

## Public Safety

# Ex-Trump campaign chairman Manafort challenges his indictment in Russia probe by filing lawsuit against Mueller

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By **Spencer S. Hsu** and **Matt Zapotosky** January 3 at 4:10 PM

Ex-Trump campaign manager Paul J. Manafort on Wednesday challenged his indictment by special counsel Robert S. Mueller III in a federal lawsuit, saying the Justice Department's prosecution of him over his business dealings have nothing to do with Mueller's investigation on Russian interference in last year's presidential campaign.

Manafort's attorneys argue in a 17-page lawsuit filed in federal court in Washington that the department exceeded its legal authority when Acting Attorney General Rod J. Rosenstein in May ordered Mueller to investigate "links and/or coordination" between the Russian government and Trump campaign, as well as "any matters that arose or may arise directly from" that investigation.

The order "purports to grant Mr. Mueller carte blanche to investigate and pursue criminal charges in connection with anything he stumbles across while investigating," no matter how remote from his original charge, Manafort attorneys Kevin M. Downing and Thomas E. Zehnle wrote.

They said the investigation focuses not on Manafort's actions with the Trump campaign in 2016, but alleged fraud, conspiracy and money laundering in his secret lobbying for pro-Russian Ukrainian groups, adding that he was interviewed by the Justice Department in 2014.

"The actions of DOJ and Mr. Rosenstein in issuing the Appointment Order, and Mr. Mueller's actions pursuant to the authority the Order granted him, were arbitrary, capricious, and not in accordance with the law," they alleged.

A spokesman for the special counsel's office declined to comment.


A Justice Department spokeswoman said: “The lawsuit is frivolous but the defendant is entitled to file whatever he wants.”

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