



POLITICS

Al Franken resigning -- live stream updates

By Kathryn Watson

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Al Franken resigns

Sen. Al Franken, D-Minnesota, announced on Thursday he will soon be resigning from the U.S. Senate, following a wave of calls for his resignation from his Democratic colleagues. Multiple women have alleged he inappropriately touched them or tried to forcibly kiss them.

In the coming weeks, "I will be resigning as a member of the United States Senate," Franken said on the Senate floor Thursday.

"Let me be clear, I may be resigning my seat but I am not giving up my voice," Franken added. "I will continue to stand up for the things I believe in as a citizen

and as an activist."

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More than 30 of Franken's Democratic colleagues in the Senate, starting with New York's Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, called for him to step down, following another woman's accusation that Franken tried to kiss her against her will. On Wednesday afternoon, Franken's office said he would make an announcement on Thursday, though it did not say what the topic of his announcement would be. Sen. Minority Leader Chuck Schumer met with Franken Wednesday and also advised him to resign.

As recently as Wednesday evening, Franken denied reports that he was preparing to resign.

Once Franken departs the Senate, Minnesota Gov. Mark Dayton, a Democrat, has the authority to appoint a temporary replacement. Then, eventually, a special primary election would be held, if he resigns before June. Sen. Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota, also a Democrat, is up for re-election next year. Franken is up for re-election in 2020.

Franken's departure is the second announced on Capitol Hill in a week, after Rep. John Conyers, D-Michigan, announced he would be leaving the House effective immediately amid allegations of sexual misconduct and harassment leveled against him.

Follow along for live updates below:

Franken concludes his speech

Franken concluded his speech, and silence overtook the Senate chamber.

"I would do it all over again in a heartbeat"

Franken recognized Thursday as the "worst" day of his political life, but said even so, it's been worth it.

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"I would do it all over again in a heartbeat," he said.

"I'm going to be just fine"

Franken recognized his family, saying he was lucky.

"I'm going to be just fine," he said.

Franken applauds his colleagues, people he represents

Franken took time to recognize his colleague, Sen. Amy Klobuchar, and recognized the talent and diligent work of the people of Minnesota.

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Others, he added, he remembers quite differently. Franken said he has thought the Senate Ethics Committee was the appropriate venue for handling those allegations.

Franken begins speaking

Franken said a couple of months ago he believed a movement was beginning in which people had begun to believe women.

"The moment was long overdue," he said.

"Then the conversation turned to me," he added, saying he was "shocked" and "upset."

Franken arrives at the Capitol

Franken and his wife arrive at the Capitol, at 11:46 a.m.

The senator is making his way to the Senate floor, where he is expected to speak soon.

Franken about to speak; Schumer to attend

Franken is scheduled to speak on the Senate floor soon.

Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer, who called on him to resign Wednesday, will be present, according to an email sent to key Democratic staffers.

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