

There's enough evidence to open a criminal investigation into Ocasio-Cortez, former FEC Commissioner says

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Andrew Kerr,

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DCNF (<https://dailycaller.com/2019/03/11/fec-commissioner-ocasio-cortez/>)



(Photo by Gary Miller/FilmMagic)

- **Former FEC Commissioner Hans von Spakovsky called for an investigation into alleged campaign finance violations by Democratic New York Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and her top aide.**

- **“There seems to be enough evidence here to justify opening a criminal investigation,” von Spakovsky wrote in a Fox News op-ed Sunday.**
- **Ocasio-Cortez and her top aide Saikat Chakrabarti have since December 2017, controlled the outside PAC credited with being the central force behind her June 2018 primary victory.**

A former member of the Federal Election Commission (FEC) called for an investigation Sunday into alleged campaign finance violations by Democratic New York Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and her top aide Saikat Chakrabarti.

Ocasio-Cortez and Chakrabarti have since December 2017, held legal authority over Justice Democrats, the outside PAC credited with orchestrating (<https://dailycaller.com/2019/03/06/ocasio-cortez-justice-democrats-pelosi/>)

her upset primary victory over incumbent Democratic New York Rep. Joe Crowley in June 2018, The Daily Caller News Foundation reported last week.

The conservative National Legal and Policy Center (NLPC) also filed an FEC complaint last week, first reported by the

Washington Examiner (<https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/politics/ocasio-cortezs-chief-of-staff-ran-1m-slush-fund-by-diverting-campaign-cash-to-his-own-companies>)

, alleging that Justice Democrats and another PAC controlled by Chakrabarti, Brand New Congress, funneled \$1 million into two private companies under his control during the 2018 midterms.

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“As a former FEC commissioner who has studied the complaint against Ocasio-Cortez and Chakrabarti, I have concluded that there is unquestionably more than enough evidence to justify the FEC opening a civil investigation,” Hans von Spakovsky, now a

Heritage Foundation senior legal fellow, wrote in a Fox News op-ed (<https://www.foxnews.com/opinion/ocasio-cortez-and-top-aide-should-be-investigated-for-possible-campaign-finance-violations>) Sunday.

“There seems to be enough evidence here to justify opening a criminal investigation,” he added.

Ocasio-Cortez

never disclosed

(<http://docquery.fec.gov/pdf/460/201802069094263460/201802069094263460.pdf>)

to the FEC that she and Chakrabarti, who served as her campaign chair, controlled Justice Democrats while it was simultaneously supporting her primary campaign. If the FEC finds that her campaign and the political action committee were operating in affiliation, it could result in her campaign receiving excessive contributions, former FEC commissioner Brad Smith told TheDCNF.

“If someone gave Ocasio-Cortez a \$2,700 contribution and then gave another contribution to either of the other two PACS that Ocasio-Cortez and/or Chakrabarti were running, her campaign violated federal law by receiving and keeping a contribution above the legal limit,” von Spakovsky explained.

Ocasio-Cortez called the NLPC's complaint a “conspiracy theory (<https://twitter.com/AOC/status/1103835746845241344>)” propagated by conservative groups looking to receive airtime on Fox News. However, she hasn't addressed TheDCNF's reporting surrounding her and Chakrabarti's “legal control over” Justice Democrats starting in December 2017

(<https://web.archive.org/web/20171202052759/https://www.justicedemocrats.com/about>)

The two continue to serve as “governors” of Justice Democrats, according to the PAC’s business filings in Washington D.C.

CNN (<https://www.cnn.com/2019/03/06/politics/alexandria-ocasio-cortez-chief-of-staff-scrutiny/index.html>)

,
ABC News (<https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/rep-alexandria-ocasio-cortezs-aides-consulting-firm-faces/story?id=61505132>)

,
NBC News (<https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/politics-news/fact-check-did-ocasio-cortez-her-team-break-campaign-finance-n980121>)

and

The Washington Post (https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/payments-to-corporation-owned-by-ocasio-cortez-aide-come-under-scrutiny/2019/03/05/ae5045ee-3f61-11e9-9361-301ffb5bd5e6_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.2d5a5407e384)

also didn’t

disclose the facts (<https://dailycaller.com/2019/03/08/snopes-ocasio-cortez-pac/>) surrounding Ocasio-Cortez’s control over Justice Democrats in stories about the freshman Democrat’s mounting campaign finance scandals.

Von Spakovsky said Chakrabarti’s use of two LLCs under his control to fund “campaign infrastructure and fundraising” services for his PACs and 12 political candidates, including Ocasio-Cortez, runs counter to Ocasio-Cortez’s call for more transparency in government.

“Is the New York congresswoman – who claims to be an honest and upstanding crusader for good government and transparency – really a hypocrite who improperly hid her own campaign spending in a complex maze of fundraising groups?” von Spakovsky asked.

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Von Spakovsky said he expects the four active FEC commissioners, two Republicans, one Democrat and one independent, will vote in favor of opening an investigation into Ocasio-Cortez "given all the evidence of possible violations of the law that has already been made public."

"We don't know what further investigation will find," he said. "But it is clear an investigation is needed to determine if Ocasio-Cortez and Chakrabarti broke the law."

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