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POLITICS

Hunter Biden's Ex-Business Partner Alleges Father Knew About Venture

Former vice president says he had no involvement; corporate records reviewed by The Wall Street Journal show no role for Joe Biden

By [Andrew Duehren](#) [Follow](#) and [James T. Areddy](#) [Follow](#)

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Anthony Bobulinski, a former business partner of Hunter Biden, in Nashville, Tenn., on Thursday.
PHOTO: MANDEL NGAN/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE/GETTY IMAGES

An ex-business partner of Hunter Biden, in a news conference organized by the Trump campaign, alleged that former Vice President Joe Biden was part of discussions around his son's efforts to form an investment venture with a Chinese oil company.

The Biden campaign denied Joe Biden had any involvement in the venture or stood to gain by it.

In a statement to reporters Thursday, Anthony Bobulinski said that in 2017 Hunter Biden consulted his father about a planned venture with Chinese oil company CEFC China Energy Co. to invest in the U.S. and elsewhere. Mr. Bobulinski was also a partner.

The venture—set up in 2017 after Mr. Biden left the vice presidency and before his presidential campaign—never received proposed funds from the Chinese company or completed any deals, according to people familiar with the matter.

company or completed any deals, according to people familiar with the matter. Corporate records reviewed by The Wall Street Journal show no role for Joe Biden.

“Joe Biden has never even considered being involved in business with his family, nor in any overseas business whatsoever. He has never held stock in any such business arrangements nor has any family member or any other person ever held stock for him,” said Biden campaign spokesman Andrew Bates in a statement.

Mr. Bobulinski said that he was rankled by Joe Biden’s public statements that he never discussed the international business activities of Hunter and other family members. He also cited nearly \$5 million in payments that a Senate Republican report last month said CEFC made to Hunter Biden’s law firm as another reason to come forward.

Mr. Bobulinski said he took part in a meeting with Hunter, Joe Biden and Joe Biden’s brother James Biden in Los Angeles in 2017 when they discussed “the Biden family business plans with the Chinese, of which [Joe Biden] was plainly familiar at least at a high level.”

A Biden campaign spokesman didn’t immediately respond to a question about the alleged meeting with Mr. Bobulinski. James Biden and an attorney for Hunter Biden didn’t respond to requests for comment.

Mr. Bobulinski, who was a guest of Mr. Trump’s at Thursday’s debate in Nashville, didn’t take any questions after his statement or provide further details on any remarks made by the former vice president. He displayed three phones which he said contained information that he would hand over to the FBI. The Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs committee and the Senate Finance committee have received material from Mr. Bobulinski and are holding an informal interview with him on Friday.

The venture with CEFC, known as SinoHawk Holdings, was half held by Mr. Bobulinski, who served as chief executive, and four other partners—Hunter and James Biden; Rob Walker, a former Clinton administration official; and James Gilliar, a British national—according to the corporate documents reviewed by the Journal.

Text messages and emails related to the venture that were provided to the Journal by Mr. Bobulinski, mainly from the spring and summer of 2017, don't show either Hunter Biden or James Biden discussing a role for Joe Biden in the venture.

Mr. Gilliar told the Journal: "I would like to clear up any speculation that former Vice President Biden was involved with the 2017 discussions about our potential business structure. I am unaware of any involvement at anytime of the former Vice President. The activity in question never delivered any project revenue."

In the correspondence provided by Mr. Bobulinski, an email he received from Mr. Gilliar in May 2017 proposed a possible equity arrangement for the five partners. The email references "10 held by H for the big guy?" Mr. Bobulinski said the "H" referred to Hunter Biden and the "big guy" was Joe Biden. Mr. Gilliar didn't respond to a request for comment, nor did the other partner in the venture, Mr. Walker.

SinoHawk was created to find investments in the U.S. and elsewhere for CEFC, relying in part on James and Hunter Biden, as well as their partners, to make introductions to politicians and influential figures, according to company strategy documents.

Mr. Bobulinski, 48, who said he served four years in the Navy, leaving with the rank of lieutenant, said through his business ventures he met Mr. Gilliar, who brought him into the proposed venture.

CEFC, whose founder and chairman had a background in military intelligence, was in the midst of a rapid, well-funded global expansion that often made investments that dovetailed with the priorities of China's president, Xi Jinping, and his global program to build infrastructure. Its founder, Ye Jianming, was put under investigation in China in 2018 and hasn't been seen in public since. CEFC has gone into receivership and been put under control of the Shanghai government.

—*Andrew Restuccia contributed to this article.*

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