

Townhall

TIPSHEET

Actually, Jared Kushner and Hunter Biden Are Nothing Alike. Here Are the Facts.



Rebecca Downs
March 19, 2024 5:30 PM

Hunter Biden's shady business dealings are no doubt expected to come up during Wednesday's hearing before the House Oversight Committee investigating "Influence Peddling: Examining Joe Biden's Abuse of Public Office." But Hunter, as well as House Democrats, have sought to divert attention to Jared Kushner, the son-in-law of former and potentially future President Donald Trump, as Team Biden looks to move the spotlight away from the first son.

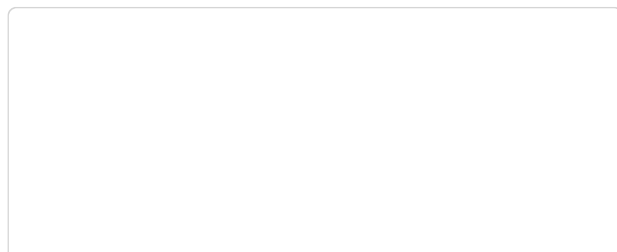
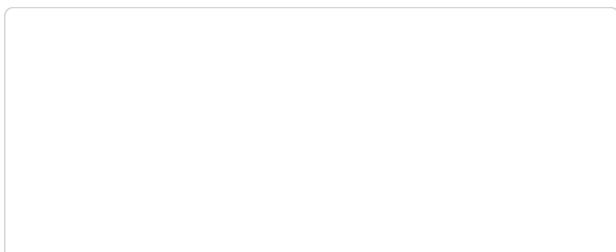
Hunter was supposed to be at the hearing, but his attorney Abbe Lowell [indicated to](#) House Oversight Committee Chairman James Comer (R-KY) via a letter last week that the president's son would be unable to attend, despite Hunter having previously asked for a public hearing.

While some would look to draw connections to their businesses, it's worth remembering that Kushner, notably, has not been credibly accused of crimes or ethics rules violations. He is also not under investigation and has voluntarily given over 30 hours of sworn testimony before Congress and the Department of Justice (DOJ).

In investigating the president, House Republicans have repeatedly raised concerns about Hunter business dealings while his father served as vice president, with Joe Biden [being seen as](#) "the [brand](#)." There have also been concerns about [Hunter's role on the](#) board [for Burisma](#) despite [a lack of experience](#). Then, there's the sordid details from Hunter's laptop from hell, which [took years for](#) the DOJ to finally confirm the existence of, after Biden and his allies claimed it was "Russian disinformation."

While Democrats also look to use the familial connection to Trump against Kushner, it's worth pointing to how the current president has denied the existence of his granddaughter, Navy Joan Roberts. While he and First Lady Jill Biden briefly acknowledged her in a statement submitted to People magazine [last July](#), in a Friday night news dump, the president is back to forgetting about Hunter's young daughter, [as we covered in his remarks from Monday night](#).

Recommended





Three Things in the March Jobs Report Biden Won't Talk About

Spencer Brown



DEVELOPING: Northeast Shaken by Strongest Earthquake Since 1884

Spencer Brown

So, what has Kushner, in contrast, been up to?

During the Trump administration, Kushner served as a senior advisor to the president and was influential on Middle East policies. He also played a key role in the Abraham Accords, which served to normalize relations between Israel and several Arab nations. Nearly six months after he left government, Kushner founded Affinity Partners, an investment firm that focuses on American and Israeli companies.

Kushner was also, notably, a successful investor *before* he started working in government. The New York Times [reported](#) that his net worth was growing by \$50 million per year before he left his career in real estate and technology to serve in the administration. Kushner was thus able to volunteer his time for the government for four years.

Members like Rep. Robert Garcia (D-CA) have tried to make much about Affinity's involvement with Saudi Arabia, and Garcia is almost certainly going to bring it up during Wednesday's hearing.

The congressman [has been posting about](#) a \$2 billion investment from Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund (PIF), as well as insisting [during his media appearances](#) that Republicans ought to investigate Kushner, claiming multiple times that what the former president's son-in-law did amounted to "corruption."

But again, this hearing is not about Kushner. It's specifically about President Joe Biden and his family's activities. Thus concerns about Burisma and Vice President Biden being the "brand" likely will, and should come up, and there will actually be a place for such talking points at the hearing.

Further, [reporting from The Wall Street Journal](#) addressed concerns about Kushner and noted that:

“Kushner dismissed such criticism as unfounded. Lawmakers in Washington looking into his mix of political and business affairs have so far produced nothing to suggest that Kushner engaged in any illegal acts.

“Partisan politics aside, no one has ever pointed to a specific legal or ethical guideline that Jared or Affinity has violated,” said Chad Mizelle, the chief legal officer at Affinity.

Over its first two years, Affinity looked at more than 1,000 companies and signed deals with six. Kushner agreed to invest \$700 million—about 20% of the fund.

Affinity invested \$150 million in Dubizzle, a classified-ads site in the United Arab Emirates, and \$200 million in Mosaic, an Oakland, Calif.-based firm that makes loans to residential solar projects. Last month, Affinity added a seventh deal by investing another \$110 million in EGYM, a Munich-based fitness technology company.

As part of the deal, Saudi Arabia agreed to a special carve-out that allowed Affinity to invest the kingdom’s funds in Israel, even though the two nations have no official diplomatic relations. Qatar, which also has no official relations with Israel, also gave Affinity similar permission, Kushner said.

...

Kushner also tried to broker a similar deal between Israel and Saudi Arabia, but that proved to be too difficult to navigate before Trump left office in 2021.

Members of the fund’s advisory board questioned the wisdom of working with Kushner, according to Saudi officials. But [Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman] dismissed their concerns and went ahead with the plans anyway, they said, in part because he felt Kushner’s work on the Abraham Accords demonstrated considerable business acumen.

”

Last month, Kushner [also addressed](#) questions about the \$2 billion in an interview with Axios. As a write-up mentioned:

“Driving the news: Kushner [secured \\$2 billion](#) in investments from the Saudi Public Investment Fund (PIF) within a year of leaving the White House and starting out in private equity, leading to accusations that he leveraged his close ties with MBS as a U.S. official into a private sector payday.

- *Kushner has not been accused of violating any laws, and rejects the idea he has crossed any ethical lines.*
- *"PIF is one of the most prestigious investors in the world. Every fund manager is trying to work with them," Kushner told Primack.*
- *"I think what's happening in Saudi Arabia is one of the most exciting transformations that we're seeing now in the world."*

”

Even more recently, Kushner shared "early design images for development projects" for Albania and Serbia in posts from his X account. "We have not finalized these deals, so they might not happen, but we have been working hard and are pretty close," he [told The New York Times](#), also tagging their account in his post.

The New York Times reported on Monday that "[Serbian Leader Says Kushner Deal Is Not an Effort to Influence Trump.](#)"

“ Excited to share some early design images for development projects we have been creating for the Albanian coast and downtown Belgrade. [@nytimes @business pic.twitter.com/o0HIYLkZWV](#)
— Jared Kushner (@jaredkushner) [March 15, 2024](#) ”

In addition to his role in the Abraham Accords and other peace deals in the Middle East, Kushner was also involved in the First Step Act dealing with criminal justice reform, as a co-leader in negotiations for the United States–Mexico–Canada Agreement (USMCA) trade deal to revamp NAFTA, and was also on the board of Operation Warp Speed as it raced to develop COVID vaccines in the final months of Trump's first term.

As part [of divesting](#) to comply with all of the rules of the Office of Government Ethics (OGE) when he joined the Trump administration, Kushner disposed of assets at below-market rates that the OGE suggested might pose a conflict. During his years of service in the government, Kushner filled out disclosure forms prepared by lawyers Jamie Gorelick and Lowell and certified by the OGE.

Reporting [from POLITICO](#) in January 2017, not long before Trump was inaugurated, includes mention of and statements from Gorelick:

“ But in his virtually unprecedented role as a family member-turned-senior White House staffer, Kushner also plans to resign from all other board positions, trusteeships and partnerships he holds, his attorney, Jamie Gorelick of WilmerHale, said. She did not outline what those positions were.

“Mr. Kushner is committed to complying with federal ethics laws and we have been consulting with the Office of Government Ethics regarding the steps he would take,” Gorelick said, noting that he plans to file a 278 financial disclosure form, required by Cabinet nominees, and comply with the same levels of transparency voters would expect of regular senior government officials.

...

“We expect when Jared walks into his office after the inauguration,” said Gorelick, “he will do so consistent with the law and all ethical requirements.” ”

For all of the hard feelings between the Biden and Trump administrations, and present concerns plaguing the Biden administration to do with the Israel-Hamas conflict, the Biden administration *did* go along with the Abraham Accords. "[Biden administration planning new post aimed at expanding Abraham Accords](#)," read a headline from The Times of Israel last June. In October 2021, Axios reported that "[Biden administration leans into Abraham Accords](#)."