves. Their constituents should be ashamed of them."

"There will be order in the House."

Watch tensions rise on House floor during debate on Pennsylvania #ElectoralCollege Vote Objection.

Note: C-SPAN does not control cameras in the House. pic.twitter.com/sQ1vAIxcot

— CSPAN (@cspan) January 7, 2021

Rep. Morgan Griffiths, R-Va., then jumped in, attempting to make a point of order and asking for some of Lamb's words to be stricken from the record.

"The gentleman said there were lies on this floor today, looking over this direction. I ask that those words be taken down," Griffiths said to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi regarding Lamb's speech.

Pelosi dismissed Griffiths because he spoke out of turn. Lamb then told Republicans: "The truth hurts."

As Pelosi banged her gavel, attempting to get the lower chamber in order, several members ran toward the back of the room. Sources, as well as reporters who were in the room, told ABC News that House Republicans and Democrats appeared to be confronting each other in the aisle, and a shouting match ensued about who should sit down.

Reps. Andy Harris, R-Md., and Colin Allred, D-Texas, appeared to be on the verge of a fist fight, sources told ABC News. There was shouting, but no punches were thrown.

The heated moment passed just as quickly as it began, and the debate resumed.

After two hours of heated debate, the House eventually joined the Senate in turning aside Republican objections to Pennsylvania's electoral for Biden.

Lawmakers in the House voted 282-138 against the objection as the counting of Electoral College votes continued into the early hours of Thursday morning.

There were 138 House Republicans who voted to sustain the objection, while 64 voted against it and 218 Democrats also voted against it.

No House Democrats voted in favor of the objection, while a majority of House Republicans (68%) did.

The Associated Press and ABC News contributed to this report.

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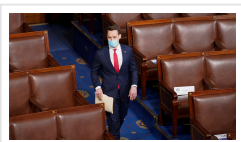


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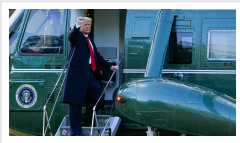
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