

# [***Live From The Trump Trial: Former President Delivers Surprise Speech In Court***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6B35-Y5P1-JBCM-F1JM-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Highlight:** Refresh your browser to follow along with a live account below, which will be updated throughout the day.

**Body**

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Former President Donald Trump appeared in the courtroom for the his civil fraud trial at New York State Supreme Court on October 4, 2023 in New York City. (Photo by Photo by Mary Altafeer-Pool/Getty Images)

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Attorneys for Donald Trump and the State of New York arrived in court Thursday to deliver closing arguments in a long-running trial over whether the real estate tycoon lied about his net worth to financial institutions. Trump, who took part in an Iowa town hall Wednesday night, came to Lower Manhattan to watch the proceedings and delivered a surprise speech just before the lunch break.

**Refresh your browser to follow along with a live account below, which will be updated throughout the day.**

**8:55 a.m.:** Protesters gather outside the courthouse, chanting, No dictators in the U.S.A.!

**9:16 a.m.:** New York Attorney General Letitia James walks up the stairs of the courthouse. Thank you, Tish, the protestors yell.

**10:00 a.m.:** Security is unusually tight around the courthouse, after the reportedthat a bomb squad headed to the Long Island home of Arthur Engoron, the judge overseeing the case.

**10:44 a.m.:** Chris Kise is presenting closing arguments on behalf of Donald Trump, standing at the front of a packed courtroom. The former president is watching from one of the best seats in the house, leaning back in a chair behind Kise. Trump is sporting a familiar outfit, one he has worn to previous appearances in this trial blue suit, white shirt, red tie.

**10:52 a.m.:**Kise is laying out familiar points, claiming that the attorney general is underestimating the value of Mar-a-Lago. He is also highlighting disclaimers included in Trump s net worth statements, the documents at the the center of this case, through which the former president exaggerated the value of his assets.

**11:00 a.m.:**Now Kise is hammering Michael Cohen, who served as a witness for the state. This is a serial liar, Kise says. He hates President Trump.

**11:06 a.m.:**Kise now appears to be blaming a real estate broker for the fact that Trump calculated the value of his penthouse as if it were 30,000 square feet, when it was actually only 10,996 square feet. In trying to shift blame, Kise fails to mention that Trump personally pushed the lie that it his penthouse was 30,000 square feet.**Forbes**recently released an audio recording of Trump lying about the size of his penthouse.

**11:45 a.m.:** Kise is getting into the numbers. Remember, the judge has already determined that Donald Trump is liable for fraud. The biggest question, at this point, is how much the former president will have to pay. The state is seeking $370 million plus interest. The attorney general got to that number by, in large part, arguing that Trump secured lower interest rates by lying about his net worth. But how much higher would Trump s interest rates have been if he hadn t lied about his net worth? It s a hard hypothetical to answer and it s**the** key question in this case.

**11:52 a.m.:**The state is also seeking to disgorge Trump s profits from his sales of the Trump International Hotel in Washington, D.C. and a golf property in New York City. These were both huge deals for Trump. He sold the D.C. hotel for a reported $375 million, far more than independent experts believed it was worth. He offloaded the golf property for about $60 million, also much more than most industry players including some inside the Trump Organization believed it was worth.

**11:58 a.m.:** Largely thanks to these deals, Trump is currently sitting on more than $400 million of cash, according to**Forbes**estimates. That s a lot of money, but it s not enough to allow Trump to rest easy. If the attorney general is successful in securing $370 million, plus interest, his business will be in enormous trouble.

**12:34 p.m.:**Kise has finished making his argument. Alina Habba, another attorney on Trump s team, is now speaking to the court. She comes with a much more dramatic than Kise, pacing in front of the courtroom and turning around to speak to the audience as she presents. She is focusing on defending former Trump Chief Financial Officer Allen Weisselberg and former Controller Jeff McConney, who are both defendants in this case.

**12:37 p.m.:**  That gets to my favorite topic, the triplex, Habba says. Like Kise, she tries to blame the overstated square footage on a real estate agent. She also fails to mention that it was Donald Trump himself who lied about the size of his apartment.

**12:43 p.m.:**Habba sits down. Now up: Clifford Robert, who represents Eric Trump and Donald Trump Jr. He starts with some broad statements. There is literally no case, he says. This is a press release wrapped up in a lawsuit. He then gets more specific, arguing that Eric and Don Jr. were not involved with their father s net-worth statements.

**12:48 p.m.:** The defense team seems eager to take shots at Michael Cohen, Trump s former attorney turned antagonist. The guy can t tell the truth about everything, says Robert. But even he, the biggest liar on the face of the planet, was forced to admit that Eric Trump and Donald Trump Jr. had nothing to do with the statement of financial condition.

**12:53 p.m.:**Robert finishes. Kise then stands up and asks the judge to allow Trump to speak. The judge seems like he is considering the proposal and he asks both Kise and Trump whether the former president will limit himself to matters relevant to the case. With that, Trump spouts off.

The financial statements were perfect, he says. The banks are happy as can be. Then he shifts to the sort of comments Judge Engoron was seeking to avoid. This is a political witch hunt, the former president says. We should receive damages.

Trump talks a bit about his penthouse, which his financial statements falsely said were 30,000 square feet. It was an honest mistake, Trump claims. When they found out it was a mistake, they immediately corrected it. Like his lawyers, he is trying to shift the blame to others, brushing over his own role in pushing the lie.

The former president keeps going on and on, recognizing that he has essentially bum-rushed the proceeding. When you say, Don t go outside of these things, we have a situation where I am an innocent man, Trump tells the judge. This is no fraud. This is a fraud on me.

He then goes directly to ***politics***. They want to make sure that I don t win again, he says, apparently referring to Attorney General Letitia James, and perhaps her legal team.

When the attorney general filed this suit in September 2022, she initially requested at least $250 million from the Trump Organization. During the trial, however, that number swelled to $370 million something that clearly bothered the former president. They found nothing, and now she comes in and says we want to make the $250 million fine $370 million, Trump says. For what?!

At one point, Judge Engoron jumps in and tells Trump that he has one minute left to speak. Trump then makes a wisecrack about how Engoron cannot listen for more than minute. Mr. Kise, please control your client, Engoron says.

Trump wraps up. Your honor, I did nothing wrong they should have to pay me, he says, before turning his ire once more toward the attorney general. She sued me to try to get publicity.

**2:20 p.m.:**  All rise! a court officer yells. After a lunch break, Judge Arthur Engoron settles in behind his perch behind the bench. Kevin Wallace steps to the front of the courtroom to deliver closing arguments for the State of New York.

**2:27 p.m.:**Donald Trump is gone from the defense counsel table. He s expected to hold a press conference this afternoon at 40 Wall Street, one of the many properties under scrutiny in this case.

**2:38 p.m.:** The closing argument for the attorney general s office is so far devoid of fireworks. Kevin Wallace is seeking to dismantle the Trump defense by picking apart its arguments. He discredits the idea that Trump s accountants are responsible for all of this, citing documents in which Trump and his executives take credit for the valuations. He then goes through each expert witness that the defense called, explaining why their testimony does not absolve the Trump Organization.

**2:53 p.m.:** Wallace then tries to zoom out and explain why Trump would have wanted to lie about his net worth. From 2014 through 2017, the Trump Organization was burning through cash. He notes that Trump was spending big on golf properties in Miami and Scotland, as well as a hotel in Washington, D.C. With cash dwindling, the attorney general s office seems to be arguing, it was essential to keep borrowing expenses as low as possible.

**3:14 p.m.:** After focusing on dozens of assets throughout this suit, the attorney general appears zeroing in on one: cash. The state is arguing that cash concerns help explain why Trump would lie about his net worth. Interestingly, cash is also key to understanding the potential fallout from this case. Two of the big remaining questions are how much Trump will have to pay, and when he will have to pay it.**Forbes** estimates that the former president currently has slightly over $400 million of cash. The closer that the disgorgement creeps toward that number and the faster that Trump has to turn the money over the more trouble he will be facing. If, say, he has to pay $100 million in a year, he ll be able to do that without much trouble. However, if he has to fork over $370 million next month, his business will be in an instant crisis.

**3:32 p.m.:** The attorney general s office is now focusing on the numbers guys who helped compile Trump s net-worth statements for years. First, the state highlights bits of Jeff McConney s testimony, arguing that they show he knew that the numbers were wrong, yet pushed them anyway. This is all part of the state s case to show an intent to defraud.

**3:41 p.m.:** Andrew Amer of the attorney general s office then moves on to Allen Weisselberg, Trump s former chief financial officer. Amer argues that Weisselberg knowingly lied about the size of Trump s penthouse. He points to the fact that, even aftertold Weisselberg that the apartment was 10,996 square feet, the Trump Organization continued to value it as if it were 30,000 square feet. It wasn t until afterpublicly exposedthe lie that the Trump Organization changed its calculation.

**4 p.m.:** The attorney general s office is now seeking to prove Donald Trump s intent to defraud, noting that he reviewed the false net-worth statements. Amer is also pointing to specific assets, saying Trump knew the size of his penthouse and understood that he could not freely access as much cash as his statements suggested.

**4:05 p.m.:** Lastly, the attorney general s office turns to Donald Trump Jr. and Eric Trump, who have been running their father s business since Donald Trump ascended to the White House. Amer points to evidence that Eric Trump was involved in coming up with valuations of a mansion and a golf club in Westchester County, New York.

**4:08 p.m.:** As the State of New York continues to make its closing arguments, Donald Trump s political operation sends out a fundraising message. I just left the courtroom! reads the subject. First, they raided my home, says the message, purportedly from the former president. Then, they indicted me and TOOK MY MUGSHOT. And just now, closing arguments have concluded in the RIGGED trial against me. Meanwhile, the office of the attorney general continues to present its case.

**4:21 p.m.:**As the attorney general s office argues that Eric Trump and Donald Trump were involved in the fraud, Judge Engoron asks a pointed question. What evidence do you have I just haven t seen it that they knew there was fraud.

**4:29 p.m.:** Amer finishes presenting, turning the microphone back over to his colleague, Kevin Wallace, who wraps up the arguments for the attorney general s office.

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