

Donald Trump files lawsuit to block access to his tax records



New York, July 25 (RHC)-- U.S. President Donald Trump has lodged a lawsuit in a bid to prevent the disclosure of years of his tax returns which he refused to release ahead of the 2016 presidential election.

The suit was filed on Tuesday against the Democrat-led House Ways and Means Committee, New York state's attorney general Letitia James as well as the commissioner of the New York Department of Taxation and Finance, Michael Schmidt.

Trump's lawsuit was filed in his capacity as a private citizen less than a month after the Ways and Means Committee had sued the Treasury Department and the Internal Revenue Service to gain access to his federal returns.

"Like House Democrats, Democratic officials in New York have used every tool at their disposal to expose the president's private financial information," reads the statement. "And like House Democrats, their goal is to retaliate against President Trump and damage him politically."

Meanwhile, James issued a statement defending her state's attempt to gain the president's returns. "President Trump has spent his career hiding behind lawsuits, but, as New York's chief law enforcement officer, I can assure him that no one is above the law -- not even the president of the United States," she said in the statement.

Trump has refused to release his tax returns arguing that they are being audited, a claim rejected by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

There have been reports that he engaged in "dubious tax schemes" that included "instances of outright fraud.?"

On April 13, Democratic lawmakers gave the president 10 days to hand over his tax returns. That deadline was announced after an initial April 10 deadline had lapsed.

Early in May, The New York Times reported that Trump's businesses lost over \$1 billion from 1985 to 1994 and he avoided paying income taxes for eight of the 10 years. The newspaper said it obtained printouts from Trump's official Internal Revenue Service (IRS) tax transcripts.

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