Today, in the matter of *Matthew Dunlap vs. Presidential Advisory Commission on Election Integrity,* the United States District Court for the District of Columbia ruled, less in favor of the Secretary of State for the State of Maine, than in favor of the American people’s sovereign right to democratic self-governance. That right demands transparency and accountability, and the Court’s decision affirms that those terms are not negotiable.

My decision to serve on the Presidential Advisory Commission on Election Integrity was not made lightly; while I had concerns about the premise behind the commission (the President’s unsubstantiated allegation of “millions of illegal votes” in the 2016 election), I saw the opportunity as a critical moment to address, once and for all, long-running, unsubstantiated rumors about voter misconduct. I approached the commission without any intention to try to thwart the Commission’s work; I simply wanted to be a full participant, and tell the great story that is the narrative of Maine’s election processes, which I believe are among the best in the nation.

My ability to participate in the work of the commission, inexplicably, was completely shut off. I was walled off from any deliberations about what the commission would examine, who we would talk to, how the work product would be formed—or even when we would be meeting. When I pointedly asked questions along these lines, my inquiries were met with complete silence.

It was a difficult and even daunting decision to bring this matter to court. Even then I had hoped that the initial suit decided today would cause the Commission to re-evaluate their processes to involve me more. Instead, I was told that they would “look forward to vigorously defending” themselves in court.

In the intervening weeks and months, there’s been plenty of recrimination heaped on me. I’ve been called “paranoid” at the least, and “the fresh new face of victim and fragility culture.” And through it all, I just wanted to fulfill the oath of office that the Chair of the Commission, Vice President Mike Pence, ascribed to me nearly a year ago. Even after the District Court granted the preliminary injunction attached to this case on December 22nd, the Administration has continued to act defiantly, giving no indication of any intent to comply with the preliminary injunction, and instead declaring the matter moot after the President dissolved the Commission on January 3rd. Here, the Court has clarified the matter.

The judge’s order stipulates that the documents of the commission must be made available to me not later than July 18th. I’m sure there’s more salacious name calling to come; but that is of little account. The American people deserve to know – indeed, as the Court rules, they have a *right* to know – how their government officials are working to reshape the future of this nation. In this decision, the judge locks the back windows and side doors, turns on the lights, and demands that this work happen not in the shadows, but in the open. I thank the District Court for their very thorough work and am very thankful to American Oversight and the law firm of Patterson Belknap for presenting this case so efficiently on my behalf, and on behalf of the American people.