



The Supreme Court on Thursday appeared skeptical of a ruling by a federal appeals court that rejected former President Donald Trump's claim that he has absolute immunity from criminal charges based on his official acts as president. During more than two-and-a-half hours of oral argument, some of the court's conservative justices expressed concern about the prospect that, if former presidents do not have immunity, federal criminal laws could be used to target political opponents.

However, the justices left open the prospect that Trump's trial in Washington, D.C., could still go forward because the charges against him rest on his private, rather than his official, conduct. However, the timing of the court's eventual opinion and the resulting trial remains unclear, leaving open the possibility that the court's decision could push Trump's trial past the November election.

Trump was indicted in August 2023 on four counts, arising from Special Counsel Jack Smith's investigation into the Jan. 6, 2021, attacks on the U.S. Capitol, alleging that he conspired to overturn the results of the 2020 election. Trump asked U.S. District Judge Tanya Chutkan to throw out the charges against him, arguing that he could not be held criminally liable for his official acts even after leaving office.

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