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## Stormy Daniels files new lawsuit alleging her 'puppet' ex-attorney 'colluded' with President Trump and Michael Cohen

## By CHRIS SOMMERFELDT

It's another case of alleged collusion.

Stormy Daniels filed a fresh lawsuit Wednesday charging her former attorney "colluded" with President Trump and Michael Cohen while still representing her.

The suit, filed in Los Angeles Superior Court and obtained by the Daily News, alleges Beverly Hills attorney Keith Davidson "hatched a plan" with Cohen in January to get Daniels to go on Fox News and falsely deny ever having sex with Trump. In one text message cited in the suit, Cohen referred to Davidson as his "pal."

Trump was aware of the cooperation between Cohen and Davidson, according to the lawsuit, while Daniels was kept completely in the dark.

The suit blasted Davidson as a "puppet" who repeatedly broke client-attorney privilege by informing Cohen ahead of time that Daniels, whose real name is Stephanie Clifford, was going to switch legal counsel and break a nondisclosure agreement that bars her from speaking publicly about allegedly having sex with Trump in 2006.

Earlier Wednesday, Rudy Giuliani, Trump's top attorney in the federal probe into Russian collusion, went on a sexist rant about Daniels, claiming her porn star profession renders her unreliable.

"I respect women, beautiful women and women with value, but a woman who sells her body for sexual exploitation I don't respect," Giuliani told a business conference in Tel Aviv. "Someone who sells his or her body for money has no good name."

Daniels' current attorney, Michael Avenatti, ripped Giuliani as a "misogynist" in response, blasting his remarks as "disgusting and a disgrace."

"His client Mr. Trump didn't seem to have any 'moral' issues with (Daniels) and others back in 2006 and beyond," Avenatti tweeted.

In response to Wednesday's lawsuit, Davidson backhandedly thanked Avenatti for supposedly waiving his attorney-client privilege with Daniels.

"Davidson is very happy that he has filed this lawsuit because he strongly believes that the filing constitutes a full and complete waiver of the attorney-client privilege," said Dave Wedge, a spokesman for Davidson.

Davidson's attorney, Michael Padula, told The News it's nothing out of the ordinary for two lawyers on opposite sides of a case to "be cordial," although legal experts disputed that assessment.

Davidson represented Daniels when she accepted \$130,000 from Cohen for signing the nondisclosure contract shortly before Trump's election. The 39-year-old adult actress is battling the hush agreement in a separate lawsuit, saying it should be voided because Trump never signed it.

Avenatti said a number of text message exchanges between Cohen and Davidson included in the lawsuit show that Trump was fully aware of their collusion to silence Daniels.

"There was a significant coverup here as part of an attempt to deceive the American people," Avenatti told The News in a statement.

The text conversations date back to Jan. 17, and while they never mention Daniels by name, many coincide with major news developments.

"I have her tentatively scheduled for Hannity tonight," Cohen texted Davidson the day before Daniels' explosive interview with In Touch magazine was published.

Davidson responded that she couldn't go on the prime-time Fox News host's show, and asked if the appearance could be postponed by a day. Cohen said the delay was "no good."

"By doing tomorrow you just create another news cycle instead of putting an end to this one," Cohen texted.

But later that evening, Cohen backtracked, texting, "the wise men all believe the story is dying and don't think it's smart for her to do any interviews."

Davidson texted back, "100%."

The "wise men" comment referred to a number of people, including Trump himself, according to the lawsuit, although Daniels didn't include documentation to back that up.

Trump denied any knowledge of Cohen's hush payment to Daniels for months before his lawyer finally acknowledged on May 2 that Trump had repaid Cohen the cash. Trump continues to deny ever having sex with Daniels.

After Daniels first signaled she was going to go public with her tryst claims in February, Davidson gave Cohen a heads up, according to the lawsuit.

Then, on March 2, just four days before Daniels filed her initial lawsuit against Trump, Davidson began texting Cohen again, likely to warn him of the upcoming legal challenge, according to Wednesday's filing.

Legal experts agreed with the lawsuit's argument that Davidson broke his client's trust by leaking protected information to Cohen, and that Cohen aided Davidson in that breach.

"Those are both clear cut violations of Davidson's Duty of Loyalty and Duty of Confidentiality," former federal Illinois prosecutor Renato Mariotti tweeted. "By accepting that information, Cohen knew he was obtaining privileged information."

Davidson notably also represented onetime Playboy model Karen McDougal when she signed a \$1.6 million nondisclosure agreement brokered by Cohen barring her from speaking publicly about allegedly having a year-long affair with Trump in 2006. McDougal has also filed a lawsuit against Davidson and Cohen accusing them of "colluding" to bury her claims.