

A law firm leading several cases against Fox News is trying to torpedo the \$15 billion Fox-Sky merger

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Lawyers representing several Fox News employees in cases against the network said that 21st Century Fox's top executives are misleading British regulating authorities in its efforts to acquire a large European broadcasting company.

Last week, employment lawyer Douglas Wigdor sent a lengthy letter warning British media regulatory agency Ofcom that 21st Century Fox's efforts to merge with Sky News could help its owners "set the political agenda."

21st Century Fox co-chairman Rupert Murdoch [announced plans](#) earlier this year to take over Sky broadcasting network in a \$15 billion deal. If Ofcom approves the deal, Murdoch and his sons [will control](#) Fox News and the Wall Street Journal in the US as well as the Times, the Sun, and Sky News in the UK.

Wigdor, who represents several clients suing Fox News, has called for Ofcom to look into whether Fox News meets the "broadcasting standards" of the agency. In a letter to Ofcom obtained by Business Insider, Wigdor cites situations involving several of his clients as reason for Ofcom to apply greater scrutiny to 21st Century Fox.

One Wigdor client mentioned in the letter is Rod Wheeler, a longtime Fox News commentator who is currently [suing](#) the network for defamation over quotes he claims were misattributed to him in a May article. The article, which was later retracted, cited Wheeler to [suggest that fatally shot DNC staffer Seth Rich had communicated with WikiLeaks](#) before his death.

The complaint, filed last week, claims that Fox News used Wheeler to draw attention away from the Russia investigation and published the story with the "full ... attention of the White House," including President Donald Trump.

In the letter to Ofcom, Wigdor suggests that Wheeler's experience, along with Murdoch's close ties to Trump, should serve as a warning when deciding whether Fox News is "fit and proper" to hold broadcasting licenses in the UK.

"The Company's conduct, including that of the highest executives at Fox, may demonstrate that there is a risk that it will act to influence political agendas in the UK," Wigdor writes in the letter.

Wigdor's law firm, Wigdor LLC, has sent frequent letters about the merger to Ofcom in the past.

The Ofcom letter also included documents citing Wigdor clients who said they [faced racial and gender discrimination as recently as 2017](#) as part of their jobs at Fox News.

"Our point was that, at the very same time they're telling regulators that they've changed, they're creating fake news," Wigdor LLP partner Jeanne Christensen told Business Insider.

Over the last five years, Fox News and its parent company, 21st Century Fox, have been embroiled in a number of high-profile scandals, including issues of discrimination and sexual harassment, that led to the ouster of former Fox News CEO Roger Ailes and host Bill O'Reilly.

But after an internal investigation, Ofcom [determined](#) that the Murdochs had not been aware of the sexual

harassment claims before 2016 and have since taken steps to address issues relating to corporate culture afterwards.

Still, Avaaz, an activist group in the US, has questioned whether the Murdochs have actually made significant changes.

“Murdoch’s Sky bid rests on his promise that he’s cleaned up his act since the phone-hacking scandal in Britain,” Avaaz campaigner Alaphia Zoyab told Variety in April. “But leopards don’t change their spots, and it’s no surprise that he’s being engulfed in fresh scandals with the same pattern of cover-ups and impunity in the US.”

The Sky deal, which [critics said](#) would give the Murdoch empire unprecedented control over both American and European media, has encountered strong opposition on both sides of the Atlantic.

British MP and Media Secretary Karen Bradley said the deal could offer Murdoch [too much influence](#) over British media and said she intends to send it back for greater investigation.

21st Century Fox didn't respond to requests for further comment.