

President Biden Pardons His Son Hunter Biden

President Joe Biden announced the pardon on Sunday.

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President Joe Biden (2nd L) walks with son Hunter Biden (R), grandson Beau and daughter-in-law Melissa Cohen Biden after having lunch in Nantucket, Mass., on Nov. 29, 2024. MANDEL NGAN/AFP via Getty Images



By Melanie Sun

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President Joe Biden said on Dec. 1 that he has signed “a full and unconditional pardon” for his son, Hunter Biden.

Hunter Biden was charged with nine counts of federal tax evasion to the sum of \$1.4 million between 2016 and 2019. He **pleaded guilty** to the tax charges in September after a previously negotiated plea deal fell through.

He was facing up to 17 years in prison and \$1.3 million in fines, with sentencing scheduled in California for Dec. 16.

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In a separate case, Hunter Biden was convicted by a jury of illegally purchasing a firearm in 2018 while using drugs, and lying about the drug use at the time of purchase. He illegally possessed the gun for 11



days. He was facing up to 25 years for the three counts, and was scheduled to be sentenced in Delaware on Dec. 4.



The **pardon** identified these two cases as well as any offenses that Hunter Biden “committed or may have committed or taken part in



during the period from Jan. 1, 2014, through Dec. 1, 2024.

With the pardon, Hunter Biden will be forgiven for any federal crimes and their associated legal penalties.

“Today, I signed a pardon for my son Hunter,” President Biden, who leaves office on Jan. 20, 2025, said in a statement from the White House. “From the day I took office, I said I would not interfere with the Justice Department’s decision-making, and I kept my word even as I have watched my son being selectively, and unfairly, prosecuted.”

The decision marks an about-turn for President Biden, who had previously promised not to use his extraordinary presidential powers to benefit his family members.

In June, Biden ruled out a pardon or commutation for his son, telling reporters as his son faced trial in the Delaware gun case that he will “abide by the jury decision.”

“I will do that and I will not pardon him,” the president said.

Hunter Biden said in his memoir and public statements that he was addicted to drugs for years but became sober in 2019.

“As I have stated, addiction is not an excuse, but it is an explanation for some of my failures at issue in this case,” he said at the time of sentencing. “When I was addicted, I wasn’t thinking about my taxes, I was thinking about surviving. But the jury would never have heard that or know that I had paid every penny of my back taxes including penalties.”

Prosecutors stated that bank records from between 2016 and 2019 show that Hunter Biden earned \$7 million from his work with Ukrainian-based Burisma Holdings and other firms. Political opponents of former Vice President Biden alleged potential conflicts of interest, particularly after Tony Bobulinski accused Biden of benefiting from his son’s business dealings in Ukraine while he was vice president.

The House voted against impeaching Biden in September 2023 after the GOP led an inquiry into Bobulinski’s claims.

Biden said on Dec. 1 it is his view that the charges against his son were the result of the actions of his political opponents in Congress in order to attack him and deter Americans from supporting him in the 2020 election.

The president said that the carefully negotiated plea deal for his son’s tax fraud case had ultimately failed due to political pressure from his opponents on the legal process.

“Had the plea deal held, it would have been a fair, reasonable resolution of Hunter’s cases,” he said in the statement announcing the pardon.

“No reasonable person who looks at the facts of Hunter’s cases can reach any other conclusion than Hunter was singled out only because

he is my son—and that is wrong,” Biden said. “Enough is enough.”

Biden added, “I believe in the justice system, but as I have wrestled with this, I also believe raw politics has infected this process and it led to a miscarriage of justice—and once I made this decision this weekend, there was no sense in delaying it further.

“I hope Americans will understand why a father and a president would come to this decision.”

Zachary Stieber and The Associated Press contributed to this report.

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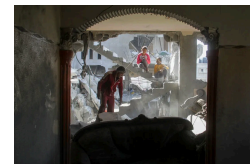
Melanie is a reporter and editor covering world news. She has a background in environmental research.



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