

# *Donald Trump indicted in federal classified documents probe*

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Palm Beach, June 9 (RHC)-- Former U.S. President Donald Trump said Thursday night that he has been indicted in the special counsel investigation into his handling of classified documents, a development that sources familiar with the matter also confirmed to multiple media outlets.

While the Manhattan district attorney in April charged Trump with 34 felony counts involving alleged multiple hush money payments during the 2016 election cycle, the latest indictment marks the first time an ex-president has faced federal charges. Both CNN and The New York Times reported that he faces seven new criminal counts.

According to ABC News, the charges "include willful retention of national defense information, conspiracy to obstruct justice, withholding a document or record, corruptly concealing a document or record, concealing a document in a federal investigation, scheme to conceal, and false statements and representations."

"Today is a historic day for accountability and upholding the principles upon which our democracy was founded. No one is above the law—not even an ex-president," said Lisa Gilbert, executive vice president for Public Citizen, in response to the news. "This fact should unite us, not divide us."

"The Justice Department has found what numerous legal scholars have found: sufficient evidence that Trump committed a federal crime in the handling of classified documents since he left office," added Gilbert. "Even Trump's own attorney general, Bill Barr, told CBS News that 'This would have gone nowhere had the president just returned the documents, but he jerked them around for a year and a half... There is no excuse for what he did here.'" "What's left is for the courts to decide," she said, "as they would in any criminal case."

Donald Trump, the front-runner for the 2024 Republican presidential nomination, announced the indictment in a series of posts on his Truth Social platform. After taking aim at President Joe Biden, who beat him in 2020 and is seeking reelection, Trump said that he has been summoned to appear at the federal courthouse in Miami on Tuesday afternoon.

The ex-president proclaimed his innocence and declared that "this is indeed a DARK DAY for the United States of America." He posted a four-minute video about what he called "A CONTINUATION OF THE GREATEST WITCH HUNT OF ALL TIME" and is already fundraising off of the development, urging supporters to "prove that YOU will NEVER surrender our country to the radical Left."

After Trump announced his 2024 campaign in November, U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland appointed Jack Smith, a longtime federal prosecutor, as special counsel to oversee probes into the twice-impeached former president's role in the January 6, 2021 attack on the U.S. Capitol and his handling of classified documents.

Smith's appointment came after the Federal Bureau of Investigation executed a search warrant at Mar-a-Lago, Trump's Florida residence, last August. Later that month, the U.S. Department of Justice released a redacted affidavit which explained what prompted the raid, during which agents retrieved several boxes of materials.

Ahead of Trump's announcement Thursday, David Rothkopf argued in a piece for the Daily Beast that "my brothers and sisters in the media and the D.C. commentariat need to stop referring to the former president's theft of classified documents vital to our national security as merely 'the documents case.'"

Rothkopf continued: "Based on evidence that has already been made public we know that Trump did not mistakenly shift a classified document or two from the White House to Mar-a-Lago. He was briefed repeatedly on the proper handling of classified materials. He has even acknowledged, on tape, that he understood how such sensitive, easily weaponizable documents should be treated."

"But he ignored the law. He ignored the advice he was repeatedly given. And, based on reporting to date, he stole scores of items that were not his, to which he had no right, which could put the lives of Americans and our national interests and those of our allies at risk."

Linking to the article, Noah Bookbinder, head of the watchdog group Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington, tweeted: "This is important. Donald Trump is likely to be charged soon not for mishandling documents, but for endangering America's national security. How we talk about this matters, and that is a more accurate and appropriate description."

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