

Vukmir campaign: Baldwin paid Hillary Clinton's lawyer to 'fix' Tomah crisis

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Brookfield, Wis. — Under fire for how she handled the Tomah VA crisis, Senator Tammy Baldwin spent nearly \$90,000 from her political campaign to have Hillary Clinton's top lawyer, Marc Elias, cover up her failure.

Baldwin's campaign expense came after she decided to fire her deputy state director, who worked for over a decade for Senator Kohl, and claimed there was a cover-up in Baldwin's office over the Tomah VA.

"After letting our veterans down at Tomah, Senator Baldwin's campaign spent \$90,000 hiring Hillary Clinton's lawyer to fix the crisis at her Senate office," said Leah Vukmir campaign manager Jess Ward. "While her mixing of campaign resources for official government business raises serious questions, Baldwin used Hillary Clinton's lawyer to blame her failure at Tomah on a top aide — all to protect her political career."

BACKGROUND ...

In February 2015, Baldwin hired Hillary Clinton's lawyer, Marc Elias, to help her deal with the Tomah VA scandal. "Sen. Tammy Baldwin has hired a powerful Washington lawyer to represent her as she continues to grapple with the fallout from her office's handling of the Tomah Veterans Affairs crisis. Attorney Marc Elias offered the first public acknowledgment on behalf of Baldwin that she fired top Wisconsin aide Marquette Baylor for her actions after the senator received a critical inspection

report about opiate prescription practices at the Tomah VA Medical Center.” ([Milwaukee-Wisconsin Journal Sentinel](#), 2/19/15)

Baldwin’s campaign paid nearly \$90,000 to Hillary Clinton’s lawyer and political fixer Marc Elias. “U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin’s campaign spent nearly \$140,000 on legal advice from one of the left’s major ‘political fixers’ since 2011, according to federal documents obtained by Wisconsin Watchdog. The brunt of those legal fees – nearly \$90,000 – were paid out in 2015, when the Madison Democrat was embroiled in a scandal involving the scandal-plagued Tomah Veterans Affairs Medical Center. Baldwin’s campaign paid Washington, D.C. attorney Marc Elias \$87,779 in 2015, according to filings with the Federal Election Commission. The campaign cut a check for \$41,704 to the firm on March 27, 2015, during the thick of the scandal, and issued payment of \$38,558 on May 21, 2015, according to campaign expenditures. There were other smaller payments.” ([Watchdog.org](#), 3/17/17)

In her ethics complaint, Marquette Baylor said Marc Elias was hired after to spin the facts and clear Senator Baldwin’s office. “Shortly after I rejected the proposed severance package, Senator Baldwin hired Marc Elias at the Perkins Coie law firm to represent her. On February 18, 2015, Elias issued a statement identifying that I was indeed fired for allegedly mishandling the Tomah VA issue, among other ‘long-term performance’ issues that were never raised or discussed during my employment. Senator Baldwin also paid her lawyer, Elias, to conduct an ‘external review’ and release a report to put their spin on facts they thought would come to light. ... Ultimately, it is telling that Elias and his firm never asked to interview me or submit questions about the circumstances and events surrounding the VA mistreatment issues. Their so-called ‘external’ review was bought and paid for by the Senator’s campaign, and the report they produced is a one-sided, incomplete, and misleading narrative of what occurred.” ([Ethics complaint](#))

Days after initial reports that Baldwin failed to act on the issues at Tomah, she fired her Deputy State Director, Marquette Baylor, “without explanation.” “Under fire for her office’s inaction over alleged overmedication at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Tomah, U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin abruptly ousted one of her top state staffers late last week. Marquette Baylor — deputy state director for Baldwin and chief of her Milwaukee office — was let go on Thursday without explanation. Baylor has been offered a cash payout as part of a severance package if the former aide agrees to keep her lips zipped. ‘It looks like they’re trying to pin the blame on her,’ a source said of Baylor’s dismissal by Baldwin.” ([Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel](#), 1/26/15)

Baldwin offered a top staffer a taxpayer-funded settlement, but it required silence regarding Tomah. “A former top staffer to U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin has rejected a proposed severance deal that would have required her to remain silent regarding what she knew about the problems at the troubled Tomah VA Medical Center. ... ‘The deadline has passed, and Marquette rejected the offer,’ said one source close to Baylor. A second source said the issue is now ‘in the senator’s court.’ ‘Marquette didn’t want to be hogtied by the deal,’ the second source said. ‘She can now move on without any restrictions.’” ([Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel](#), 1/26/15)