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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Where can I find a copy of the lawsuit?

- A copy of the complaint is available here:
http://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/pages/emoluments/dc_v_trump.pdf

Why are you suing President Trump?

- We are suing President Trump to stop him from violating two anti-corruption provisions in the U.S. Constitution: the Foreign Emoluments Clause and the Domestic Emoluments Clause.
- The Emoluments Clauses seek to prevent foreign and domestic government entities from influencing federal officials—including the president—by bestowing money or other things of value. Taken together, they ensure that the President is working in the nation’s interest, not focusing on his bottom line.
- President Trump, acting through companies he continues to own, control, and prosper from, has violated both of these provisions. Foreign countries have already conducted business with the president’s companies and he is receiving money and other benefits from these foreign countries.
- This type of constitutional violation opens the door to corruption and undermines trust in our democracy. No one is above the law, and as Attorneys General with a duty to protect the public interest, we are stepping up to ensure the President follows the Constitution.

What has President Trump done to violate the Constitution?

- Since taking office, President Trump has continued to own, control and prosper from hundreds of business around the world. By accepting benefits from foreign and domestic government actors, the President is opening himself up to the type of foreign influence and corruption that the Constitution seeks to prevent.
- He violates the Constitution when his businesses benefit from transactions with governments – whether they are spending at his hotels, granting permits and licenses abroad, or granting him free advertising from government agencies.
- For example, he has received payments or benefits from governments including China, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Indonesia, which have paid for rooms and events at Trump hotels or leases in Trump buildings, or which have granted valuable trademarks or real estate permits.
- More details can be found in the full complaint: [link]

Why should we be concerned about violations of the Emoluments Clauses?

- The Framers of the Constitution drafted the Emoluments Clauses to ensure that government officials were focused only on serving the American people.

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- The Framers knew that foreign countries would seek to induce or influence the President by bestowing money or other things of value.
- The president is entrusted with the power to make decisions that affect all Americans. We should never have to wonder whether the president is acting in the country's interest or for his own financial benefit.

What do you hope to achieve by bringing this suit?

- We are asking for a court order to prevent President Trump from continuing to violate the Constitution.
- It is unprecedented in our nation's history that a president has put his financial interests above the interests of the American people in this manner.
- Every president in recent history has taken clear, transparent steps to separate personal business interests from the official business of the United States, and President Trump must do the same.