# Menendez and Trump Trials: A Closer Look at Bribery and Hush Money Allegations



### Key Details from Menendez and Trump Trials

**Sen. Bob Menendez Bribery Trial**

Senator Bob Menendez (D-NJ) is standing trial for bribery charges in Manhattan Federal Court. Jury selection began on May 14, 2024, with Judge Sidney Stein overseeing the proceedings. Menendez, along with New Jersey businessmen Wael Hana and Fred Daibes, is accused of accepting bribes in the form of cash, gold bars, and a luxury Mercedes-Benz convertible. His wife, Nadine, faces separate charges related to the same case. Menendez's defense aimed to include a psychiatrist's testimony about a condition causing him to hoard cash due to trauma from his family's property confiscation in Cuba. However, Judge Stein rejected this request, citing insufficient grounds and hearsay.

Potential witnesses include several high-profile lawmakers and former officials, such as Sens. Marsha Blackburn, Lindsey Graham, and former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. Menendez has pleaded not guilty to the charges, which include acting as a foreign agent and bribery. This is his second time facing bribery charges, having experienced a mistrial in 2017.

**Donald Trump Hush Money Trial**

Former President Donald Trump faces charges related to falsifying business records to cover up a $130,000 payment to adult film actress Stormy Daniels. Trump’s defense team, led by attorney Todd Blanche, began cross-examining Michael Cohen on May 14, 2024. Cohen, Trump's former lawyer, testified that Trump directed the payments to suppress Daniels' claims of an affair before the 2016 election. Cohen’s credibility was questioned, particularly regarding his admitted guilt for lying to Congress in 2018.

House Speaker Mike Johnson and various Republican politicians, including Sen. J.D. Vance and former presidential candidate Vivek Ramaswamy, attended the trial to show support for Trump. Johnson criticized the trial as politically motivated, echoing Trump’s stance that he is a victim of election interference. The proceedings are expected to continue with the defense's case potentially starting next week, and Trump may testify.

These trials mark significant legal battles for both Menendez and Trump, involving serious allegations of corruption and deceit.

**Sources:** CNN, The Independent, DailyMail.com