

Texas House Panel Recommends Impeachment of State Attorney General



In a significant development, a committee of the Texas House of Representatives has recommended the impeachment of Republican Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton. The committee alleges that Paxton misused his power by favoring a developer who had made contributions to his campaign and provided additional benefits. According to the articles of impeachment, the developer purportedly employed a woman with whom Paxton was having an affair and carried out renovations on Paxton's residence.

Prominent media outlets such as Law360, the Associated Press, the New York Times, and the Washington Post have covered this ongoing story, shedding light on the intricacies surrounding the case.

Moreover, Paxton settled a lawsuit for \$3.3 million brought by former aides who claimed that Paxton retaliated against them for raising concerns. This settlement prevented a trial and effectively kept their allegations out of the public eye, as mentioned in the articles of impeachment. Additionally, Paxton successfully delayed a securities-fraud trial against him, which, according to the impeachment document, deprived voters of the opportunity to make an informed decision while voting for attorney general.

Despite these controversies, voters reelected Paxton for a third term in November 2022. In a video clip posted on Twitter by Paxton, his litigation chief, Chris Hilton, asserted that any potential impeachment proceedings should only focus on conduct since the most recent election, emphasizing that the voters have already expressed their preference for Ken Paxton.

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The Texas House's Committee on General Investigating, consisting of three Republicans and two Democrats, made the recommendation for impeachment. The actual impeachment of Paxton would require a majority vote from the Texas House, where Republicans hold 85 out of 150 seats, according to the Washington Post. Subsequently, if impeached, a two-thirds vote from present senators would be necessary for conviction. Republicans hold 19 out of the 31 seats in the Texas Senate.

In the event of impeachment, Paxton would be temporarily removed from office pending the Texas Senate vote, thus leaving an interim vacancy in the role of Attorney General.

The Texas House committee recently conducted a public hearing where investigators presented their findings and testimonies.

In response to the committee's vote, Paxton released a statement denouncing the report and its authors. He criticized the process for lacking opportunities for rebuttal or due process, claiming that the report relied on hearsay and discredited allegations. Paxton further expressed disappointment that a senior attorney from his office was not permitted to present relevant facts and that every attempt to seek a comprehensive account of the truth was rejected.

As the legal proceedings unfold, the recommendations for impeachment raise significant implications for the tenure of Attorney General Ken Paxton. The potential outcome will not only shape the future of the office but also impact the political landscape in Texas. Stay tuned for further updates on this evolving legal news story.