

ALERT

Senator Menendez Found Guilty of Corruption & Acting as a Foreign Agent

July 17, 2024

Senator Bob Menendez (D-NJ), former Chair of the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, has been found guilty in his federal corruption case for, among other things, bribery, obstruction of justice, and acting as a foreign agent of Egypt. This is the first case in which a U.S. Senator has been convicted of acting as a foreign agent.

In September 2023, Sen. Menendez was indicted by federal prosecutors on corruption charges for allegedly taking bribes to help business partners in New Jersey associated with the Egyptian Government. The Senator, alongside his wife, Nadine Menendez, accepted hundreds of thousands of dollars and gold bars from New Jersey businessmen in exchange for Menendez facilitating weapon sales to Egypt. In October 2023, federal prosecutors filed a superseding indictment alleging new charges that Menendez conspired alongside his wife and two of the New Jersey businessmen to act as agents of a foreign principal to Egypt by providing sensitive U.S. Government information to aid in the advancement of Egyptian interests. The charges describe dinner meetings held in Manhattan between Sen. Menendez, Nadine Menendez, businessman Wael Hana, and unnamed Egyptian Officials during which sensitive information was passed. Federal law prohibits public officials from serving as foreign agents, even as registered under the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA). 18 U.S. Code § 219.

Sen. Menendez, who pleaded not guilty, was found guilty on Tuesday by a 12-member jury on all 16 counts, including charges of bribery, conspiracy to commit honest services fraud, extortion, and conspiracy for a public official to act as a foreign agent. The Senator faces a sentencing hearing on October 29, and could face decades in prison. Despite his calls for resignation, the Senator has yet to step down

Authors

Tessa Capeloto
Partner
202.719.7586
tcapeloto@wiley.law

Practice Areas

Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA)
National Security

from Congress and is running for reelection in November.

Wiley's FARA Handbook provides further information on FARA, as well as the relationship between FARA and the Lobbying Disclosure Act (LDA). Additional information on pending LDA and FARA reforms can also be found in our coverage of proposals in the 118th Congress and 2023 Review of FARA developments. Please contact the FARA attorney listed on this alert for any questions.

Maddie Van Aken, a Legislative and Reporting Coordinator at Wiley Rein LLP, contributed to this alert.