# Steve Bannon On Fraud Cases

**Highlights:**

* Steve Bannon was twice indicted for fraud over a scheme to build a border wall that he then used for personal expenses.
  + Bannon was indicted for allegedly defrauding donors claiming he would build the Trump wall on the southern U.S. border.
    - On his last day in office, Trump pardoned Bannon.
  + New York Charged Bannon with fraud and money laundering in connection to the “We Build A Wall” campaign.

## Bannon Was Twice Indicted For Fraud Over A Scheme To Build A Border Wall That He Then Used For Personal Expenses

### Bannon Was Indicted For Allegedly Defrauding Donors Claiming He Would Build The Trump Wall On The Southern U.S. Border

**August 2020: Bannon Was Charged With Conspiracy To Commit Money Laundering And Conspiracy To Commit Wire Fraud In Connection To The “We Build The Wall” Crowdfunding Campaign.** According to the Department of Justice, “Audrey Strauss, the Acting United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and Philip R. Bartlett, Inspector-in-Charge of the New York Field Office of the United States Postal Inspection Service (‘USPIS’), announced the unsealing of an indictment charging BRIAN KOLFAGE, STEPHEN BANNON, ANDREW BADOLATO, and TIMOTHY SHEA for their roles in defrauding hundreds of thousands of donors in connection with an online crowdfunding campaign known as ‘We Build the Wall’ that raised more than $25 million. The defendants were arrested this morning. […] KOLFAGE, 38, of Miramar Beach, Florida, BANNON, 66, of Washington, D.C., BADOLATO, 56, of Sarasota, Florida, and SHEA, 49, of Castle Rock, Colorado, are each charged with one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud and one count of conspiracy to commit money laundering, each of which carries a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison.” [Department of Justice, [8/20/20](https://www.justice.gov/usao-sdny/pr/leaders-we-build-wall-online-fundraising-campaign-charged-defrauding-hundreds-thousands)]

**Bannon Allegedly Promised Donors That 100% Of The Funds Raised To Go Towards Building A Border Wall With Mexico, But Instead Used The Money For Personal Expenses.** According to CNN, “The four men were indicted for allegedly using hundreds of thousands of dollars donated to an online crowdfunding campaign called We Build the Wall for personal expenses, among other things. Bannon and another defendant, Brian Kolfage, promised donors that the campaign, which ultimately raised more than $25 million, was ‘a volunteer organization’ and that ‘100% of the funds raised…will be used in the execution of our mission and purpose,’ according to the indictment unsealed Thursday. But instead, according to prosecutors, Bannon, through a non-profit under his control, used more than $1 million from We Build the Wall to ‘secretly’ pay Kolfage and cover hundreds of thousands of dollars in Bannon’s personal expenses.” [CNN, [8/20/20](https://www.cnn.com/2020/08/20/politics/bannon-build-the-wall-indictment/index.html)]

#### On His Last Day As President, Trump Pardoned Bannon

**January 20, 2021: Trump Pardoned Bannon.** According to the Wall Street Journal, “President Trump issued a flurry of pardons and commutations on his final day in office, rewarding a handful of longtime allies and well-connected celebrities, including his former chief strategist, Steve Bannon, and onetime fundraiser Elliott Broidy.” [Wall Street Journal, [1/20/21](https://www.wsj.com/articles/trump-pardons-former-chief-strategist-steve-bannon-11611120199)]

### New York Charged Bannon With Fraud And Money Laundering In Connection To The “We Build The Wall” Campaign

**September 2022: Bannon Was Indicted In New York State Court On Money Laundering, Conspiracy, And Fraud Charges Related To His Build The Wall Scheme.** According to CNN, “Former Donald Trump aide Steve Bannon pleaded not guilty Thursday in a New York court to state charges of money laundering, conspiracy and fraud related to an alleged online scheme to raise money for the construction of a wall along the southern US border, according to his attorney. The state charges are based on the same conduct Bannon was charged with by federal prosecutors in 2020 that alleged he and three others had defrauded donors in the border wall effort, which raised more than $15 million. He was later pardoned by Trump. Presidential pardons do not apply to state investigations, however.” [CNN, [9/8/22](https://www.cnn.com/2022/09/08/politics/steve-bannon-not-guilty-plea-surrender-border-wall-charges/index.html)]

**July 2024: Bannon Was Scheduled To Go On Trial**. According to Newsweek, “The trial for Donald Trump ally Steve Bannon over allegations he defrauded people who donated to a campaign to build a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border has been postponed by several months. Bannon, a former White House senior adviser, has pleaded not guilty to several charges of money laundering, conspiracy and scheming to defraud in connection with $15 million in donations a ‘We Build the Wall’ fundraising campaign received. The trial at the New York Supreme Criminal Court was originally set to begin on May 27 by Judge Juan Merchan. However, the judge, who is also presiding over Trump's hush-money trial, which is expected to last several more weeks, has delayed the start of Bannon's proceedings until September, senior Courthouse News reporter Josh Russell first reported.” [Newsweek, [5/1/24](https://www.newsweek.com/steve-bannon-faces-music-we-build-wall-fraud-case-1896079)]