



An environmental lawyer whom Donald Trump wanted to take over the Justice Department in the days before the Jan. 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol repeatedly asserted his Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination during a disbarment hearing on Wednesday.

[Jeffrey Clark](#), a former Justice Department civil lawyer with no criminal law experience, had wanted to investigate a conspiracy theory that the 2020 election was stolen, [including via smart thermostats](#)

. Just hours before the Jan. 6 attack, Trump nearly made Clark the acting attorney general of the United States but backed off when Justice Department leadership threatened to resign en masse.

Federal authorities [searched](#) Clark's home in June 2022, and he now faces criminal charges in Georgia in the state racketeering case against Trump and others. Clark

[surrendered](#) to authorities in August in that case and entered a not-guilty plea. He is also [unindicted co-conspirator no. 4](#)

in the federal election interference case brought by special counsel Jack Smith against Trump.

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