

Trump Pardons 15, Including 2 Former Republican Congressmen

Former Republican Congressmen Duncan Hunter of California and Chris Collins of New York were among 15 people pardoned by President Donald Trump Tuesday, said a statement from the White House press secretary.

Both Collins' and Hunter's pardons came at the request of many members of the current Congress.

The first member of Congress to endorse Trump for president, Collins was sentenced to two years and two months in federal prison after admitting he helped his son and others dodge \$800,000 in stock market losses over a failed drug trial by a small pharmaceutical company, *CBN News* reported. Collins served nearly seven years in Congress, representing the people of Western New York from 2013 to 2019. He was reelected to this seat three times and is currently serving a 26-month sentence.

In 2019, Hunter pled guilty to one count of misusing campaign funds, an offense, according to the White House release, that could have been handled as a civil case via the Federal Election Commission. He was sentenced to 11 months in prison, a term that was set to begin in January 2021. Hunter represented California's 50th Congressional District from 2013 to 2020. Prior to that, he served as an officer in the U.S. Marine Corps and saw combat in both Afghanistan and Iraq.

Among the other 13 pardoned Tuesday was a 2016 campaign official entangled in the Russia probe and former government contractors convicted in a 2007 massacre in Baghdad.

George Papadopoulos was Trump's 2016 campaign adviser. He was charged with a process-related crime, one count of making false statements in connection with Special Counsel Robert

Mueller's investigation into possible Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election. The White House reported that, at the time Papadopoulos allegedly made false statements, he was not represented by counsel and, after he was arrested, he gave additional information on his prior statements to special counsel.

"Today's pardon helps correct the wrong that Mueller's team inflicted on so many people," the White House statement said.

Also pardoned Tuesday were Alfonso Costa, Alfred Lee Crum, Crystal Munoz, Tynice Nichole Hall, Juith Negron, Steve Stockman, Nicholas Slatten, Paul Slough, Evan Liberty, Dustin Heard, Weldon Angelos, Phillip Lyman, Otis Gordon and Phillip Esformes.

Slatten, Slough, Liberty, and Heard were veterans working in Iraq in 2007 as security contractors responsible for securing the safety of United States personnel. When the convoy attempted to establish a blockade outside the "Green Zone," the situation turned violent, which resulted in the unfortunate deaths and injuries of Iraqi civilians. Initial charges against the men were dismissed, but they were eventually tried and convicted on charges ranging from first degree murder to voluntary manslaughter. On appeal, the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that additional evidence should have been presented at Slatten's trial.

For more information on all who were pardoned, visit . {eo}