

Today we unseal an Indictment charging Lev Parnas, Igor Fruman and two co-defendants for their alleged participation in schemes to violate the federal campaign finance laws by repeatedly using straw donors and foreign money.

Parnas and Fruman were arrested at around 6pm last night at Dulles Airport with one-way tickets on an international flight.

As alleged in the Indictment, the defendants broke the law to gain political influence while avoiding disclosure of who was actually making the donations and where the money was coming from.

They sought political influence not only to advance their own financial interests but to advance the political interests of at least one foreign official – a Ukrainian government official who sought the dismissal of the US ambassador to Ukraine.

Protecting the integrity of our elections – and protecting our elections from unlawful foreign influence – are core functions of our campaign finance laws. And as this Office has made clear, we will not hesitate to investigate and prosecute those who engage in criminal conduct that draws into question the integrity of our political process. And I want to add that this investigation is continuing.

I want to acknowledge and thank the career prosecutors of my Office handling the investigation and prosecution of this case. To my right, Rebekah Donaleski and Nicolas Roos, and their supervisors, Russell Capone and Edward Diskant, the Chiefs of the Public Corruption Unit.

The charges announced today reflect the hard work not only of this Office but of our law enforcement partners at the Federal Bureau of Investigation. To my left is Bill Sweeney, the Assistant Director in Charge of the New York Field Office of the FBI. I want to thank him and his team for their dedication and professionalism.