

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE
NINETEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
IN AND FOR OKEECHOBEE COUNTY
FLORIDA

Case No. 2022CA000246

Senior Judge: Robert L. Pegg

PRESIDENT DONALD J. TRUMP,

Plaintiff

vs.

MEMBERS OF THE PULITZER PRIZE
BOARD, an unincorporated association,
ELIZABETH ALEXANDER, ANNE
APPLEBAUM, NANCY BARNES, LEE
C. BOLLINGER, KATHERIN BOO,
NEIL BROWN, NICOLE CARROLL,
STEVE COLL, GAIL COLLINS, JOHN
DANISZEWSKI, GABRIEL ESCOBAR,
CARLOS LOZADA, KELLY LYTTLE
HERNANDEZ, KEVIN MERIDA,
MARJORIE MILLER, VIET THANH
NGUYEN, EMILY RAMSHAW, DAVID
REMNICK, and TOMMIE SHELBY,

Defendants.

**ORDER DENYING DEFENDANTS' MOTION TO TEMPORARILY STAY CIVIL
ACTION BECAUSE OF PLAINTIFF'S STATUS AS PRESIDENT OF THE
UNITED STATES**

This cause having come on to be heard this 3rd day of March, 2025, upon the defendant's Motion to Temporarily Stay Civil Action Given Plaintiff's Status as President of the United States, and the court having considered the contents of the motion and argument of counsel, and being otherwise duly advised in the premises, the court finds as follows:

1. Defendants are seeking a stay of the instant proceeding because plaintiff is the currently sitting president of the United States. 1. They opine that to proceed further would be constitutionally impermissible because it would be an attempt to exercise “direct control” over plaintiff during his presidency.
2. Defendants also argue that plaintiff’s participation in the lawsuit could interfere with his duties as president as he could not devote his time and energy to the problems and issues facing the nation.
3. Should plaintiff fail to comply with the order(s) of this court such as discovery obligations, any sanction could be a “sword of Damocles” hanging over the President’s head.
4. Plaintiff believes that defendants have no standing to request a stay. Such a request would be the prerogative of the plaintiff as he would be in a better position to determine if proceeding further would be a diversion of his energies or interfere with the obligations of his office. Any immunity claim arising from Article II of the United States Constitution would reside with the President, not his adversaries.
5. Plaintiff also argues that the Supremacy Clause as well as Article II protects the President as a defendant against a state court exercising its jurisdiction, not the defendants.

DISCUSSION

Plaintiff’s arguments are well taken. Should the duties of the President interfere with his ability to perform his obligations in this action, he is certainly entitled to seek the appropriate relief. Should he not do so, yet not comply with the rules of

this court, defendants may apply for the appropriate sanctions as they would against any other plaintiff. These could be the usual sanctions of fines, costs, attorney's fees, and the ultimate sanction of dismissal of the action should that be appropriate. Defendants would not be precluded from seeking another stay of the proceeding if plaintiff fails to perform his obligations under Florida law and the rules of civil procedure.

It is therefore

ORDERED AND ADJUDGED that the defendant's be, Motion to Temporarily Stay Civil Action Given Plaintiff's Status as President of the United States be and the same is hereby **DENIED**.

DONE AND ORDERED this 10th day of March 2025, in Okeechobee County, Florida.



ROBERT L. PEGG
Senior Circuit Judge