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BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM

Panic in Trump campaign described

Ex-aide testifies on fallout of tape from 'Access Hollywood'

By Michael R. Sisak, Jake Offenhartz and Philip Marcelo
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Donald Trump's 2016 campaign was seized with worry about the potential political damage from a tape that showed Trump bragging about grabbing women sexually without their permission, longtime Trump adviser Hope Hicks testified Friday at his hush money trial. Hicks, a former White House official, was compelled to testify by prosecutors, who are hoping her remarks bolster their argument that the uproar over the infamous "Access Hollywood" tape hastened Trump's then-lawyer to pay off porn actor Stormy Daniels to bury a negative story that could imperil his 2016 presidential bid.

Once one of Trump's closest confidants, Hicks provided jurors with a glimpse into the chaotic fallout from the tape's release just days before a crucial debate with Democrat Hillary Clinton. Hicks described being stunned and huddling with other Trump advisers after learning about the tape's existence from The Washington Post reporter who broke the story. Hicks forwarded the reporter's request to campaign leadership with the recommendation to "deny, deny, deny," Hicks said.

"I had a good sense to believe this was going to be a massive story and that it was going to dominate the news cycle for the next several days," Hicks testified. "This was a damaging development."

She added: "This was just pulling us backwards in a way that was going to be hard to overcome."

Prosecutors used her testimony to strengthen their case alleging Trump worked to prevent damaging stories about his personal life from becoming public as part of a scheme to illegally influence the 2016 presidential election. Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg has sought to establish that link not just to secure a conviction but also to persuade the public of the significance of the case, which may be the only one of four Trump prosecutions to reach trial this year.

Trump has denied any wrongdoing and slammed the case as

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A counterprotester waves an American flag on the Main Quadrangle near the pro-Palestine encampment at the University of Chicago on Friday. TERRENCE ANTONIO JAMES/CHICAGO TRIBUNE PHOTOS

U. of C. to 'intervene' to remove encampment

President claims pro-Palestine protesters create 'systemic disruption' on campus

By Rebecca Johnson, Alice Yin and Caroline Kubzansky
Chicago Tribune

The University of Chicago announced it was prepared to "intervene" to remove the pro-Palestine encampment from the school's Main Quadrangle, President Paul Alivisatos said Friday, claiming student protesters have created a "systemic disruption" on campus.

But what or when that intervention looks like remains to be seen. A spokesperson for the university did not respond to a request for comment.

The announcement added to the heightened tensions Friday afternoon when a group of fraternity brothers marched to the encampment, which had hundreds of people, carrying American flags, chanting "USA, USA!" as Muslim students gathered for prayers. A line of cops formed between the groups.

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Pro-Palestine supporters rally on the Main Quad at the University of Chicago on Friday.

Serial Chicago con man gets 9 years in prison

Cipolla engaged in multiple schemes to rip off people, feds

By Jason Meisner
Chicago Tribune

Serial Chicago con man Joey Cipolla was sentenced to nine years in federal prison Friday for what the judge called "an extraordinarily large amount" of schemes to cheat people out of money.

In handing down the 108-month sentence, U.S. District Judge Matthew Kennelly noted that Cipolla had spent time in state prison for similar crimes before, but instead of being deterred he soon returned to scamming people.

"One would think that if Mr. Cipolla had the ability and willingness to control what he was doing — because he obviously has skills — that (his previous prison time) would have been enough. But it wasn't."

Kennelly said that was a sign that a lengthy sentence was needed to keep Cipolla "sepa-

rated from the public."

"There are people out there that need to be protected from Mr. Cipolla," Kennelly said. "... It seems like one of those situations where Mr. Cipolla sees opportunities and he takes them."

In addition to the prison sentence, Kennelly ordered Cipolla to pay \$1.6 million in restitution, which includes back taxes he owes to the IRS and state.

Cipolla, 40, pleaded guilty in November to a multipronged scheme: stifling people on luxury auto sales over eBay, rip-offs in the leasing of aircraft out of DuPage County Airport and using more than \$1 million in fraudulently obtained COVID-19 relief funds to pay for his over-the-top lifestyle. He also admitted he failed to file income tax returns for years, cheating the IRS out of hundreds of thousands of dollars in taxes.

In asking for up to about 10 years in prison, federal prosecutors described Cipolla as a smooth talker and charmer, a man with an unhealthy obsession with wealth who doesn't care about hurting

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CHRIS SWEDA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Counsell faces old team, but Cubs fall

Cubs manager Craig Counsell faced his former team, the Brewers, for the first time, but Milwaukee scored three runs in the eighth to win Friday's game 3-1. **Chicago Sports**

Murder charges in shooting of officer

Murder charges were announced against the man who allegedly shot and killed off-duty police Officer Luis Huesca last month in Gage Park. **Chicagoland, Page 5**

Ald. opposes proposed migrant shelter site

Asylum-seekers would be moved to 11th Ward location ahead of DNC

By Alice Yin
Chicago Tribune

A South Side alderman told constituents Friday that Mayor Brandon Johnson is seeking to open a new migrant shelter in her ward and move asylum-seekers away from downtown ahead of the Democratic National Convention, a move she vehemently criticized over environmental and safety concerns.

Ald. Nicole Lee, 11th, sent an email to her constituents Friday afternoon informing them of Johnson's team approaching her with plans to build the shelter at 3951 S. Canal St. and 3909 S. Normal Ave., in the New City neighborhood. City officials explained the reason was because of the planned closure of the Standard Club migrant shelter downtown before the DNC comes to Chicago this August, Lee said in the message.

"Earlier this week, Mayor John-

son's administration notified Ald. Lee that they are considering plans to build a new temporary migrant shelter in the 11th Ward at 3951 S. Canal St. to replace the Standard Club shelter downtown before the Democratic National Convention," Lee's email reads. "Yesterday, Ald. Lee met with Mayor Johnson about these plans and outlined in no uncertain terms that she is fully and unequivocally opposed to standing up this shelter at this location."

A spokeswoman for the city's Department of Family and Support Services said in a statement Friday evening that Lee "was given notice in an effort to gather feedback and information about a potential temporary emergency shelter site."

"We will continue to be transparent and inform community stakeholders as we gather more information and determine next steps," the city said in the statement.

The question of how Chicago should handle the 40,000-plus asylum-seekers who have made

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