

Fox News Whacked With Another Sexual Harassment Suit

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MANHATTAN (CN) — In yet another [lawsuit](#) accusing Fox News of covering up sexual harassment and retaliating against women, Fox News Radio reporter Jessica Golloher says she was fired just 24 hours after she contacted an independent investigator Fox had hired in the wake of numerous harassment and discrimination complaints against the network.

Golloher's email to lawyer Michele Hirshman said simply: "I'm having some issues at FOX. Is it feasible to give you a call this week? I'd really appreciate it," according to her complaint in New York County Supreme Court.

However, "Ms. Golloher soon learned that Fox, rather than treating complaints of discrimination as worth prompt and confidential consideration, instead used them to paint targets on the backs of employees," the complaint adds.

"Defendants' decision to terminate Ms. Golloher is a transparent act of retaliation and a clear attempt to silence yet another victim of discrimination at Fox. It is clear that Fox remains more concerned about protecting its male employees and shielding them from the consequences of their discriminatory behavior than it is in ensuring that it is complying with the law and ensuring that women can work in a space free from discrimination."

Fox says she was terminated for "budgetary reasons," but Golloher says it was because of this email, along with prior internal complaints she made to radio news director Hank Weinbloom and Fox News Radio vice president Mitch Davis.

The firing comes as the network touts a hotline its employees can use to voice their complaints.

As a sexual harassment scandal involving Bill O'Reilly reached boiling point, Fox defended itself by saying that none of O'Reilly's harassment victims had used the hotline.

But Golloher's attorney said that Fox VP Davis was himself fired from ABC News after improper use of an online account that involved a sending a sexually explicit photo through ABC servers.

"As we allege in the complaint, terminating an employee within 24 hours of utilizing the 'hotline' that Fox has touted as a defense to the O'Reilly sexual harassment matters is yet another indication of its lack of oversight and retaliatory animus for those that are brave enough to report unlawful conduct," Golloher's attorney Jeanne Christensen said in an email to Courthouse News.

"What is even more dumbfounding, however, is that Fox Radio's Vice President and General Manager, who conducted the termination in question was, according to media reports, fired from his prior job at ABC, after ABC learned of his improper use of online material that included a sexually explicit photograph that was turned over to the FBI."

Golloher's lengthy complaint describes years of disparate treatment and sexist double standards. Golloher came to Fox News Radio in 2008, as a foreign correspondent. She is based in Jerusalem and covers the Middle East and Africa.

In 2013, as Fox's primary Russian correspondent, Golloher began preparing to cover the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia.

She was contacted by London-based colleague Simon Owen to say he would be "joining her," but when she arrived in Sochi, she learned that Owen had been appointed the lead reporter though he did not speak Russian and was unfamiliar with the country.

"Instead, shockingly, Ms. Golloher was degraded and humiliated when essentially, Fox forced her to work as Mr. Owen's assistant and was told to simply 'piggyback' onto and 'defer' to whatever Mr. Owen was doing or needed," her complaint states. "Specifically, Weinbloom and Davis made clear to Ms. Golloher that she was to serve as Mr. Owen's 'Russian translator,' assist with Mr. Owen's entrée into the country using her established contacts, and provide Mr. Owen with content and ideas for reporting."

During the Olympics, Weinbloom ordered Golloher to shift her reporting to a recent ban by Moscow on lacy underwear imports, and she was sent to spent time covering "ridiculous and frivolous 'panty protests,'" according to the complaint.

Golloher says she was berated by producer Dave Anthony, who would dictate word-for-word what she should say in her reports. She says she complained to Weinbloom and Davis about Anthony's "manner of speaking down to her, including his rude and disparaging conduct and general view that she was a vapid, unintelligent female reporter," but they did nothing about it.

She says her travel requests to report on bombings, stabbings and daily violence while covering the Middle East were repeatedly denied as "too dangerous," but that Owen was sent all the way from London to Pakistan to cover a story Golloher had already pitched.

"Ms. Golloher complained about the disparate treatment she received as compared to her male peers," the complaint state. "Specifically, she complained to Davis and Weinbloom about their repeated denials of her requests to travel and report on stories, using such pretexts as dangerous conditions or expense of traveling for the story, yet male reporters were sent to the precise locations she had pitched, often at a much greater economic cost to Fox News. Weinbloom and Davis did nothing in response."

A Fox News spokesperson said in an email: "Jessica Golloher's claims are without merit. Her allegations of discrimination and retaliation are baseless. We will vigorously defend the matter."

Golloher seeks compensatory and punitive damages for discrimination and retaliation in violation of the New York State Human Rights Law, New York Executive Law and the New York City Human Rights Law.

Her attorneys are Jeanne Christensen and Douglas Wigdor with Wigdor LLP in New York City.

The defendants are Twenty-First Century Fox, Fox News Network, Hank Weinbloom and Mitch Davis, in their individual and professional capacities.