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# Efforts to fire Fed governor move ahead

BY ERIC TUCKER AND PAUL WISEMAN

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WASHINGTON>> The Trump administration is moving ahead with its efforts to fire Federal Reserve governor Lisa Cook, two months after the Supreme Court allowed her to retain her job while she fights the president's effort to terminate her over mortgage fraud allegations that she has denied.

The justices, in a 5-4 decision in June, said Cook, who was nominated to the Fed's Board of Governors by President Joe Biden, could remain in her post at least as long as her lawsuit challenging her firing goes on. The Trump administration is appealing a lower-court ruling in Cook's favor.

Supreme Court Chief Justice John Roberts wrote in a footnote in his opinion that nothing forbids President Donald Trump from "trying again" to fire Cook, provided she is given proper notice and a chance to contest it. Trump indicated, after the opinion, that he would do just that, vowing to "take appropriate action immediately."

In a letter this week obtained by The Associated Press, White House aide Dan Scavino told Cook that Trump was "considering removing you from your position" but cited the Supreme Court's requirement of proper notice in giving her until August 26 to challenge it.

The attempt to fire Cook is rooted in a criminal referral made last August by Bill Pulte, the director of the Federal Housing Finance Agency, that accused her of committing mortgage fraud by declaring two different homes — one in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and one in Atlanta — as "primary residence." Homebuyers can get lower mortgage rates or smaller down payments on their primary homes compared to second or vacation homes.

Cook has aggressively defended herself against the allegations, saying the president had attempted to oust her "on a manufactured pretext because I refused to bow to political pressure and continued to set interest rates based only on what would best serve the American people."

Her lawyer, Abbe Lowell, argued in a November letter that Cook has mostly lived in the Ann Arbor property since first purchasing it in 2005. As a result, it was accurate for her to refer to it as her "primary residence" in a June 2021 application to refinance its mortgage, the letter said.A month later, she purchased a condominium in Atlanta and, in a July 2021 document, also referred to it as her "primary residence." Lowell said that it was an "isolated notation" that did not reflect an intent to defraud. An earlier mortgage application to the same lender in May 2021 had referred to the Atlanta condo as a "vacation home," Lowell said. Cook also referred to it as a second home in federal filings during her confirmation process to become a Fed governor.

The latest White House letter largely rehashes the year-old allegations. "These allegations are as baseless now as they were a year ago when President Trump tried to remove Governor Cook and interfere with the independence of the Federal Reserve," Lowell said in a statement.

"No matter what President Trump tries to do next, this much is clear under the facts and Supreme Court precedent — there is no valid cause for removing Governor Cook. As we did before, we will challenge this latest pretext and preserve her position and the historic role of the Fed," he added.