

Invoking the ‘Interest of Justice,’ Judge Taps Sidley Austin’s Alan Raul to Represent Roger Stone Jurors

Raul is a former associate counsel to President Ronald Reagan, a member of the conservative group Checks and Balances and the head of Sidley Austin’s privacy and cybersecurity practice.

By **Jacqueline Thomsen**

U.S. District Judge Amy Berman Jackson of the District of Columbia is turning to Sidley Austin partner Alan Raul for pro bono representation of jurors from Roger Stone’s trial as right-wing figure Mike Cernovich goes to court to obtain copies of questionnaires they filled out ahead of jury selection.

Cernovich, represented by the outspoken Connecticut attorney Norm Pattis of The Pattis & Smith Law Firm—who most recently made headlines with his representation of the late Fotis Dulos on murder charges—last week filed a motion seeking the juror voir dire identification number of the jury’s foreperson and jury questionnaires in the case. The main motion to intervene repeatedly misspelled the term for the questioning

of prospective jurors as “voire dire.”

That motion focuses on the jury’s foreperson, Tomeka Hart—who publicly identified herself through social media posts last month—and responses she gave on her questionnaire. Cernovich argues in the filing that her “public conduct has raised grave constitutional concerns regarding the fairness of the jury trial in the instant matter.”

“Mr. Cernovich, as a journalist and a concerned citizen, respectfully requests the court to allow him to exercise his right under the First Amendment to investigate [Hart],” the motion reads.

On Monday, in a new court docket created to handle

the request for the juror questionnaires, Jackson said she had determined “that it would be in the interest of justice and that it would aid the court in the full and fair resolution of this miscellaneous matter to appoint pro bono counsel to represent any juror or jurors who choose to participate in it.”

Jackson’s order did not provide her reasons for selecting Raul. Raul did not return a request for comment.

Raul is a former associate counsel to President Ronald Reagan and founder of Sidley Austin’s privacy and cybersecurity practice. Raul is also a member of the American Bar Association’s Cybersecurity Legal Task Force and the Center for Democracy and Technology’s

advisory committee.

His prior federal government work includes stints as general counsel for the Office of Management and Budget and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

He is also a member of Checks and Balances, a group of conservative lawyers outspoken against President Donald Trump. Other members of the group have been critical of Main Justice intervening in line prosecutors' sentencing recommendation for Stone.

Those remarks have been amplified on the organization's social media channels, but the group itself has not issued a formal statement on the Stone sentencing. Raul does not appear to have made public remarks about the Stone case.

Raul has signed past Checks and Balances letters critical of the Trump administration, including one from October that urged an "expeditious" impeachment inquiry into Trump over allegations he directed a hold on Ukrainian military aid in exchange for investigations into his political rivals, the Bidens.

Jackson has recently raised the safety of the jurors in Stone's case as of paramount importance. During a hearing last week in Stone's bid for a new trial, she read aloud tweets by Trump attacking the jury's

foreperson and commentary by others like Fox News' Tucker Carlson as further putting the jurors in potential danger.

The judge cited a supplemental filing by DOJ in expressing concerns about the jurors' safety. She also called up a deputy marshal to the bench, along with one attorney from each party, to receive additional information, with the condition that information not be shared with anyone else, including other counsel.

Jackson has yet to rule on Stone's motion for a new trial, which also hinges on responses Hart gave on her juror questionnaire. At the hearing on the motion, two of Hart's fellow jurors took the stand and defended her conduct, with one saying Hart had pushed the jury to spend more time considering one of the charges against Stone.

The federal jury found Stone guilty in November of seven charges of lying to Congress, impeding a congressional investigation and witness tampering. Jackson sentenced Stone last month to 40 months in federal prison, but speculation is rampant that Trump may pardon his longtime ally.

The judge blocked anyone at last week's hearing from using the names or juror numbers of any members of the jury, most of which were at the

courthouse for the proceeding. She has also blocked anyone involved in Cernovich's bid for the juror questionnaires from using the jurors' names or other identifying information.

Cernovich is not the only figure on the right associated with the juror questionnaires: Two other figures, Jacob Wohl and Jack Burkman, last week said they were releasing copies of the questionnaires, which have not otherwise been made public. ■