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*Truth and Tradition*

## **Trump Attorney Says Former President ‘Ready to Fight,’ Arraignment Expected Early Next Week**

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Former President Donald Trump is set to be arraigned sometime “early next week” after a Manhattan grand jury voted for his indictment, Trump’s attorney Joseph Tacopina said on Thursday.

“We’re working that out—maybe Tuesday,” Tacopina, who has represented high-profile clients such as Michael Jackson and rapper Jay-Z, told The Epoch Times in an interview late Thursday.

“I’ve spoken to him,” Tacopina said when asked about Trump’s reaction to the indictment. “He’s angry, disappointed, but he’s ready to fight. He’s a pretty tough guy—his knees don’t buckle, so he’ll be ready to go.”

A grand jury on Thursday voted for Trump’s indictment, Tacopina confirmed with The Epoch Times. That makes Trump the first former president to face criminal charges in the history of the United States.

The indictment against Trump was a major development in a probe launched by Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg into an alleged payment from Trump to adult entertainment actress Stormy Daniels. Trump has denied having an affair with Daniels, saying he's a victim of extortion.

Legal experts have commented that the prosecutor's criminal case likely centers on whether Trump documented that payment as false business records in the Trump Organization.

A spokesperson for the office of Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg said in a statement that it is now coordinating with Trump's attorneys his "surrender to the Manhattan D.A.'s Office for arraignment on a Supreme Court indictment."

The White House told The Epoch Times it has no comment on the indictment. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) said in a statement: "Mr. Trump is subject to the same laws as every American."

House Speaker Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.) pledged to hold Bragg to account.

'Days of Dictatorships'

According to Tacopina, Trump's indictment echoes the means political opponents have used against each other under dictatorships.

"This harkens back to the days of dictatorships—Nazi Germany, the Soviet Union, and communist China—where you pick a political opponent you don't like and you want to do away with him, you find a crime," Tacopina said. "That's what happened here."

As an example of this political animus toward Trump, Tacopina cited former Manhattan Special Assistant District Attorney Mark Pomerantz's account in his book "People vs. Donald Trump: An Inside Account." The Manhattan DA's office hired Pomerantz to assist in its probe of Trump's finances in February 2021. Pomerantz resigned in February 2022 and published his book in February 2023 documenting the investigation into Trump.

"Pomerantz's book basically laid that out—they said they hated Donald Trump—he would pay the prosecutor ... for three years, scouring his records—personal records, business records—and they come up with absolutely nothing except this ridiculous [case]," Tacopina said.

J. Anthony Jordan, president of the District Attorneys Association of the State of New York, told media outlets in a statement in February that Pomerantz violated professional ethics “by writing and releasing a book in the midst of an ongoing case.”

“We’re indicting the former president United States of America, for the first time, on a civil confidentiality agreement that’s legal across the board in any state in this country, and nothing more,” Tacopina said. “And it’s really, really, really troubling to me.”

“It’s a very sad day for the United States of America because today’s the day, I believe, that the rule of law died,” the attorney said. “And it’s not something that anyone should be happy about, whether you’re aligned with the right or the left.”

That view is shared by Alan Dershowitz, professor emeritus at Harvard Law School, who characterized Bragg’s prosecution of Trump as politically motivated and the “weakest case” he has seen in his six decades of experience practicing criminal law.

“It’s very dangerous—it means that district attorneys can indict their own political enemies,” Dershowitz said in an interview with The Epoch Times late Thursday, noting that he predicted this outcome in his book, “Get Trump,” which describes a two-tiered system of justice singling out Trump.

“It really endangers the rule of law for all Americans: today, it’s Trump; tomorrow, it’s a Democrat; the day after tomorrow, it’s your uncle Charlie, or your niece, or your nephew,” Dershowitz added.

“In 60 years of practice, this is the worst case of prosecutorial abuse I have ever seen,” the scholar said. “What’s really unprecedented is not the indictment of a past president, but the indictment of a potential future president who was running against the head of the party of the man who indicted him.”

‘His Knees Don’t Buckle’

Clark Neily, senior vice president for Legal Studies at the Cato Institute, says Trump differs from other defendants in that the former president won’t cave to coercion maneuvers from prosecutors.

When a federal prosecutor has a strong motivation to convict a defendant, Neily explained, the strength of the prosecutor’s case, including the strength of the legal theory and evidence, has little import on the equation.

“Because nearly everybody can be coerced into pleading guilty in our system,” Neily told The Epoch Times in an interview earlier this month. “The amount of pressure that prosecutors can bring to bear on ordinary defendants to plead guilty is beyond anything, I think, that ordinary people can imagine, and that even includes threatening to indict a defendant’s family members simply to exert plea leverage on the defendant.

“I don’t think that will work with Donald Trump.”

“Because I think they’re unwilling to put on public display such nakedly thuggish tactics,” Neily said. “I don’t think Donald Trump can be induced to plead guilty, because I think he’s got the resources and the platform and the mindset to resist those efforts.”

Tacopina said his defense team would execute “every punch we have” against the prosecution.

“With every stop along the way, we are going to pull out the muscle,” the attorney said. “There’s nothing in our arsenal we will leave unused because this is an outrageous case.”

“It’s gonna be challenged on a legal basis, on a factual basis,” the attorney added. “If it gets to trial, obviously, the credibility of their incredible witnesses will also be challenged.”

Earlier in the month, Tacopina filed a formal ethics complaint ([pdf](#)) with the New York City Department of Investigation (DOI), the city government’s watchdog. The scope of the DOI’s investigations includes misconduct, waste, fraud, abuse of authority, and unethical conduct, and its investigations are confidential.

“The Department of Investigation is looking into Mr. Bragg,” he said in an interview with [The Epoch Times](#) on March 24.

## Next Steps

Following normal procedures, Trump would appear at the Manhattan district attorney’s office at an agreed-upon time for booking, which includes being fingerprinted, having his mugshot taken, and being read his Miranda rights.

It is unclear, as of writing, what exact special accommodations will be made for Trump during processing for security considerations.

He would later be arraigned in a courtroom, which typically occurs within a few hours. During this process, Trump's defense team would be handed the physical copy of the indictment, and Trump is expected to plead not guilty. Trump would then be released on his own recognizance, as New York law bars prosecutors from seeking bail for nonviolent felony charges.

While Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis has announced in response to Trump's indictment that his office will not assist in any extradition of Trump, a Florida resident, to New York, that should be of little consequence considering Trump's team is planning to cooperate with the indictment process.

Trump, meanwhile, blasted the indictment in a lengthy statement.

"This is Political Persecution and Election Interference at the highest level in history," he wrote in a statement published on Truth Social on Thursday. "From the time I came down the golden escalator at Trump Tower, and even before I was sworn in as your President of the United States, the Radical Left Democrats—the enemy of the hard-working men and women of this Country—have been engaged in a Witch-Hunt to destroy the Make America Great Again movement. You remember it just like I do: Russia, Russia, Russia; the Mueller Hoax; Ukraine, Ukraine, Ukraine; Impeachment Hoax 1; Impeachment Hoax 2; the illegal and unconstitutional Mar-a-Lago raid; and now this."

Dershowitz said he believes that Trump could be convicted by a jury during his trial but that the verdict would be reversed on appeal.

"I don't think that Trump can get a fair trial in New York," he said, noting the predominately Democrat population in New York.

"Then, it will be reversed on appeal, but by that time, we'll be deep into the [2024 presidential] election cycle," Dershowitz added.

Trump vowed on March 4 to stay in the presidential race regardless of if he is criminally charged.

"Oh, absolutely, I won't even think about leaving," Trump told reporters at the Conservative Political Action Conference, in response to a question on the matter.

“Probably, it’ll enhance my numbers, but it’s a very bad thing for America. It’s very bad for the country.”

The Epoch Times contacted Bragg’s office for comment.