

Unauthorized DOJ Prosecutions Caused \$47M in Damages

Federal Court Lacked Jurisdiction Over Prosecutions Led by Two Attorneys Not Authorized to Represent the United States in Federal Criminal Proceedings

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Phil Andonian, Attorney for the Plaintiffs has served the Department of Justice with formal notice of a claim for damages totaling more than \$47 million dollars for the Department's negligence in permitting two lawyers to prosecute the firm's clients in the Middle District of Florida on behalf of the Department of Justice without the statutorily required authorization from the Attorney General.

Without this authorization, the two were not authorized Assistant United States Attorneys and were not permitted to represent the United States in federal criminal litigation, thus depriving the court of jurisdiction over the matters, from the initial proceedings in the grand jury through trial

and sentencing. As a result of this unlawful prosecution, the firm's clients suffered significant monetary and emotional harm and continue to do so to this day.

"The Executive Office of the United States and the Department of Justice have not produced proof of this authorization despite repeated requests—including multiple FOIA requests—and indeed correspondence from both entities indicates that no such authorization exists," said CalebAndonian partner Phil Andonian, who represents the two individuals subjected to the unauthorized prosecution. Andonian also noted that "this is a significant problem that seems likely to implicate myriad other cases like ours since every AUSA must be expressly authorized to represent the United States in federal criminal cases. Without this authorization, every aspect of the criminal proceedings, from indictment to verdict to sentencing, is null and void."

The underlying criminal prosecution is Case No. 13-CR-87 (Middle District of Florida). The notice served on the Department of Justice, which is called a Standard Form 95, alleges substantial monetary and emotional damages for the Department's continued negligence. The Department has a limited amount of time to respond to the notice before the firm files a civil lawsuit in federal district court seeking recovery in full of the alleged damages.

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