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## FRANCE ELECTION: FILLON FIGHTS BACK TO WIN FULL PARTY SUPPORT

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Embattled French presidential hopeful Francois Fillon has fought off a rebellion to secure the unanimous support of his conservative party, The Republicans.

Fillon is embroiled in a fake jobs scandal in which it is claimed he misused public funds.

But an emergency meeting on Monday, hours after party heavyweight Alain Juppé ruled out challenging Fillon, ended with French Senate leader Gerard Larcher announcing:

After extensive debate, the political committee has unanimously reiterated its support for Francois Fillon. He is committed to working to bring together the political family of the right and centre around him and his programme for national recovery.

Francois Fillon has indicated that he will take the initiative when it comes to conveying our values. So the Republicans are together and determined around Francois Fillon.

Fillon, a former prime minister, was emboldened by the thousands of supporters he gathered in Paris on Sunday when he stood alongside his wife Penelope who insists she did work for him.

The allegations that he paid her lavishly from taxpayers funds for doing little work as his parliamentary assistant have badly damaged Fillon and also rattled foreign investors who fear it could boost far-right leader Marine Le Pens election chances.

Fillon denies any wrongdoing.

with Reuters

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Kaynak/Source: