

CBS considers caving on Trump censorship lawsuit to save Paramount merger

A law professor cited by CBS News called Donald Trump's \$10 billion lawsuit over the editing of a *60 Minutes* interview with Kamala Harris "...so ill grounded that it comes close to being sanctionable as frivolous." But now, the *The Wall Street Journal* reports that executives at CBS' parent company, Paramount Global, have discussed settling the suit while "gaming out options to reduce friction with the incoming administration" ahead of a government review of its merger with Skydance.

The paper reports that incoming FCC chairman and censor-in-chief Brendan Carr warned execs last year that presidential dissatisfaction with CBS News will make a review tougher. He's also publicly displayed that view, saying during a Fox News interview in November, "...CBS has a transaction before the FCC. I'm pretty confident that news distortion complaint over the CBS 60 Minutes transcript is something that is likely to arise in the context of the FCC's review of that transaction."

The lawsuit claims that in airing two differently edited versions of Harris' response to a question about the war in Gaza, "CBS used its national platform on 60 Minutes to cross the line from the exercise of judgment in reporting to deceitful, deceptive manipulation of news."

But instead of mounting a defense of free speech against a lawsuit and Trump's accusations that the network said were false and completely without merit, Paramount is considering following the example of Disney and tech oligarchs who will

line up at the inauguration like Mark Zuckerberg.

The ABC News owner agreed to pay \$15 million to Trump's presidential foundation and museum to settle a defamation lawsuit in December. Zuckerberg sharply redirected Meta's policies to the right while meeting with Trump, reportedly "in part to mediate a lawsuit Trump brought against Facebook and Zuckerberg in 2021 over the platform's suspension of Trump's account after the Jan. 6 riot at the U.S. Capitol."

<https://www.theverge.com/2025/1/17/24346279/cbs-paramount-trump-merger-lawsuit>