

Cato board member faces spousal-abuse charge

The case against Preston Marshall, an associate of the Koch brothers, follows allegations of sexual harassment against the think tank's former president.

By MAGGIE SEVERNS and DANIEL LIPPMAN 02/28/2018 05:00 AM EST

A board member at the libertarian Cato Institute is facing criminal charges of assaulting a family member in Texas, as his wife claims he held her down, choked her, head-butted her and bit her in the face, according to court documents of the May 2017 incident.

Preston Marshall, a 44-year-old investor who was involved in high-profile lawsuits over his family's estate with Anna Nicole Smith, pleaded not guilty to assaulting his wife. His wife, Anastasia Marshall, has initiated divorce proceedings.

Marshall has been on the Cato board since 2012, when he was appointed with the support of Charles and David Koch, who are major Cato funders.

Bob Levy, chairman of the board of the Cato Institute, said that "neither I nor Cato President Peter Goettler were aware of the criminal charges brought last year against Cato board member Preston Marshall" prior to an inquiry from POLITICO. "If Mr. Marshall is found guilty of these allegations, we will certainly call on him to step down from the board or, if necessary, ask the board of directors to remove him."