

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

# Trump administration drops effort against law firms after judges find president's orders unconstitutional

Numerous judges have ruled against Trump's executive orders targeting certain law firms.



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— President Donald Trump issued executive orders last year targeting specific law firms over their staffs and clientele. Al Drago / Bloomberg via Getty Images file

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The [Justice Department](#) on Monday dropped the fight over [President Donald Trump's](#) executive orders targeting firms he disliked, conceding to unanimous rulings from federal judges that found the orders violated the fundamental tenets of the Constitution.



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The targeted firms included Perkins Coie, WilmerHale, Susman Godfrey and Jenner & Block. They had fought back against executive orders by Trump that took aim at their security clearances, government contracts and access to government buildings due to their clientele and hiring.

Perkins Coie has represented high-profile Democrats, including former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton; WilmerHale employed former special counsel Robert Mueller after he investigated Trump; and Jenner & Block hired Andrew Weissmann, who was a part of Mueller's team.

The firms, which stood up to the administration [at a time when many other major law firms caved](#), welcomed the administration's capitulation.

“As we said from the outset, our challenge to the unlawful Executive Order was about defending our clients’ constitutional right to retain the counsel of their choosing and defending the rule of law. We are pleased these foundational principles were vindicated,” a WilmerHale spokesperson said in a statement Monday.

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— The WilmerHale law firm in Washington last year. The firm celebrated the administration decision, calling it "clearly the right one." Kent Nishimura / Bloomberg via Getty Images file

Jenner & Block said in a statement that the administration's move makes permanent the federal judges' earlier rulings that the lawsuits against the firms were unconstitutional.

The Wall Street Journal [first reported](#) the administration's decision to drop the suits.

Federal judges [repeatedly sided](#) with the firms; a May ruling from U.S. District Judge Beryl Howell [called the executive order](#) against Perkins Coie "an unprecedented attack" on the U.S. judicial system.

Some firms, [such as Paul Weiss](#), reached deals with the administration after the executive orders were issued, agreeing to give tens of millions of dollars in pro bono work for causes Trump

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Vanita Gupta, who was the No. 3 official at the Justice Department during the Biden administration, blasted the firms that quickly acquiesced to Trump's demands, saying after the Justice Department's decision was announced Monday that those firms that capitulated "undermined the rule of law and the legal profession in this country."

"This episode will be remembered as demonstrating the difference between institutions that had the ethical courage to uphold the Constitution and fight bullying and then won, and those that compromised their ethics and gained nothing," Gupta said in a statement Monday. "Let's hope that media companies, universities, and other organizations pay heed."

Rep. Jamie Raskin of Maryland, the top Democrat on the House Judiciary Committee, praised the firms that fought back.

"Today, those firms forced Trump to back down and abandon his blatantly unconstitutional effort to punish lawyers, clients and causes because Trump disagrees with their speech," Raskin said in a statement. 📺



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