

Minnesota AG who took \$10K from convicted scammers dismisses fraud scandal as 'political theater'

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Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison dismissed **the state's \$250 million fraud scandal** as nothing more than “political theater” — despite taking \$10K in donations from the convicted fraudsters.

Ellison said he was tired of Republicans hounding his office over his efforts to prosecute the case, claiming that it was being blown out of proportion for political means.

“We’re serious about convicting people for stealing money that is going **4** supposed to go to poor people. It’s a serious issue,” **he told CNN**.

Minnesota AG Keith Ellison called the state's fraud scandal “political theater” during an interview on CNN.
CNN

“But we’re not getting serious partnership — what we’re getting is political theater like you just saw with the homeland security director,” he added, referencing Department of Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem’s arrival in Minnesota on Wednesday.

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Ellison ultimately likened the intense, national scrutiny facing Minnesota to the criticism levied against former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton [after the 2012 Benghazi attacks](#).

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"I'll just remind you of Benghazi. You all would remember listening to Senate and House Republicans go on about how big the Benghazi scandal — it was so terrible, and they grilled at the time Secretary Clinton over this issue," he said to CNN analyst Laura Coates.

"And then when a reporter like yourself said, 'What came out of that? You spent a lot of money, what came out of it?' And their answer was, we reduced Hillary Clinton's popularity in public opinion polls. That was their answer," he added. "But I'm telling you, this is similar to that."

Minnesota state Reps. Kristin Robbins, Walter Hudson, Marion O'Neill Rarick and former DOJ Special Counsel

Brendan Bailou (let to right) testifying at a House Oversight Committee hearing on alleged fraud in Minnesota on Jan. 7, 2026.

Photo by Brendan SMIALOWSKI / AFP via Getty Images

Ellison has found himself under pressure to properly prosecute the case after it was revealed that he had raked in \$10,000 in campaign donations from individuals who would go on to be convicted of taking part in the scam that stole \$250 million from a federal program meant to feed hungry children during the pandemic.

Here's the latest on the Minnesota fraud scheme:

- DOJ surging prosecutors to Minnesota to bring fraudsters to justice – Bondi vows 'severe consequences' for those convicted
- Somali ambassador to UN is linked to shady health care company in Medicaid fraud scandal: HHS official
- Tim Walz abruptly drops out of Minnesota governor's race in wake of billion-dollar fraud scandal
- Somali fraudsters got luxury digs, beachside resort, rented Rolls Royce and Lamborghini with stolen funds

Ellison was recorded meeting with Salim Said, who was convicted of 21 counts related to the case, along with alleged co-conspirator Ikram Mohamed, while on the campaign trail, according to The Center for the American Experiment conservative group.

Gandi Mohamed, Mohamed's brother and a defendant in the case as well, made a \$2,500 donation — the maximum individual contribution allowed — days after Ellison met with the alleged fraudsters.

Ellison and other Minnesota Democrats received campaign donations from individuals convicted of fraud through the nonprofit Feeding Our Families.

Star Tribune via Getty Images

A photo of a box of cash marked "\$270,000 dollars" shown in the Feeding

Our
Families
court
case.

Obtained
by the NY
Post

Three more \$2,500 donations linked to Feeding Our Future were accepted by Ellison's campaign on the same day Gandhi made his contribution.

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Brian Evans, a spokesperson for Ellison, previously told The Post that the attorney general "had no way of knowing these people were connected to the FBI's investigation" when he accepted their campaign contributions.

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