

Trump coup lawyer Rudy Giuliani testifies before Atlanta grand jury in criminal probe of effort to overturn 2020 election

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On Wednesday, former President Donald Trump's personal lawyer Rudy Giuliani testified before a 23-person grand jury in Atlanta, Georgia, for roughly six hours. Giuliani was compelled to testify in the criminal investigation headed by Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis into Republican efforts to overturn the results of the 2020 presidential election in Georgia.

As of this writing, it is unclear what transpired at the hearing, including whether Giuliani invoked the Fifth Amendment. One of Giuliani's attorneys, Bill Thomas, declined to answer reporters' questions after the hearing, saying, "I can tell you that we were ordered to be here, we showed up, we did what we had to do."

Thomas added that the "grand jury process is a secret process, and we're going to respect that."

Giuliani is one of dozens of Trump's accomplices who have been subpoenaed to testify before the special grand jury, which does not have the power to indict but can recommend that charges be filed.

Earlier this week, a federal judge ruled that South Carolina Republican Senator Lindsey Graham would also have to testify before the grand jury. Graham had been fighting a subpoena issued by District Attorney Willis and said he would appeal the court ruling.

Prior to the hearing, Giuliani lawyer Robert Costello made clear that his client would not answer any questions pertaining to conversations he had with Trump. Costello claimed that these conversations—which revolved around how to subvert 81 million votes cast for Biden, seven million more than those cast for Trump, and unconstitutionally keep

Trump in power as president-dictator—were subject to "attorney-client" privilege.

Giuliani has been implicated in several of Trump's efforts to overturn the election. These include helping to coordinate the "alternate" elector scheme that sought to replace slates of Biden electors certified by states won by the Democratic candidate with bogus pro-Trump slates, as well as testifying multiple times before the Georgia legislature on nonexistent voter fraud.

While Giuliani was testifying on Wednesday in Atlanta, Judge Mary Marlowe Sommer of the First Judicial District of New Mexico ordered fellow Trump coup lawyer John Eastman to testify before the same Georgia grand jury on August 30. The previous day, Colorado 8th Judicial District Judge Gregory Lammons had ordered another coup lawyer, Jenna Ellis, to appear before the Fulton County grand jury on August 25.

Earlier this week it was revealed that Giuliani was being called to testify about Trump's illegal efforts to overturn the vote in Georgia not simply as a material witness but as a target of the criminal investigation. In response, the former mayor of New York City attacked the probe in an appearance on the far-right Newsmax network.

"It's just a further desecration of the Sixth Amendment," Giuliani said. "I was his [Trump's] lawyer of record in that case. The statements that I made are either attorney-client privilege, because they were between me and him, or they were being made on his behalf in order to defend him."

Giuliani went on to say that his being forced to testify was further evidence that “we’re starting to live in a fascist state.”

Giuliani, like his fellow political criminal Trump, claims that any accountability for his efforts to install a fascistic dictatorship is evidence of political persecution. The real question is why it has taken 19 months since the attempted coup of January 6, 2021 for the Democrats to take any serious action against Guiliani, Trump and their co-conspirators, including large sections of the leadership of the Republican Party.

In another significant development, the *New York Times* revealed on Wednesday that former White House counsel Pat Cipollone and his deputy, Patrick Philbin, were interviewed earlier this year by the FBI as part of the Justice Department’s criminal investigation into Trump’s withholding of classified documents at his Florida compound.

That investigation led to the August 8 FBI raid on Mar-a-Lago and the unveiling of the search warrant citing probable cause to believe Trump was in violation of federal statutes concerning state secrets, including the Espionage Act.

Cipollone and Philbin, along with former White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows, were tapped by Trump to represent him in his dealings with the National Archives in January 2021. In its report, the *Times* said Philbin tried to recover documents sought by the National Archives, but Trump “repeatedly resisted entreaties from his advisers.”

The *Times* wrote that the would-be dictator told several advisers in reference to the documents, “It’s not theirs, it’s mine.”



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