

Justice Roberts Unilaterally Suspends DC Court's Ruling That Would Make Trump Taxes Available

Chief Justice John Roberts of the Supreme Court has put the brakes on a lower court's ruling that would have made President Donald Trump's taxes available.

The order offered no reason for the action, which means the accounting firm of Mazars USA is not forced to offer up the documents, Fox News reported.

The House Oversight Committee had agreed for a temporary stay while House Democrats file arguments. The committee is expected to act by Thursday to file its arguments as to why Trump's taxes should be released.

The D.C. District Court's ruling compelling Mazars to release the documents will be in abeyance (*suspension*) while the Supreme Court decides whether it will hear the case.

House Democrats are claiming that the documents could shed light on possible conflicts of interest for Trump, according to CNN.

Trump's lawyers filed the appeal last week after a circuit court judge ruled that Mazars had to comply.

"For the first time in our nation's history, Congress has subpoenaed the personal records of a sitting President from before he was in office," Jay Sekulow, one of Trump's lawyers, said in a statement, according to NPR.

"And, for the first time in our nation's history, a court upheld a congressional subpoena to the President for his personal papers. Those decisions are wrong and should be reversed."

William S. Consovoy, a lawyer representing Trump, said in his filing to the Supreme Court that the lower court decision had set a dangerous precedent, according to The Washington Post.

Using the lower court's ruling as a guide, "any committee of Congress can subpoena any personal information from the president; all the committee needs to say is that it's considering legislation that would force Presidents to disclose that same information," Consovoy wrote.

"Given the temptation to dig up dirt on political rivals, intrusive subpoenas into the personal lives of presidents will become our new normal in times of divided government — no matter which party is in power. If every committee chairman is going to have this unbounded authority, this Court should be the one to say so," the filing read.

In the filing before the circuit court, Trump's lawyers warned that upholding the standard used by the lower court would mean that "Congress is free to investigate every detail of a president's personal life, with endless subpoenas to his accountants, bankers, lawyers, doctors, family, friends and anyone else with information that a committee finds interesting."

However, in ruling against the president, Judge David S. Tatel, rejected that argument.

"We conclude that in issuing the challenged subpoena, the committee was engaged in a 'legitimate legislative investigation,' rather than an impermissible law-enforcement inquiry," he wrote.

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"It is not at all suspicious that the committee would focus an investigation into presidential financial disclosures on the accuracy and sufficiency of the sitting president's filings. That the committee began its inquiry at a logical starting point betrays no hidden law-enforcement purpose," he wrote, noting that the subpoena to produce the records was not aimed at Trump, but his accountant.

The House probe is only one of two investigations seeking Trump's taxes. The other has been launched by the office of the Manhattan District Attorney.

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