

Trump criminal target letter in election probe cites laws on conspiracy, witness tampering

by Dan Mangan | CNBC

(CNBC) - The target letter that special counsel Jack Smith recently sent lawyers for former President Donald Trump mentions three federal criminal statutes, including conspiracy to defraud the United States and witness tampering, NBC News reported Wednesday.

The target letter also mentions a third criminal statute, deprivation of rights under color of law, according to NBC, which cited two attorneys with direct knowledge of the letter.

Smith is investigating Trump and various allies of the former president for their efforts to reverse his loss in the 2020 election to President Joe Biden.

Those efforts included the submission of false Electoral College slates, various legal challenges to state election results, testimony to state lawmakers and Trump's pressuring of Georgia's top election official to change the election results.

The details of the federal statutes mentioned in the target letter were first reported by The Wall Street Journal.

Trump is the leading candidate for the Republican nomination in next year's presidential election.

Trump on Tuesday disclosed that Smith had sent his lawyers the letter, which is typically issued by the Department of Justice to give people a chance to testify before a grand jury after the discovery of substantial evidence linking them to a crime.

"Deranged Jack Smith, the prosecutor with Joe Biden's DOJ, sent a letter (again, it was Sunday night!) stating that I am a TARGET of the January 6th Grand Jury investigation, and giving me a very short 4 days to report to the Grand Jury, which almost always means an Arrest and Indictment," Trump wrote on his Truth Social site Tuesday.

Trump argued that Smith's probe is designed to harm his chances of winning the 2024 Republican presidential nomination and general election against Biden.

Multiple sources told NBC News that Trump has no plans to travel to Washington, D.C., to testify to a grand jury meeting in federal court there.

Smith on Wednesday morning left his Washington office to visit the courthouse where the grand jury was meeting. The panel is likely to be



A target letter sent by special counsel Jack Smith (L) to former President Donald Trump mentions three federal criminal statutes: conspiracy to defraud the United States, witness tampering, and deprivation of rights under color of law.

the one Smith will ask to indict Trump if he decides to seek criminal charges against the former president.

NBC confirmed that former Trump White House aide William Russell, who works for his 2024 presidential campaign, will testify to the grand jury again, after having already appeared multiple times before that panel.

Conspiracy to defraud the U.S. can include acts that "interfere or obstruct legitimate Government activity," or that "make use of a government instrumentality," the Department of Justice notes on its website.

The DOJ's site detailing deprivation of rights under color of law notes that it is a "crime for a person acting under color of any law to willfully deprive a person of a right or privilege protected by the Constitution or laws of the United States."

The statute specifically mentions acts committed by federal, state and local officials.

The statute on witness tampering covers a broad array of criminal conduct, including persuading another person to prevent their testimony in an

official proceeding, and destroying or concealing a document with the intent to impair its use for an official proceeding.

Separately on Wednesday, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution reported that Smith's prosecutors had subpoenaed surveillance video footage recorded at the State Farm Arena in Atlanta during vote counting there after the 2020 election.

Trump's campaign lawyers had used surveillance footage from the vote count to argue without success in December 2020 that Georgia's presidential election was tainted by fraud. Biden won Georgia's popular vote.

Smith last month charged Trump with about three dozen felonies related to his keeping classified documents at his Florida home after leaving the White House, and for allegedly obstructing government officials when they tried to recover those records from his Mar-a-Lago club in Florida.

Trump has pleaded not guilty in that case. His lawyers have asked the judge in that case to delay trial until at least after the 2024 presidential election.

Elite Connecticut college says it will end 'legacy' admissions

by Bernd Debusmann Jr | BBC News, Washington

(BBC, Washington) - Wesleyan University, an elite US liberal arts college, says it will no longer grant preference to student applicants with family or donor ties.

The Connecticut institution said it was "important" to end legacy admissions, which have long been criticised as a perk for the white and wealthy.

It cited the Supreme Court's recent ruling that race could no longer be considered as a factor in admissions.

A vast majority of Americans are against legacy admissions.

In a statement on Wednesday, Wesleyan University President Michael Roth said "an applicant's connection to a Wesleyan graduate indicates little about that applicant's ability to succeed".

For that reason, he said, such ties have played a "negligible" role in the university's admission process.

Mr Roth also said that Wesleyan will continue

to value its "ongoing relationships that come from multi-generational Wesleyan attendance".

But there would be no legacy "bump" in its selection process from now on, he said.

Wesleyan joins a number of other US universities that have already dropped legacy admissions, including Johns Hopkins and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, or MIT.

An opinion poll conducted last year by the Pew Research Center found that 75% of Americans were against legacy admissions, up from 68% in 2019.

US President Joe Biden last month led criticism of the practice, saying that "adversity" should be considered in the college admissions process.

"When a poor kid, maybe the first in their family to go to college, gets the same grades and test scores as a wealthy kid whose whole family has gone to the most elite colleges in the country and whose path has been a lot easier, well, the kid who faced

tougher challenges has demonstrated more grit, more determination," he told reporters at the White House.

"That should be a factor that colleges take into account."

Mr Biden's comments came after the Supreme Court voted 6-3 to repeal decades-old US policies on so-called affirmative action, also known as positive discrimination.

Following the decision, a Boston-based non-profit, Lawyers for Civil Rights, filed a federal civil rights complaint against Harvard's legacy admissions.

The legal action cited studies indicating that a vast majority - 70% - of legacy and donor-based applicants are white.

Congresswoman Barbara Lee, a California Democrat, referred to legacy admissions as affirmative action for white people.

Harvard has yet to publicly address the issue.

Tiger Woods' ex-girlfriend Erica Herman drops \$30 million lawsuit against 15-time major winner

by Joel Beall | GOLF DIGEST

(GOLF DIGEST) - Tiger Woods' ex-girlfriend has dropped a \$30 million lawsuit against the 15-time major winner.

Erica Herman had filed a complaint against Jupiter Island Irrevocable Homestead Trust—a trust that Woods controls—last October in Marin County, Fla., alleging that the entity was in violation of the Florida Residential Landlord Tenant Act, with Herman seeking more than \$30 million for damages suffered. She claimed "by trickery, agents of the Defendant convinced the Plaintiff to pack a suitcase for a short vacation and, when she arrived at the airport, they told her she had been locked out of her residence."

In March, she filed a lawsuit alleging a non-disclosure agreement she signed should be declared unenforceable under the federal Speak Out Act. The act, which prevents the enforcement of NDAs in instances of sexual assault and harassment, was signed into law in December 2022.

But in May a circuit judge ruled against Herman, writing that Herman had failed to "provide factual specificity" regarding any accusation.



Tiger Woods and Erica Herman

On June 1, Herman and her lawyers asked the court to reconsider her case on four issues, most notably a lack of evidence, but a judge tossed out the request. Herman had planned to appeal, but instead a motion to dismiss without prejudice was filed June 29.

Herman, 39, was the general manager at Woods' restaurant, The Woods Jupiter, and was first publicly seen with Woods at the 2017 Presidents

Cup. She alleged in court documents that when they began to have a personal relationship, Woods and his lawyers required her to sign the NDA and threatened to fire her if she didn't sign.

Woods, a three-time Open Championship winner, is not competing this week at Royal Liverpool as he continues to rehab following April surgery on his ankle.