

Senator Mark Kelly Ditches His Tesla After Elon Musk Calls Him a Traitor

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(Bloomberg) -- Arizona Senator Mark Kelly, a former Space Shuttle commander who used to work with Elon Musk's SpaceX, has ditched his black Tesla Model S after publicly feuding with the world's richest person in recent weeks.

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"I'm here in Washington driving to work for the last time in my Tesla," Kelly, a Democrat, said Friday in a video posted on X, Musk's social media platform. "When I bought this thing, I didn't think it was going to become a political issue. Every time I get in this car in the last 60 days or so, it reminds me of just how much damage Elon Musk and Donald Trump is doing to our country."

In an interview later with Bloomberg News, Kelly called the Tesla a "rolling billboard" for Musk's work for the president. Kelly, who bought a white Chevy Tahoe as a replacement, said the move was inspired in part by the billionaire's spearheading of the Department of Government Efficiency, which has pushed agencies to cut tens of thousands of workers.

"What he's doing in trying to fire all of these people — I met with them in my office — ruining people's lives just so they can create some room to give a big giant tax cut to billionaires like him," Kelly said.

Musk, on Monday, called Kelly a "traitor" over his visit to Ukraine, which came shortly after the Trump administration paused aid to the nation to try to force it to comply with the president's peace plan with Russia.

That insult prompted Kelly to claim Musk has sworn an "oath to his own checking account." Kelly suggested Musk should quit the government "and go back to focusing on SpaceX."

The two men have known each other for years, but they have increasingly gone public with their criticisms of each other this year.

In 2022, Kelly touted his enjoyment from his Tesla. “This car is a lot of fun to drive,” Kelly said at the time. “It’s also generally good for the environment, right? Zero emissions.”

Kelly’s sale of his car comes as Tesla becomes the target for protests against Musk across the country. Republican lawmakers have called for investigations of vandalism to Tesla’s US showrooms and charging stations after Trump suggested earlier this week he would designate the acts as domestic terrorism.

During an unusual White House event this week with Musk, Trump said he would purchase a Tesla to keep at the White House for the use of his staff, in a sign of support for him.

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Arizona Sen. Mark Kelly says he's selling his Tesla in protest, calls out Elon Musk

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Sen. Mark Kelly resumed his war of words with Elon Musk on Friday with a salty social media video saying he's ditching his Tesla car to further separate himself from someone who "kind of turned out to be an a-----."

Standing near the U.S. Capitol, the Arizona Democrat echoed the growing sentiment of many left-leaning Tesla owners, who have [come to regret that the electric vehicle is so closely aligned](#) with the man spearheading President Donald Trump's mass layoffs in the federal workforce.

"There are some things I really liked about it. There are some things I didn't like about it. But that doesn't matter," Kelly said with a black Tesla in the background. "What matters is doing the right thing. I think it's time to get rid of it."

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“Elon Musk kind of turned out to be an a-----, and I don’t want to be driving the car built and designed by an a-----. So, I’m looking forward to my new ride.”

Kelly said he came to no longer like the car over the past 60 days, the period when Trump returned to the White House and Musk has targeted veterans, senior citizens and the poor with budget cuts.

Kelly’s swipe at Musk comes after Trump hopped into a Tesla with Musk outside the White House. Trump said on social media he planned to buy one of the vehicles. The [carmaker’s stock has skidded 40%](#) since Trump returned to the White House.

Musk and Kelly have locked horns repeatedly since Musk’s advisory Department of Government Efficiency has overseen an estimated 250,000 layoffs of government workers, many of them veterans.

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On Monday, Musk told his 220 million followers on the X social media platform he owns that Kelly was a “traitor” after Kelly, a combat veteran and member of the Senate Armed Services and Select Intelligence committees, described a visit last week to Ukraine.

Kelly responded to that with pointed words of his own.

“Traitor? Elon, if you don’t understand that defending freedom is a basic tenet of what makes America great and keeps us safe, maybe you should leave it to those of us who do,” Kelly said.

In an interview with The Arizona Republic afterward, Kelly said Musk’s downsizing has less to do with finding needed cuts to the government than helping himself.

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“What he’s really trying to do is get to the point where they can deliver this big, giant tax cut for billionaires like himself and his buddies and Donald Trump,” Kelly said.

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Kelly's latest post comes on the day the Senate will take up a Republican-shaped spending plan to avert a government shutdown which Kelly described on Thursday as giving "unchecked power to Donald Trump and Elon Musk."

This article originally appeared on Arizona Republic: [Sen. Mark Kelly is dumping his Tesla. Here's why](#)