

President-Elect Trump May Finally Be Seeking the Impossible

President-elect Donald Trump may finally be asking for something that even a Republican-controlled Congress can't help him get in his forthcoming administration.

During one of his many Twitter expositions this week, the president-elect explained why a press conference planned for later this week won't now take place. The press conference was suppose to lay out the plans for transferring control of his company to his adult children, but now it seems it will be more than that.

He wrote:

Even though I am not mandated by law to do so, I will be leaving my businesses before January 20th so that I can focus full time on the Presidency [sic]. Two of my children, Don and Eric, plus executives, will manage them. No new deals will be done during my term(s) in office.

I will hold a press conference in the near future to discuss the business, Cabinet picks and all other topics of interest. Busy times!

Ivanka, well-regarded for her own astute business sense, wasn't included in the plan because Trump has other ideas for her. It's been widely reported that Ivanka and her husband, Jared Kushner, are shopping for a new home in Washington, D.C.

We may now know why.

"I would love to be able to have them involved," he told Chris Wallace during last weekend's *Fox News Sunday*. "If you look at Ivanka, you take a look, she's so strong, as you know, to the

women's issue and childcare, and so many things she'd be so good. Nobody can do better than her [sic]. I'd just have to see whether or not we can do that. She'd like to do that.

"I'd love to have Jared helping us on deals with other nations and see if we can do peace in the Middle East and other things. He's very talented. He's a very talented guy. So, we're looking at that from a legal standpoint right now."

5 U.S. Code § 3110 prohibits any public official of the federal government, including the president, from hiring any relative to a position over which he or she may have jurisdiction or control. Democrats have tried to suggest Trump is already violating the statute by placing his children and Kushner in key positions on his transition team, but the law only applies to public officials, and until noon EST on Jan. 20, the president-elect remains a private citizen.

Once he is sworn in, however, the law would seemingly prohibit their taking part in the administration. It was signed into law in 1967 by President Lyndon Johnson, who had been infuriated that his predecessor, John Kennedy, had nominated his brother, Bobby—whom Johnson despised greatly and deemed "singularly unqualified"—as his attorney general.

But there may be a legal loophole. The statute, as written, applies only to "agencies" over which the president has jurisdiction. It may not apply to White House staff positions, depending upon the legal interpretation you want to use.

For instance, first ladies, while not officially members of the administration, have traditionally taken on pet policy projects. Trump's foe in the election, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, was placed in a position to advance her husband's administration's healthcare agenda—without any complaints from Democrats at the time.

The president-elect has not specifically mentioned what roles he would like to see his daughter and son-in-law perform in

his administration, but it's very likely that if there is any way he can work it out, there will be a place for them in the White House. Expect the Democrats to put up a fight—or at the very least complain loudly about it. {eoa}