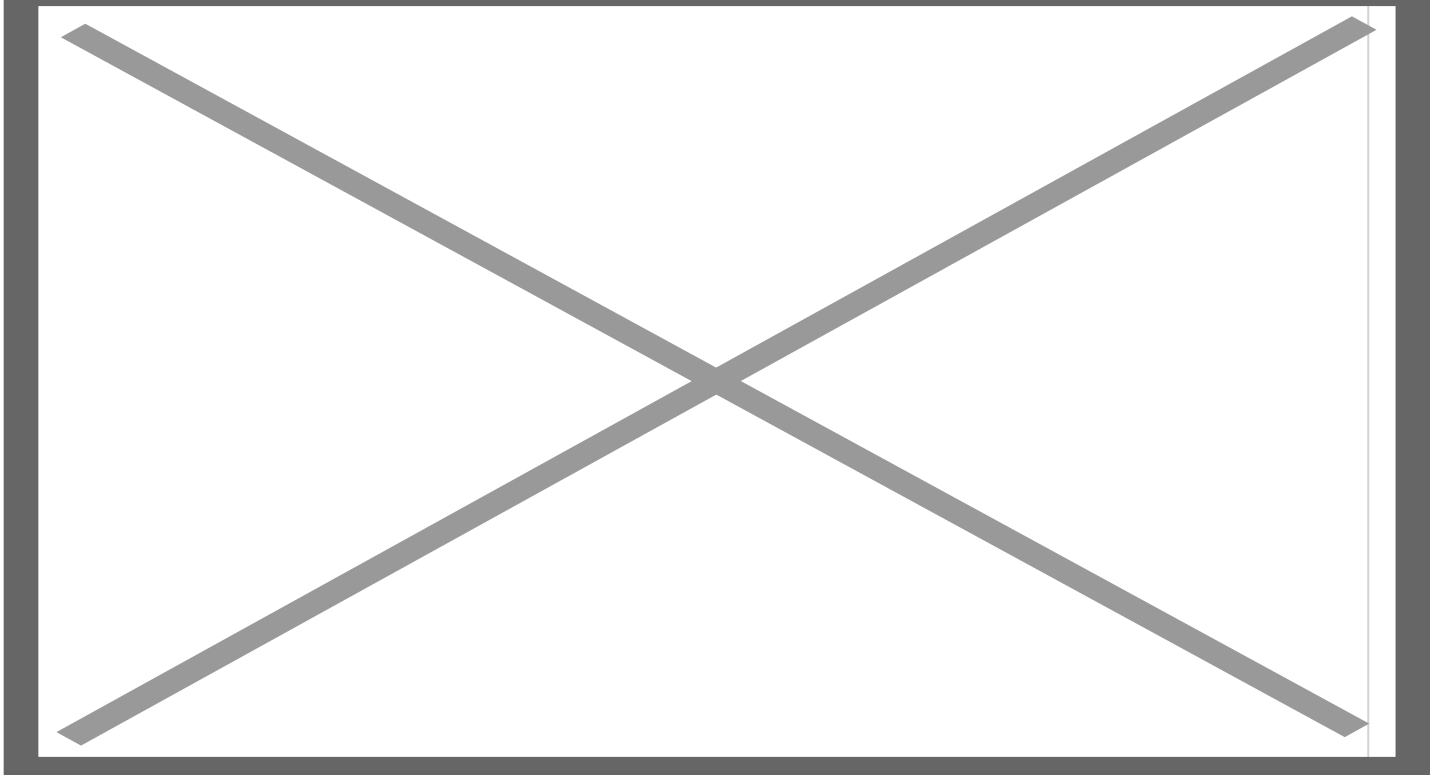


U.S. Republican Senate hopeful denies paying for girlfriend's abortion

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Herschel Walker with his buddy The Donald

Atlanta, October 5 (RHC)-- Herschel Walker, a right-wing Republican candidate for the U.S. Senate who has said he opposes abortion with no exceptions, has denied a media report that he paid for a girlfriend's abortion in 2009.

Walker, who aims to unseat Democratic Senator Raphael Warnock in Georgia, was responding to a report by The Daily Beast that said the candidate's then-girlfriend provided a receipt for the procedure, a copy of a check from Walker and a get-well card given to her by the former football star. The woman, who asked not to be identified by the news outlet, said Walker encouraged her to end the pregnancy, saying that the time was not right for a baby, The Daily Beast reported.

“This is a flat-out lie – and I deny this in the strongest possible terms,” Walker, said in a statement late Monday that also said he would sue the outlet. Matt Fuller, the politics editor for The Daily Beast, tweeted in response: “I can tell you we stand behind every word and feel very solid about the story.”

The report comes two weeks before early voting begins in Georgia, one of several critical races that will determine whether Democrats hold onto their narrow majority in the Senate. It is also the latest scandal for Walker, a first-time candidate for office who has also faced allegations of domestic violence.

Abortion looms large in the run-up to the November 8 midterm elections. In June, the US Supreme Court overturned *Roe v Wade*, the 1973 landmark ruling that made abortion a federally protected right in the United States. The issue has taken center stage in many Democratic campaigns. Democrats in Congress have been discussing codifying abortion rights into federal law, and they are hoping that women, younger voters, and people of colour would rally behind the issue.

As a Senate hopeful, Walker has supported a national ban on abortions with no exceptions for cases involving rape, incest or a woman’s health being at risk. “I’m for life,” Walker has said repeatedly as he campaigns. When asked whether he would allow for any exceptions, he has said there are “no excuses” for the procedure.

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