

US Appeals Court Considers Sanctions for Sidney Powell in Election Lawsuit



Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers is seeking sanctions against conservative lawyer Sidney Powell for her failed lawsuit alleging fraud in the 2020 presidential election. Lawyers representing Governor Evers argued before the U.S. appeals court in Chicago, stating that Powell's case should have never been brought and that sanctions are warranted. Governor Evers aims to recoup \$106,000 in attorney fees from Powell and her team of lawyers who claimed widespread election fraud in battleground states won by Democrat Joe Biden, including Wisconsin.

During the oral arguments at the 7th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals, Jeffrey Mandell, a partner at Stafford Rosenbaum representing Governor Evers, asserted that the case was sanctionable from the beginning and emphasized that it should have been dismissed outright. However, U.S. District Judge Pamela Pepper previously denied Evers' motion for sanctions in August, citing that she no longer had jurisdiction over the case. Judge Pepper also stated that sanctions would not be appropriate as she had swiftly dismissed Powell's lawsuit without delving into the merits of her claims.

If Governor Evers' appeal is successful, Judge Pepper would be required to reconsider the motion for sanctions. However, Judge David Hamilton expressed concerns during the arguments, stating that reviving the sanction motion after a victory could be perceived as a "post-victory ambush."

Powell's lawsuit sought to overturn the results of the Wisconsin election, alleging a vast and complex fraud scheme involving voting machines, Venezuelan dictator Hugo Chavez, and hackers from China and Iran. However, Judge Pepper dismissed the case within days on procedural grounds.

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During the hearing, Powell expressed her surprise at Evers' motion for attorney fees, stating that she felt "blindsided" by the request. Powell revealed that she has faced multiple sanctions motions and disciplinary complaints across various states, including her home state of Texas. She characterized these actions against her as "lawfare" and indicated her challenges in defending her claims.

In her appellate brief, Powell continued to defend her allegations of election fraud, arguing that Governor Evers cannot deem her claims frivolous without an evidentiary hearing. It's worth noting that Powell has already been sanctioned \$175,000 by a federal judge in Michigan for filing a similar lawsuit containing baseless election fraud claims. She has since appealed the sanction to the 6th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals, which held oral arguments on the matter in December.

The outcome of Governor Evers' appeal for sanctions against Sidney Powell remains uncertain. The court's decision will determine whether sanctions are imposed and if Judge Pepper will revisit the request. This case adds to the broader legal debate surrounding the 2020 presidential election and the claims of fraud put forth by some individuals. As the legal proceedings continue, monitoring the implications for future election-related lawsuits and the potential consequences for those who bring forward unsupported claims will be crucial.