

WASHINGTON NEWS

Inaugural committee gets subpoena on documents



New York Times

Stephanie Winston Wolkoff was an adviser to first lady Melania Trump whose event planning firm was paid nearly \$26 million by Donald Trump's inaugural committee.

BY MAGGIE HABERMAN AND BEN PROFFER
NEW YORK TIMES

NEW YORK — President Trump's inaugural committee was ordered Monday to turn over documents about its donors, finances and activities to federal prosecutors in Manhattan, according to two people familiar with their investigation into the committee's activities. A lawyer working with the inaugural committee received

a subpoena Monday evening seeking documents related to all of the committee's donors and event attendees; any benefits handed out, including tickets and photo opportunities with the president; federal disclosure filings; vendors; contracts; and more, one of the people said.

Prosecutors also showed interest in whether any foreigners illegally donated to the committee, as well as whether committee staff knew that

such donations were illegal, asking for documents laying out legal requirements for donations. Federal law prohibits foreign contributions to federal campaigns, political action committees and inaugural funds.

A spokesman for the inaugural committee said it was still reviewing the subpoena and intended to cooperate with the investigation. A spokesman for the U.S. Attorney's Office in Manhattan declined to comment. ABC first reported that a subpoena was in the works.

The subpoena marked an escalation of the investigation, which the prosecutors opened late last year amid a flurry of scrutiny of the inaugural committee.

The U.S. Attorney's Office in Brooklyn is separately in-

vestigating whether foreigners illegally funneled donations to Trump's inaugural committee using so-called straw donors to disguise their donations. Federal law prohibits foreign contributions to inaugural committees.

As part of their inquiry, prosecutors in Manhattan have pursued the possibility that the inaugural committee made false statements to the Federal Election Commission, according to people familiar with the matter. It can be a crime to knowingly make false or fraudulent statements to a federal agency.

The inaugural committee disclosed a list of its donors to the FEC, and the prosecutors are examining whether that list is complete and accurate, the person said. If a donor was

omitted from the report, prosecutors could take an interest in that as well.

The inaugural committee was chaired by Thomas J. Barrack, a close friend of the president. No one who worked for the committee, or donated to it, has been accused of wrongdoing, and a subpoena is an initial step in the inquiry.

The investigation into the inaugural committee grew out of the investigation into Michael Cohen, Trump's former personal lawyer and fixer. Cohen is due to begin a prison sentence next month after pleading guilty last year to a range of crimes, including one campaign finance-related charge, in which he implicated the president.

In raids of Cohen's office, home and hotel room in April,

FBI agents seized his cell-phones, which included nearly 200 voice recordings, mostly voicemail messages, according to people briefed on the seized material. On one recording, Trump spoke to Cohen about a payment to a woman who had claimed to have had an affair with Trump, which he has denied.

On another, Cohen spoke to Stephanie Winston Wolkoff, who was a top official on the inaugural committee. Winston Wolkoff was fired as an adviser to the first lady, Melania Trump, in early 2018, after the inaugural committee released its financial disclosures showing that entities controlled by Winston Wolkoff were paid \$26 million. The vast majority of those funds went to a subcontractor.

Trump's fundraising reaches \$67.5 million

BY ASHLEY BALCERZAK AND DAVE LEVINTHAL
CENTER FOR PUBLIC INTEGRITY

President Trump's re-election committee fundraising haul has reached \$67.5 million — an unprecedented effort for a first-term president during his first two years in office.

Trump's fundraising prowess puts pressure on an ever-expanding field of Democratic presidential candidates. None yet match Trump's financial heft, and all face what promises to be an expensive Democratic primary, where they'll first battle each other for their party's nomination.

"Significantly, grassroots support for the President has remained both steady and historic, with the vast majority of our fundraising coming from contributions of \$200 or less," said Michael Glassner, chief operating officer of Trump's campaign. "This is a true testament to President Trump's fulfillment of his promises made to the forgotten men and women of America."

Trump's own campaign committee total doesn't count tens of millions of dollars more raised by the Trump-aligned Republican National Committee. The RNC jointly fundraises with Trump, who filed for re-election on the day of his inauguration.

his campaign war chest going into 2019, new records filed with the Federal Election Commission indicate. That number would have been larger had the president's campaign not burned through existing reserves — it spent more than \$23 million from Oct. 1 through Dec. 31.

Many Democratic presidential contenders and potential candidates do already have some cash stashed away in existing campaign accounts.

As of Dec. 31, these politicians reported the following amounts in their existing coffers, FEC records show: Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt. (\$9.1 million from his Senate campaign committee and \$4.7 million from his 2016 presidential campaign committee); Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass. (\$11.1 million); Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y. (\$10.3 million); Sen. Cory Booker, D-N.J. (\$4.1 million) and Sen. Amy Klobuchar, D-Minn. (\$3.9 million).

Others include Rep. Tulsi Gabbard, D-Hawaii (\$2 million); Sen. Sherrod Brown, D-Ohio (\$1.4 million); Sen. Kamala Harris, D-Calif. (\$1.3 million); former Rep. Beto O'Rourke, D-Texas (\$286,531); former Rep. John Delaney, D-Md. (\$268,000). Politicians may use money raised for U.S. Senate or U.S. House campaigns toward a presidential campaign.

Trump has \$19.3 million in

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