

# ***NEWS RELEASE***



***OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA  
San Diego, California***

***United States Attorney  
Laura E. Duffy***

**For Further Information, Contact:**

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**Assistant U.S. Attorneys Phillip L.B. Halpern (619) 546-6964 and  
Emily J. Keifer (619) 546-7319**

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*For Immediate Release*

## **CAMPAIGN AIDE ADMITS TO LAUNCHING FALSE FEDERAL INVESTIGATION AIMED AT DISCREDITING CONGRESSIONAL CANDIDATE**

***Carl DeMaio's former campaign policy director pleads guilty to obstructing justice  
and lying to the Federal Bureau of Investigation***

**NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY – June 12, 2015**

SAN DIEGO – Former Carl DeMaio campaign staffer Todd Bosnich pleaded guilty to obstruction of justice in federal court today, admitting that he instigated and impeded an FBI investigation by sending a threatening email to himself and falsely claiming that it was likely from DeMaio.

Bosnich, who served as policy director for the unsuccessful congressional campaign, made the admissions before U.S. Magistrate Judge Jan Adler. Bosnich was allowed to remain free on a \$10,000 bond and was ordered to appear for sentencing on August 31, 2015, at 9 a.m. before U.S. District Judge Larry A. Burns.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Phil Halpern told the court during today's hearing that Bosnich's offense "had the potential to effect a national election." He added: "Mr. Bosnich, for whatever reason, had a great deal of hostility and personal animus towards Mr. DeMaio. As a result of his feeling aggrieved, Bosnich wanted to get back at Mr. DeMaio."

According to his plea agreement, after he was terminated from his job in May of 2014, a disgruntled Bosnich made sexual harassment accusations against DeMaio. Among other things, he claimed that DeMaio offered him \$50,000 in hush money to keep quiet about the harassment.

Bosnich also told a radio reporter during an interview on June 2, 2014 that he had received threatening emails from an anonymous source that he was "positive" were from DeMaio or someone closely associated with DeMaio.

According to his plea agreement, Bosnich admitted that three days later, on June 5, 2014, Bosnich set up a dummy yahoo email account, [elimanagment@yahoo.com](mailto:elimanagment@yahoo.com), from his North County residence using bogus personal information including a false date of birth and gender. According to his admissions, he then sent a "particularly ugly and threatening message" to his own personal email account. The email suggested that the "anonymous" author of the email would ensure that Bosnich never again worked in politics if he didn't stop making accusations against DeMaio.

During multiple interviews with the FBI, Bosnich – supposedly the victim of threatening emails - continued to claim that he did not know who sent the emails, but he believed DeMaio was behind the anonymous threats. Based on these false claims, a grand jury issued subpoenas attempting to identify the source of the emails. All the while, it was Bosnich himself who had sent the emails

"The integrity of the American electoral process is the very bedrock of our democracy," said U.S. Attorney Laura E. Duffy. "These actions were far from a harmless prank and cannot be tolerated."

FBI Special Agent in Charge Eric S. Birnbaum commented, "Mr. Bosnich engaged in a pattern of lies and deceitful acts in an effort to obstruct FBI agents from getting to the truth in this case. Even when given opportunities to recant his statements he continued to knowingly provide false information portraying himself as a victim in this matter and giving the appearance that a candidate running for office was behind the threatening emails. Today's conviction sends a clear message that the FBI will aggressively investigate and pursue prosecution of those who attempt to obstruct federal investigations and illegally undermine our electoral process."

The background of Bosnich's obstruction was detailed in Court documents, which recalled how DeMaio announced his intention to run for California's 52nd Congressional District in May 2013 (the year before the actual election). In October 2013, Bosnich was hired by DeMaio's campaign to serve as its Policy Director.

In May 2014, Bosnich was terminated by DeMaio's campaign. The reason for his termination, as well as the events that occurred immediately before and after his termination, are a matter of dispute. Bosnich claimed that DeMaio made a series of unwanted sexual advances towards him in the Spring of 2014, and that when he complained to DeMaio's campaign manager, he was first marginalized and later offered a \$50,000 "payment" in exchange for signing a "non-disclosure" agreement.

As revealed in the pleadings, the DeMaio campaign maintained that Bosnich was terminated not because of a sexual harassment claim, but because of poor work performance. Specifically, the campaign asserted that Bosnich was first terminated as a paid employee because he issued a report to the media that was both inaccurate and plagiarized. The campaign then alleged that Bosnich (on May 24, 2014) was barred from working in any capacity because he "misappropriated" several internal emails. Finally, the Campaign asserted that Bosnich vandalized its campaign headquarters (on May 28, 2014) after he had been fired for cause.

Sometime between the late evening of May 27, 2014, and the early morning of May 28, 2014, an intruder at DeMaio's campaign headquarters cut telephone cords, broke laptop computers, damaged office equipment, and stole several items from the office. Among the items stolen was a notebook containing sensitive campaign information, as well as the office's cable modem and router.

On May 29, 2014, Bosnich wrote several emails to the Chief-of-Staff for DeMaio's opponent, Scott Peters. Bosnich initiated contact by sending several internal DeMaio campaign emails that he received during his time serving as the Campaign's Policy Director. He also reiterated his claim that DeMaio had sexually harassed him and threatened to destroy him if he did not stay quiet about the harassment.

On May 31, 2014, the Peters' Campaign chief of staff delivered the emails received from Bosnich to the San Diego Police Department ("SDPD"). She told the SDPD that the emails arrived unexpectedly and she decided to give them to the police because: (1) they included allegations regarding possible threats and sexual harassment; and (2) she thought there might be some connection between Bosnich's emails and the recent burglary of the DeMaio campaign office.

Later that same day, SDPD detectives interviewed Bosnich, who denied any involvement in the burglary. To the contrary, Bosnich told the detectives: (1) he had been harassed by DeMaio on a number of occasions; (2) that he complained to DeMaio's campaign manager about the harassment; and (3) the campaign manager offered Bosnich a job with the San Diego Republican Party if he would keep silent. In addition, Bosnich stated that he was informed that his career would be destroyed if he spoke to anyone about DeMaio's harassment.

On June 2, 2014, Bosnich recorded an interview with a local radio personality. During the interview, he repeated the allegations he had previously told the detectives. He also stated for the first time that he had received threatening emails. Although these emails were allegedly anonymous, Bosnich stated that he was "positive" that DeMaio (or someone closely associated with DeMaio) was behind the threats.

Subsequently, Bosnich repeated his allegations (including the allegedly anonymous threats) to an increasingly wide array of news media outlets.

On June 5, 2014, Bosnich set up the “dummy” Yahoo email account. After doing so, he used it (for the first and only time) to send a particularly ugly and threatening message to his own personal email account. The email referenced Bosnich’s disclosures to Peters’ chief of staff and suggested that the “anonymous” author of the email would ensure that Bosnich never again worked in politics if he didn’t stop making accusations against DeMaio.

Bosnich admitted in federal court that his main purpose in sending the threatening email to himself was to bolster his claims that DeMaio was threatening him to remain silent about the alleged sexual harassment. In this fashion, Bosnich’s claims about DeMaio’s sexual harassment appeared not only to be legitimate, but to take on a new and, perhaps, more sinister context.

The SDPD was sufficiently concerned about the serious nature of the allegations that they notified the FBI.

On June 16, 2014, FBI agents and Halpern interviewed Bosnich in the presence of attorneys that he retained to prepare the filing of a sexual harassment suit against DeMaio. At the meeting, Bosnich reiterated his prior sexual harassment allegations against DeMaio. In an attempt to influence the investigation of DeMaio, Bosnich also falsely claimed that an anonymous source sent him the threatening email from the “elimanagment” account. Bosnich also speculated that the author of the emails was DeMaio or someone associated with his campaign.

During the late summer and early fall, the United States acted upon the false information provided by Bosnich in following up all available leads related to the threatening email. Rather than recant his false statements at an October 17, 2014 meeting with the FBI Agents and Assistant U.S. Attorneys, Bosnich continued to conceal the fact that he was the author of the threatening email. He also continued to suggest that the email might have been sent by DeMaio or one of his close associates.

**DEFENDANT:**

**Case Number 15cr1544-LAB**

Todd Bosnich

Age: 29

Del Mar, CA

**SUMMARY OF CHARGES**

Obstruction of Justice – Title 18, U.S.C., Section 1512  
Maximum penalty: 5 years’ imprisonment and \$250,000 fine

**AGENCY**

Federal Bureau of Investigation