

# [***Checks & Imbalances: Trump s Undisclosed Loans, The Politics Of Meat***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6735-DSX1-JBCM-F1HD-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Byline:** Zach Everson, Forbes Staff

**Highlight:** Today we look at loans Trump did not disclose, the meat industry, Sen. Tom Cotton's (R-Ark.) new book and a campaign that emptied its coffers to the candidate s widow.

**Body**

**Today we look at loans Trump did not disclose, the meat industry, Sen. Tom Cotton's (R-Ark.) new book and a campaign that emptied its coffers to the candidate s widow.**

**How Trump Avoided Disclosing Eight Loans On His Ethics Filings**

Donald Trump did not include at least eight loanson financial disclosure reports he filed as president. Although one of those omissions caused a dustup with ethics officials and a second one might have violated the law, the other six were legally excluded from the filings, which are supposed to give the public an understanding of officials finances but are so riddled with loopholes that they offer only a partial picture, hiding deals involving family members and partners," reports Dan Alexander:

We definitely learned from him that the reporting requirements are not sufficient, said Virginia Canter, who worked as White House associate counsel in the Clinton and Obama administrations and now serves as chief ethics counsel for a watchdog group named Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington.

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Blacked out: Donald Trump leaves an event in the East Room of the White House on October 6, 2017.

BRENDAN SMIALOWSKI/AFP via Getty Images

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**Welcome To The Latest Issue Of Checks & Imbalances**

This is the web edition of the Checks & Imbalances newsletter, usually sent to inboxes Tuesdays and Fridays. It s free. Tomake sure you don t miss an issue, subscribe.

Please support this work, if you can, by subscribing to . Any tips or suggestions? Email me at [*zeverson@forbes.com*](mailto:zeverson@forbes.com) or call/SMS/Signal 202.804.2744. Follow me on Mastodon at@z\_everson@journa.host. Thanks!

**In Case You Missed It**

* Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez Is Under Investigation By House Ethics Committee

1. Last-Minute Addition To Sweeping Defense Bill Will Shield Judges Families Information Including Ginni Thomas Activism
2. Madison Cawthorn Fined $15,000 For Plugging Let s Go Brandon Cryptocurrency
3. Trump Organization s Lenders Stay Silent After Tax Fraud Conviction

**Raw Deal: Meat, Power And *Politics***

In Raw Deal: Hidden Corruption, Corporate Greed, and the Fight for the Future of Meat, **Forbes**food and agriculture journalist Chloe Sorvino pulls back the curtain on the greed, corruption and unsustainability of the meat industry. Readers of Checks & Imbalances will not be surprised to learn that Sorvino uncovers bribes, foreign corruption and a revolving door between the industry and the government.

You canread an excerpt at Forbes.comandorder "Raw Deal" at Amazon.com.

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Courtesy Simon & Schuster/Chloe Sorvino

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**Continuing Irresolutions**

**Updates on Checks & Imbalances previous reporting**

The FEC has imposed an additional fine on Jan. 6 rally organizer, Women for Trump founder Amy Kremer forfor her Women Vote Smart PAC, . The penaltyfor failing to file a quarterly report, bringing her total fines for similar offenses to $83,000. Earlier this year, the FECto the Treasury Department for collections after she failed to pay some of its assessments.

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On Oct. 19, conservative activist Virginia Thomas, the wife of Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas,This time it was $500 to the campaign of Sen. Mike Lee (R-Utah). Thomas hasto political campaigns.

**Interesting Expenditure**

in April 2021. This June, his campaign, Patricia, bringing its cash on hand down to nothing, according to a filing with the FEC. Text accompanying the disclosure explained the campaign's disbursement as

PATRICA WILLIAMS, WIDOW OF CONGRESSMAN ALCEE HASTINGS REQUESTED BALANCE OF FUNDS .$23,028.23

That information proved to be insufficient for the FEC, so it. The campaign responded,

PATRICA WILLIAMS, WIDOW OF CONGRESSMAN ALCEE HASTINGS REQUESTED BALANCE OF FUNDS .$23,028.23 FOR EXPENSES

The campaign s treasurer did not respond to an inquiry. The expenditure wasof NBCLX.

**Watch: AOC Is Under Investigation By House Ethics Committee**

Last week your correspondent to discuss the House Committee on Ethics, which is conducting an investigation into Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.) and recently fined Rep. Madison Cawthorn (R-N.C.). We also talked about the Trump Organization s tax-fraud case, in which it was recently found guilty.

**Oopsies**

In June, the FECfor failing to file a quarterly disclosure for his Support American Leaders PAC, according to a report released Wednesday. Tunstall isto wire fraud for bilking donors to his PACs out of $3.5 million,**Politico**reported last week.

**Book report**

On Oct. 19, the Republican Majority Fund, Sen. Tom Cotton s (R-Ark.) leadership PAC,for books to use as donor gifts. Two weeks after the transaction, an imprint of Hachette, Only the Strong Survive.

A spokesperson for Cotton confirmed that the committee purchased the senator's book but said he would not profit from it. Senator Cotton will not earn any royalties or any money towards the book advance for the purchase of these non-royalty copies, said Caroline Rabbitt Tabler.

**Tracking Trump**

One of Donald Trump s political committees bought $48,000 worth of books from his son Don Jr. s publishing company, which had released a coffee-table tome by the former president.

On May 18, the Trump Save America Joint Fundraising Committeepaid $48,000to the Delaware-based Winning Team Publishing Inc., according to Federal Election Commission records. The transaction does not appear to have been previously reported.

Donald Trump Jr. cofounded Winning Team Publishing with former Trump campaign staffer Sergio Gor in 2021. Winning Team Publishing produced Trump s coffee-table book Our Journey Together, which Trump Save America JFC isnow offeringin exchange for donations of $75 or more.

Our Journey Together was sourced largely with photos in the public domain, meaning the former president used a private family company to publish a work of mostly taxpayer-subsidized material, then boosted sales of that book by spending donor funds on it.

A spokesperson for Trump acknowledged that the committee bought Our Journey Together to help raise funds. All items purchased were heavily discounted and sold by the committee for a profit that benefits Save America, the spokesperson said.

Campaign-finance recordsshow two other committees have done business with Winning Team Publishing. Trump s Save America PAC spent $8,000 for printing services in April, and the Travis County, Texas GOP paid the company $16,000 in June.

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The Trump Save America Joint Fundraising Committee is offering donors copies of Trump's "Our Journey Together" in exchange for donations of $50 or more.

Save America

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* Playing with paradise: Defunct Bali golf course another Trump fiasco (Agence France-Presse)

1. Confidential Records Show a Saudi Golf Tour Built on Far-Fetched Assumptions (The New York Times)
2. Special Counsel Smith speeds ahead on criminal probes surrounding Trump (CNN)
3. Meet the megadonors backing the Trump super PAC as some top donors opt out of supporting 2024 candidacy (CNBC)
4. Trump to release book of letters next year amid 2024 campaign (CNN)
5. Herve Pierre Braillard, Melania Trump s stylist, has received $132,000 from Trump's Save America leadership PAC since April, with the committee describing the expenditures as strategy consulting. (Twitter/Rob Pyers of California Target Book)

**Editor s Picks**

* Billionaire Mozzarella King Prevails In Family Feud Trial That Threatened His Business. It s good news for politicians, as James Leprino has donated about $1.7 million to campaigns. (Forbes)

1. 77 members of Congress have violated a law designed to prevent insider trading and stop conflicts-of-interest (Insider)
2. Inside the secret $32M effort to stop Stop the Steal (Politico)
3. In FTX Collapse, Binance Sees a Chance to Become the New Face of Crypto (The New York Times)
4. Breitbart, Ye & a Mercer Retreat (Puck)
5. Incoming GOP House armed services and defense appropriations chairs top recipients of defense sector contributions (OpenSecrets)
6. Wealthy Governor s Company to Pay Nearly $1 Million for Chronic Air Pollution Violations (ProPublica)
7. Peter Thiel put another $2.5 million into the Blake Masters super PAC on October 20. That means Thiel spent a total of $20 million on Masters this election cycle. (Twitter/Teddy Schleifer of Puck)
8. Africa US: 10 lobbying campaigns to watch at next week s Leaders Summit (The Africa Report)
9. DOJ Appeals Wynn Ruling (Politico)
10. Federal Election Commission Shows Signs of New Life (The Brennan Center)
11. A spokesperson for [Campaign Legal Center] says the nonprofit organization cannot return or give away Bankman-Fried's money because the money is already spent. (Twitter/FEC Commissioner Sean Cooksey)
12. SPOTTED at Matt and Mercy Schlapp s annual Christmas party at their Alexandria home on Friday night: Justice Brett Kavanaugh, Rep. Matt Gaetz (R-Fla.) and Ginger Gaetz, Sean Spicer, Alex Acosta, Sebastian Gorka, Stephen and Katie Miller, Chad Wolf, Greta Van Susteren and John Coale, Laura Schlapp and Bryan Wells, Brendan Carr, Rep.-elect George Santos (R-N.Y.), Erin and Nick Perrine, Erik Prince, Ziad Ojakli, Peter Davidson, Steve Holland and Ben Terris (Politico)

**In Closing**

All I know is that I ll never dish another raw deal

LL Cool J, I Need Love

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