Maryland, Washington D.C. Officials Sue Donald Trump for Self-Dealing

Summary: Donald Trump has been sued by two attorney generals who want him to release his tax returns.

The attorney generals of Maryland and Washington, D.C. claim that President Donald Trump has violated the constitution by not shedding his businesses, and they are suing him for it.

The lawsuit was filed today in Maryland federal court, *The New York Times* said. The suit stated that Trump's failure to end his ties with his businesses undermined public trust and violated constitutional laws against self-dealing.

The two attorney generals are Democratic, and it is expected that some other Democrats in Congress will also file a similar lawsuit. The purpose of these complaints is to force Republican Donald Trump to defend his continued ownership of his businesses, which include hotels and golf courses.

Democrats said that Trump violates the Constitution, which forbids public officials from accepting gifts or emoluments from foreign governments and economic benefits from federal or state governments (that are not his salary.) The purpose of this ban is to curb corruption.

The complaint has many of the same points made in a lawsuit filed in New York federal court earlier this year. According to *The New York Times,* Maryland and Washington's filing "may progress farther because the plaintiffs were government entities, which could have stronger standing to sue the president."

While the Department of Justice has not yet responded to the new lawsuit, they said in response to the New York complaint that emolument clauses were never intended to stop a president from owning a business while in office. They said that it was up to Congress and not a federal judge to decide what to do if the President actually had violated these rules.

Monday's complaint said that businesses owned by Trump diverted money from other businesses in Maryland and D.C. and that Trump's position unfairly helps his businesses such as the Trump International Hotel.

Brian E. Frosh, the Maryland attorney general, and Karl Racine, the attorney general for the District of Columbia, said that they are seeking to obtain the president's tax returns. While other presidents have released them, Trump has refused, and the attorney generals said that they want to see them in order to gauge the extent of his business dealings.

“It is unprecedented that the American people must question day after day whether decisions are made and actions are taken to benefit the United States or to benefit Donald Trump,” Frosh said. “The president’s conflicts of interest threaten our democracy.”

The Republican National Committee has called the new lawsuit "absurd," and they accused the attorney generals of being "partisan."

“The actions by the attorneys general represent the kind of partisan grandstanding voters across the country have come to despise," the RNC said in a statement to the *New York Times*.

- Fired FBI Director James Comey Accuses Trump Administration of Telling Lies
- Key Official Who Was Investigating Trump’s Ties with Russia Departing DOJ
- Comey Isn’t Going to Go Quietly

Source: *New York Times*

What do you think of the attorney generals' lawsuit? Let us know in the comments below.