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First in U.S. History: Former President Trump Indicted by Federal Grand Jury Over Alleged Classified Documents Mishandling

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Former President Donald Trump was indicted by a federal grand jury on Thursday, June 8, 2023.

In an unprecedented move, former U.S. President Donald Trump was indicted by a federal grand jury on Thursday, following an investigation into his alleged mishandling of classified documents at his Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida. This marks the first time in U.S history that a former president has faced federal charges.

Trump has been charged with seven counts, including violations of the Espionage Act, which prohibits the misuse of classified information. In addition, charges of obstruction and false

statements have also been confirmed by Trump's attorney, James Trusty, during an interview on CNN.

In a recent post on Truth Social, Trump revealed that his legal team had been notified of his indictment in what he described as the “Boxes Hoax.” The former president has maintained his innocence and announced his scheduled appearance at the federal courthouse in Miami on Tuesday.

According to Wall Street Journal sources, prosecutors have been amassing evidence that suggests Trump intentionally withheld sensitive intelligence and defense-related documents, despite legal demands for the return of all such materials last year. The indictment has been filed under seal, with public access yet to be granted.

Trump expressed disbelief over the proceedings, stating, “I never thought it possible that such a thing could happen to a former President of the United States.” He further affirmed his innocence in a forceful statement, “I AM AN INNOCENT MAN!”

The charges against Trump, who is a potential contender for the 2024 presidency, have been filed under the administration of his prospective rival, President Joe Biden. The White House refrained from commenting on the matter.

In response to questions about the Justice Department's independence, President Biden emphasized, “I have never once, not a single time, suggested to the Justice Department what they should do or not do relative to bringing a charge or not bringing a charge. I’m honest.”

The charges have brought an added layer of legal complexity to Trump's potential bid for the 2024 presidency. The 76-year-old is already confronting criminal charges in New York tied to a hush-money payment in the 2016 election, and he is facing the possibility of charges in Georgia related to alleged attempts to overturn the 2020 election results.

Following the indictment, Trump's campaign swiftly launched a fundraising drive. In an email to supporters, Trump urged them to “peacefully stand with me today and prove that YOU will NEVER surrender our country to the radical Left—for 1,500% impact.”

The federal indictment is a significant development in a wider probe led by special counsel Jack Smith, a former war-crimes and public-corruption prosecutor. Appointed by Attorney General Merrick Garland, Smith has been tasked with overseeing two inquiries related to Trump, including an investigation into efforts by Trump and his allies to overturn his 2020 election loss.

The probes, while ongoing, have uncovered evidence that suggests a focus on Trump’s fundraising after the 2020 election. The investigations into document mishandling were triggered in early 2022, following the retrieval of 15 boxes of documents, some containing classified records, from Mar-a-Lago by the National Archives.

In the coming months, Smith's team is expected to examine key pieces of evidence, including an audio recording in which Trump allegedly admits to keeping a classified Pentagon document on a potential attack on Iran. Trump's legal team met with Justice Department officials on June 5 in an attempt to prevent the indictment.

This case unfolds parallel to a separate investigation examining how classified documents from President Biden’s tenure as vice president ended up at his home and office. Another inquiry into similar circumstances involving former Vice President Mike Pence was closed by the Justice Department on June 1.

