



The International Academy of Trial Lawyers Urges the United States Senate to Delay Confirmation Hearing to Permit Full Review of District Court Findings Regarding President's Lawsuit

July 14, 2026—[The International Academy of Trial Lawyers](#) is committed to upholding the Rule of Law and preserving the integrity of the legal profession. In that spirit, and not for any partisan purpose, the Academy [recently urged federal courts](#) to scrutinize the “settlement” that Todd Blanche, then the Acting Attorney General of the United States, sought to implement with President Trump, whom he serves as Acting Attorney General.

On July 13, 2026, the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida issued a 56-page [opinion](#)¹ on that settlement. The Court ruled that the President’s lawsuit and the settlement Mr. Blanche signed as Acting Attorney General of the United States were collusive, riddled with conflicts of interest, and brought for an improper purpose. In the Court’s words:

... Lead Plaintiff [President Trump] and Defendants are public servants—the pinnacle of the Executive Branch—sworn to uphold the law, faithfully perform the duties of their office, and protect the interests of the American public. *The issue before the Court is whether, instead, they ignored ethical norms, court rules, and legal authority to manipulate the judicial process. The issue is whether they did so to gild their efforts to gain unprecedented access to the public fisc with the patina of legitimacy.*²

The Court reviewed an extensive record and found very troubling facts. The Department of Justice—led by Mr. Blanche—made no effort to defend the United States against the President’s meritless claims, even though it fought vigorously against similar claims by other taxpayers.³

The Court also found that what the President had earlier claimed was true: he was “suing himself,” but not for lawful purposes. Instead, the suit was filed for the improper purpose of creating an unconstitutional slush fund to benefit the President’s allies and to confer extraordinary immunity from tax enforcement on himself and his family. In the words of the Court:

*This action was never about a party seeking judicial resolution of a legal issue or a factual dispute. The nature of the suit itself and the conduct of the Parties and counsel from its filing make plain that this was an attempt to use the Court to provide some legitimacy to an agreement to confer immunity to people and entities affiliated with the President and to earmark billions of dollars from American taxpayers to redress grievances not defined in the law.*⁴

¹ The court’s Opinion was issued on July 13, 2026. It is available at ECF 106, President Donald J. Trump v. Internal Revenue Service et al., Case No. 26-20609-CV-Williams, in the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida. Emphasis is added unless otherwise noted.

² Opinion at 2.

³ Opinion at 4-5 (explaining that “In every case naming the government as a defendant, the DOJ engaged in a vigorous defense. That is, every case until the instant litigation,” and noting that the Department filed *no pleading* other than a request for an extension of time to answer to defend the President’s lawsuit.)

⁴ Opinion at 56 (Emphasis added).

This ruling raises important questions about Mr. Blanche's role in that settlement the Court found to be a sham. The Court found that the Justice Department, led by Mr. Blanche, abandoned the United States, remained "silent"⁵ and failed to defend the nation, and ignored Mr. Blanche's conflicts of interest and those of others. Leaving no doubt that these were grave professional failures, the Court directed that its ruling be sent to the State Bar of New York, where Mr. Blanche is presently under disciplinary investigation.⁶

**The Senate's "Advice and Consent" Duty
Requires it to Investigate the Court's Findings.**

The United States Senate must conduct a searching inquiry into the Court's findings before the Senate takes up the President's nomination of Mr. Blanche to serve as Attorney General of the United States.

Rarely has the Senate's Constitutional duty to provide "advice and consent"⁷ to the appointment of an Attorney General been more important. The Attorney General exercises vast federal powers. As the highest legal officer of the United States, the Attorney General has a solemn obligation to uphold the Constitution and laws of the United States and to "do justice" on behalf of the people. The United States Attorney General must be a person whose ethics are of the highest caliber, with independence that is beyond reproach. The Senate owes it to the American people to ask whether Mr. Blanche's actions, as found by the Court, demonstrate he has either quality.

[An appendix to this Statement lists 15 specific Court findings of fact](#) that should concern every American citizen, regardless of political party. **Shared concern for the Constitution and the Rule of Law should prompt the Senate to postpone hearings on Mr. Blanche's nomination as Attorney General until he provides a candid and full response to the Court's ruling.** Senators of both parties must conduct a searching inquiry into the Court's findings, which include evidence of severe conflicts of interest, possible violation of a federal tax statute, disciplinary referrals, and the abandonment of the interests of the United States in service of a collusive settlement with the President.

The Court also ordered the President to be sanctioned for filing a collusive lawsuit, finding it "was an attempt to use the Court to provide some legitimacy to an agreement to confer immunity to people and entities affiliated with the President and to earmark billions of dollars from American taxpayers to redress grievances not defined in the law."⁸ "No sitting President has ever sued federal

⁵ Opinion at 24 (noting the DOJ was "silent" and filed no defense to the lawsuit), 28 (DOJ silent in court on a defense Mr. Blanche made publicly), and 50 ("DOJ, which is tasked with enforcement of United States law, has remained conspicuously absent and silent ..." on serious questions about this matter...")

⁶ The Court directed that its findings regarding other lawyers should also be sent to the Bar for the District of Columbia, referred to the Bar of Florida for discipline, Opinion at 53-54, and banned a third from appearing in the Southern District of Florida for one year. Opinion at 46.

⁷ Article II, § 2, cl. 2 of the United States Constitution limits the President's authority to appoint cabinet members by requiring the Senate to give "Advice and Consent" to the appointment "*provided two thirds of the Senators present concur.*"

⁸ Opinion at 55.



agencies completely subject to his control for monetary benefits, or any benefits that inure to him, his family, and associates.”

The Court’s findings raise a second Constitutional concern: “the conferral of possibly millions of dollars in tax relief and corollary benefits potentially violates Article II, Section I of the United States Constitution, a limitation surely known by former White House Counsel and the current Acting Attorney General.”⁹ Article II prohibits granting extra compensation or “any other Emolument from the United States, or any of them.” Here, the President received extraordinary and sweeping immunity from tax enforcement under the settlement, a grant of immunity inconsistent with §7217 of the Internal Revenue Code.¹⁰

Acting Attorney Blanche and the parties never disavowed this part of the settlement.¹¹ The Court’s sanction prohibiting the President or the government “from referring to the purported ‘settlement agreement,’ ... or using, offering, admitting, or citing any of its provisions in any ... other official proceeding as evidence of a ‘settlement’ reached in this matter...,” reflects the seriousness of this matter. This, too, should be scrutinized by Congress.

About the Academy

The International Academy of Trial Lawyers (the Academy) is a fellowship of lawyers with a singular mission: to protect and promote the Rule of Law. Founded in 1954, the Academy is composed of distinguished trial lawyers recognized for skill, experience, ethics, and civility. It includes both plaintiff and defense counsel in civil litigation, as well as prosecutors and defense lawyers in criminal cases. The Academy includes trial lawyers from the United States, Canada, and more than 30 other countries. Fellowship is by invitation only. Nominees must have distinguished themselves through careers defined by exceptional trial skills, professionalism, and integrity. They become Fellows only after a rigorous vetting process that includes both peer and judicial review.

APPENDIX: [Fifteen District Court Findings Congress Should Investigate](#)

⁹ Opinion at 35.

¹⁰ Opinion at 33-34 (A settlement granting immunity to the President from tax enforcement “also raises the question whether the agreement violates Article II, Section 3 of the United States Constitution, which directs that the President “shall take care that the Laws be faithfully executed.”)

¹¹ Opinion at 36.