



President Donald Trump presents Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell with what Trump called a list of cost overruns for the Federal Reserve's \$2.5 billion headquarters renovation project Thursday.

CHIP SOMODEVILLA Getty Images/TNS

# Trump says not ‘necessary’ to fire Powell after Fed tour

BY JOSH WINGROVE AND AMARA OMEOKWE  
Bloomberg News

WASHINGTON  
President Donald Trump downplayed his clash with Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell over cost overruns during a tour of the central bank’s renovation project on Thursday, making it clear that he saw the issue of lower interest rates as a more pressing concern.

After a tour that saw Trump and Powell publicly trade barbs over the cost of the project, Trump maintained there was “no

tension” with the Fed chief and indicated that problems with the project probably weren’t reason enough to fire the central bank head.

“To do that is a big move, and I just don’t think it’s necessary,” Trump told reporters.

Still, the remarkable tour was not without moments of tension. The president joked that he might ordinarily remove a project manager who oversaw similar cost overruns. He ribbed Powell – who for months has faced presidential criticism – over interest rates.

“Well, I’d love him to lower interest rates. Other than that, what can I tell you?” Trump said.

The president’s visit was a rare spectacle, with Trump being the first president to visit the Federal Reserve in nearly two decades – a dramatic example of how, in his second term, he has ramped up his pressure on the chairman, threatening longstanding norms about the central bank’s independence and autonomy, in his bid to secure lower rates. Trump’s second White House term has been marked by an expan-

sion of executive power that’s helped him bring myriad industries to heel – except the Federal Reserve.

The tour opened with Trump and Powell, wearing white hard hats, coming down the dimly lit hallway to speak with reporters. Trump honed in on what he and his allies say is an exorbitant cost for renovating a federal building, while Powell shook his head. In a tense moment, a visibly uncomfortable Powell pushed back and shook his head when Trump claimed the renovation costs had hit

\$3.1 billion.

When the president offered Powell a piece of paper he cast as offering details on the new estimate, Powell tersely told Trump his revised claim included a building that had already been completed.

“That’s a third building,” Powell said, interrupting the president. “It was built five years ago.”

Asked by a reporter what he would do if a manager on one of his construction projects had gone over budget, Trump replied bluntly. “Generally speaking, what would I do?” Trump said. “I’d fire ‘em.”

Powell laughed as Trump knocked him on the arm, and the president added that he did not “want to be personal.”

“I just would like to see it get finished,” Trump said.

While the real estate mogul, who regularly touts his experience having overseen massive construction projects in his home of New York, said he had undertaken bigger jobs than the Fed work in the past and kept costs manageable, he indicated he did not consider the cost overruns alone enough to remove Powell from the job.

“I don’t want to put that in this category,” Trump said.

The president also repeatedly turned his focus back to the central bank’s rate-setting policies.

“I just want to see one thing happen, very simple: Interest rates have to come down,” he said.

More broadly, Trump said he and Powell had a “good meeting” but declined to characterize their private discussion on interest rates, alluding to the Fed’s current blackout period ahead of their meeting next week.

## PEOPLE

### Post Malone, ex reach custody deal on daughter

*Us Weekly*

**Post Malone’s** ex-girlfriend and mother of his child, **Hee Sung “Jamie” Park**, dropped her legal battle against the musician after the exes reached a private deal over custody of their daughter, *Us Weekly* can report.

According to court documents obtained by *Us*, on Monday, Park dismissed the petition she filed against Malone (real name: Austin Post) in Los Angeles Superior Court regarding paternity and support.

“Entire action of all parties and all causes,” explained the request for dismissal.

The move comes days after an agreement over custody, parenting time, support and related matters was filed in a Utah court.

Malone, 30, filed a petition, which was sealed by the court, over paternity and support on April 14 in Utah. Park filed her suit two days later in California.

Park only identified their daughter with her initials in the paperwork, DDP. She said they lived with Malone until November 2024.

In her filing, she demanded full custody of their child but proposed that the musician have visitation. Park checked the box indicating she wanted to share legal custody.

Sources close to Malone told TMZ the child had been raised in Utah and believed she should continue to be around the same support system.

# DOJ interviews Ghislaine Maxwell while opposing her appeal

BY ABBIE VANSICKLE  
NYT News Service

On Thursday, top Justice Department officials interviewed Ghislaine Maxwell, a longtime associate of Jeffrey Epstein’s.

But just days before, the same department asked the Supreme Court justices to reject her appeal seeking to overturn her conviction for assisting Epstein’s alleged crimes.

The moment highlights the awkward position of the department that prosecuted Maxwell as it seeks to curb criticism that federal officials have hidden information about Epstein’s case, including his links to famous and well-connected figures.

Prosecutors had previously argued in court that Maxwell had been dishonest in her accounts of her interactions with Epstein, and she has made it clear that she wants her freedom.

Maxwell is currently serving a 20-year prison sentence for charges related to sex trafficking. She has long denied any knowledge or participation in Epstein’s abuse of teen girls and young women. She filed a petition to the Supreme Court in April, asking the justices to overturn her 2021 conviction for conspiring to sexually



HAIYUN JIANG NYT

The U.S. Supreme Court is seen from Capitol Hill on July 16. Ghislaine Maxwell, a longtime associate of Jeffrey Epstein, filed a petition to the Supreme Court in April, asking the justices to overturn her 2021 conviction for conspiring to sexually abuse minors.

The Epstein saga was recently reignited by the Trump administration’s public announcement that it would not release files related to the investigation into Epstein, something long promised by the president and his allies.

That Justice Department’s decision fueled an

unusual backlash against the president by many of his supporters.

Epstein was indicted in 2019 in New York on federal charges of sex trafficking and conspiracy and died of an apparent suicide in his jail cell while awaiting trial.

All of the swirling interest appears unlikely to

speed the timeline for a Supreme Court decision on whether to hear Maxwell’s appeal.

Maxwell filed her petition April 10. The Justice Department formally opposed her request July 14.

Maxwell’s legal team is likely to file a reply brief responding to the government’s argument. The justices typically consider petitions about a month after receiving an opposition brief like the one filed in Maxwell’s case by the Justice Department. However, that timeline is almost certain to be longer here because the justices do not regularly meet to consider new cases from late June until the end of September.

The court is currently on its summer recess, typically a sleepy season for the institution, when many justices travel, teach and give public appearances. While the justices continue to handle emergency applications -- and also issue periodic summer orders, including decisions on whether to accept new cases -- there has been no indication they would expedite Maxwell’s petition.

Even if the justices ultimately agreed to hear the appeal, it most likely would not be argued be-

fore early October, when the court’s new term begins. A decision would most likely come by the end of June or early July 2026.

In her petition, Maxwell argued that she should have been shielded from criminal charges related to her conduct with Epstein because of a plea deal Epstein entered into with prosecutors in Florida in 2008.

Epstein agreed to plead guilty to two state charges – soliciting prostitution and soliciting minors to engage in prostitution – and in exchange he received an assurance from the U.S. attorney’s office for the Southern District of Florida that it would not pursue federal criminal charges against him. Prosecutors also promised to shield Epstein’s co-conspirators.

But allegations against Epstein gained new attention in 2018, spurred by reporting from The Miami Herald that focused on the role of R. Alexander Acosta, the former chief federal prosecutor in Miami who signed off on Epstein’s plea deal. Acosta became President Donald Trump’s labor secretary during his first administration.

A Justice Department review of the case later determined that Acosta had “exercised poor judgment” by allowing Epstein to dodge federal child trafficking charges. Department officials also blamed Acosta for failing to alert Epstein’s victims

to the terms of the non-prosecution agreement and ensure that they were aware of his guilty plea.

Epstein was charged federally after all in 2019.

The following year, federal prosecutors in New York indicted Maxwell on charges related to sex trafficking. She argued that the case should be dropped because of the nonprosecution agreement.

A federal judge rejected her argument, and a jury convicted her. A panel of federal appeals judges upheld her conviction. Maxwell then filed her petition to the justices, asking them to take up her case.

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