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Trump Considering Pardons For Ex-Reps. Stockman and Hunter



By **John Gizzi**

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President Trump is reportedly considering either pardons or at least commutation of sentences for two former Republican U.S. Representatives now in prison, sources close to the administration told Newsmax.

Imprisoned former Reps. Steve Stockman, R.-Texas and Duncan D. Hunter, R.-Calif., could be freed by the stroke of a presidential pen as early as Christmas, the same sources said.

But Trump, like other presidents on the way out of office, could also wait until January to issue pardons or some form of clemency that are sure to fuel controversy.

Several Republican House Members have called on him to pardon Hunter and Stockman. In Stockman's case, both supporters of the president in Texas and a former Member of the House Republican leadership have weighed in on him on behalf of the former congressman and conservative firebrand.

Hunter, 44, pled guilty to one count of misusing campaign funds in December 2019 and resigned from Congress. He was sentenced to one year in prison in March of 2020.

Friends and former colleagues of the former six-term congressman, while not defending his misuse of the campaign funds, nevertheless argue that it was an overly severe punishment.

They also say that Hunter's past record of two tours of duty as a U.S. Marine Corps officer — including service in Afghanistan and Iraq — should have counted in his sentencing.

In November 2018, Stockman was sentenced to ten years in prison followed by three years of supervised released — the longest prison sentence ever levied against a former Member of Congress.

The Texan had been convicted on 23 counts of money laundering, mail and wire fraud, conspiracy, and income tax evasion. All of the charges had to do with a non-profit organization he had helped set up known as "Life Without Limits" and whose funds he is alleged to have used to pay personal debts.

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“The Obama case against Steve stems from a grand total of \$915,000 he raised for nonprofits he worked for from a pair of donors,” historian Craig Shirley wrote to Newsmax. “The donors knew what their money was being utilized for, never once complaining to Steve or any authority figures about it.

“The money was intended for various educational and philanthropic projects, some of which never panned out (which, trust me, happens often in the nonprofit business).”

Shirley and other supporters strongly believe Stockman’s prosecution under the Obama Administration was directly related to his being the first congressman to charge that Internal Revenue Service Director of Exempt Organizations Lois Lerner was using her authority to harass conservative organizations and deny them their tax-exempt status.

“I hope and pray that President Trump pardons former Congressman Steve Stockman who was unjustly prosecuted by Obama administration officials,” Texas’s former State GOP Chairman Tom Pauken told Newsmax. “It is a travesty of our justice system that Steve is still a federal prisoner.”

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