# Closing Arguments Begin in Trump Hush-Money Trial in Manhattan



### Closing Arguments Commence in Trump Hush-Money Trial

The criminal trial of former U.S. President Donald J. Trump over an alleged hush-money payment enters its final stage in Manhattan this week with closing arguments from both the defense and prosecution starting Tuesday, May 28, 2024.

### Case Background

Trump faces 34 felony counts of falsifying business records related to a $130,000 payment to adult film star Stormy Daniels, aimed at silencing her allegations of a sexual encounter during the final days of his 2016 presidential campaign. Michael Cohen, Trump’s former lawyer, facilitated the payment.

### Key Players and Evidence

The prosecution, led by Joshua Steinglass, claims Trump orchestrated the payment and subsequently disguised reimbursements as legal expenses. Cohen's testimony, along with other witness statements, emails, and phone records, form the backbone of their case.

The defense, led by Todd Blanche, challenges Cohen's credibility, asserting that Cohen acted independently and that Trump made legitimate legal service payments. Trump has consistently denied any sexual liaison with Daniels.

### Anticipated Outcomes

Judge Juan M. Merchan is set to instruct the jury on relevant laws post closing arguments, with deliberations possibly beginning as early as Wednesday. Trump, who did not testify, faces up to four years in prison if convicted.

### Political Context

Despite the trial, Trump remains a prominent Republican candidate for the 2024 presidential election. Public opinion polls show him maintaining strong support among conservative voters, often leading against incumbent President Joe Biden.

### Broader Legal Troubles

Trump is also facing three other criminal trials related to his actions post the 2020 election and handling of classified documents. None are expected to conclude before the upcoming presidential election, adding further complexity to his campaign.

### Conclusion

As the trial potentially reaches its conclusion, both legal teams aim to sway the jury with their interpretations of events. Regardless of the trial’s outcome, Trump's political and legal battles are set to continue, deeply influencing the 2024 presidential race.