

# Trump Attorney Sues Greenpeace Over Dakota Access Pipeline in \$300 Million Racketeering Case

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*Energy Transfer Partners, owner of the [Dakota Access pipeline](#), has filed a \$300 million Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) lawsuit against Greenpeace and other environmental groups for their activism against the long-contested North Dakota-to-Illinois project.*

In its [187-page complaint](#), Energy Transfer alleges that “putative not-for-profits and rogue eco-terrorist groups who employ patterns of criminal activity and campaigns of misinformation to target legitimate companies and industries with fabricated environmental claims and other purported misconduct” caused the company to lose “billions of dollars.”

In the case, Energy Transfer is represented by lawyers from the firm Kasowitz Benson Torres LLP, one of the namesakes of which is [Marc Kasowitz](#). Kasowitz is a member of the legal team representing **President Donald Trump** in the ongoing congressional and special counsel investigation of his 2016 presidential campaign’s alleged ties and potential collusion with Russian state actors. The [press release](#) announcing the filing of the lawsuit details that Kasowitz attorney [Michael J. Bowe](#) is leading what the firm describes as an ongoing probe into the environmental groups’ “campaign and practices.”

## Trump Connections

Bowe, according to [multiple press accounts](#), is serving as Kasowitz’s deputy in the ongoing Russia investigation. He also [represents](#) Resolute Forest Products and co-plaintiffs in its [ongoing RICO lawsuit](#) against Greenpeace, Stand.Earth, and other defendants involved in a corporate social responsibility campaign revolving around Resolute’s forest-originated products.

Bowe, furthermore, is an [attorney-of-record](#) in a \$50 million defamation [lawsuit filed against](#) freelance journalist **Yashar Ali** by [suspended](#) Fox News anchor **Eric Bolling**. Ali published a freelance article commissioned by the HuffPost on August 4 in which multiple sources told Ali that Bolling had sent a litany of [unsolicited lewd text messages](#) to Fox News’ female employees.

Another attorney of record for the latest Greenpeace lawsuit, [Jennifer Recine](#), formerly represented Trump “against the owners of one of the last large scale real estate development sites in Manhattan” and helped him win “the largest ever attachment in New York City history,” according to her biographical sketch on the Kasowitz Benson Torres website. Bowe also lists that detail on his Kasowitz biography.



People protesting the Dakota Access pipeline march past San Francisco City Hall in November 2016. (Source: [Pax Ahimsa Gethen](#), [CC BY-SA 4.0](#))

According to a New York Times article published in June, Marc Kasowitz [represented Trump](#) during the Trump Organization's financial travails in Atlantic City, New Jersey, and has served as his attorney in other recent matters. He even considered setting up an office in the White House, though he serves as Trump's personal attorney and not White House legal counsel.

"Kasowitz has been central to Mr. Trump's recent legal battles, helping his client keep divorce records sealed and representing him in the Trump University fraud lawsuit, in which Mr. Trump ultimately agreed to pay \$25 million to settle claims from former students that the institution had cheated them out of tuition money," reported The Times. "In the final weeks of the presidential campaign, Mr. Kasowitz threatened to sue The New York Times for libel on Mr. Trump's behalf over a story in which two women accused Mr. Trump of inappropriate touching years earlier."

Energy Transfer Partners CEO **Kelcy Warren** was a major campaign donor to President Trump, [giving him over \\$100,000](#) in campaign contributions.

#### **'Meritless Lawsuit'**

In its press release, the legal team for Energy Transfer Partners says that a website "will be established to catalog information and publish progress reports on the case and, when necessary, to set the record straight as the facts warrant."

A similar website has been set up in the Resolute Forest Products case, [resolutevgreenpeace.com](#). In a press release, Energy Transfer Partners accuses Greenpeace and other groups of "inducing and directing violent and destructive attacks."

"The alleged Enterprise is comprised of rogue environmental groups and militant individuals who employ a pattern of criminal activity and a campaign of misinformation for purposes of increasing donations and advancing their political or business agendas," Energy Transfer Partners says in its press release about the lawsuit. "In addition to its misinformation campaign, the Enterprise directly and indirectly funded eco-terrorists on the ground in North Dakota. These groups formed their own outlaw camp among peaceful protestors (sic) gathered near Lake Oahe, and exploited the peaceful activities of these groups to further the Enterprise's corrupt agenda by inducing and directing violent and destructive attacks against law enforcement as well as Plaintiffs' property and personnel."

The "eco-terrorist" language [mirrors that used](#) by law enforcement and the public relations firms it and Energy Transfer Partners paid during the height of protests at the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation in Cannon Ball, North Dakota. In response to a request for comment from DeSmog, Bowe said that the alleged RICO conspiracy had a global reach.

"The complaint alleges the manufacturing and aggressive worldwide dissemination of a completely phony narrative inconsistent with overwhelming

and incontrovertible facts,” said Bowe. “We intend to successfully prosecute the case to its conclusion, vindicate this good company, and compensate it for the substantial harm it has suffered.”

Greenpeace, though, sees the lawsuit as an act of “bullying” and in the category of [“Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation,”](#) or SLAPP.

“This is the second consecutive year Donald Trump’s go-to attorneys at the Kasowitz law firm have filed a meritless lawsuit against Greenpeace,” Greenpeace USA **General Counsel Tom Wetterer** said in a press statement. “They are apparently trying to market themselves as corporate mercenaries willing to abuse the legal system to silence legitimate advocacy work. This has now become a pattern of harassment by corporate bullies, with Trump’s attorneys leading the way.”

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