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LEGAL NEWS

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Sean 'Diddy' Combs Accused Of Rape, Assault By Former Partner Cassie

A lawsuit claims the hip-hop mogul subjected her to "a decade of his violent behavior." He denies the "offensive and outrageous" allegations.

By [Bill Donahue](#) +

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Sean Combs Onstage during Invest Fest 2023 at Georgia World Congress Center on Aug. 26, 2023 in Atlanta.
Prince Williams/WireImage

Sean “[Diddy](https://www.billboard.com/artist/diddy/)” Combs was sued Thursday by R&B singer and longtime romantic partner [Cassie](https://www.billboard.com/artist/cassie/) over allegations that he repeatedly physically abused her over the course of a decade, including one instance of rape.

In a [lawsuit](https://www.billboard.com/t/lawsuit/) filed in Manhattan federal court, attorneys for Cassie (full name Casandra Ventura) claimed she “endured over a decade of his violent behavior and disturbed demands,” including repeated physical beatings and forcing her to “engage in sex acts with male sex workers” while he masturbated.

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“Ms. Ventura has now fully escaped Mr. Combs, but the harm that the assaults and sexual abuse he caused her to experience for nearly a decade will forever haunt her,” wrote Cassie’s attorney **Douglas Wigdor**, who has filed a number of high-profile sexual abuse cases. “She cannot, however, continue to live in silence about what she endured. Mr. Combs remains immensely powerful, and immensely dangerous.”

In a statement, Combs’ attorney – well-known celebrity defense lawyer **Ben Brafman** – said his client “vehemently denies these offensive and outrageous allegations.”

“For the past 6 months, Mr. Combs has been subjected to Ms. Ventura’s persistent demand of \$30 million, under the threat of writing a damaging book about their relationship, which was unequivocally rejected as blatant blackmail,” Brafman said. “Despite withdrawing her initial threat, Ms. Ventura has now resorted to filing a lawsuit riddled with baseless and outrageous lies, aiming to tarnish Mr. Combs’ reputation and seeking a pay day.”

In his own statement, Wigdor disputed Brafman’s accusations about the settlement negotiations: “Mr. Combs offered Ms. Ventura eight figures to silence her and prevent the filing of this lawsuit. She rejected his efforts and decided to give a voice to all women who suffer in silence. Ms. Ventura should be applauded for her bravery.”

Ventura, who had an on-and-off public relationship with Combs for 11 years until they split in 2018, says that she met the hip-hop mogul in 2005, when she was just 19 and he was 37. After he signed her to his Bad Boy Records label, she says Combs “lured” her into a romantic relationship – albeit one in which he “asserted complete control over Ms. Ventura’s personal and professional life.”

“He provided unprecedented avenues for success for the aspiring artist, but in return, demanded obedience, loyalty, and silence,” her lawyers write in her complaint.

During the relationship, Ventura says she suffered “episodes of horrific abuse,” including times when he would fly into an “uncontrollable rage” and “beat Ms. Ventura savagely.” She says he would remind her of his ability to harm her, including by requiring her to carry his gun in her purse.

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“Mr. Combs told Ms. Ventura that he was going to blow up Kid Cudi’s car, and that he wanted to ensure that Kid Cudi was home with his friends when it happened,” Ventura’s lawyers write. “Around that time, Kid Cudi’s car exploded in his driveway.”

A rep for Kid Cudi did not immediately return a request for comment on the lawsuit’s claims.

After years of “again and again” attempting to “escape his tight hold over her life,” Ventura says that in September 2018, she and Combs went to dinner at an Italian restaurant in Malibu “for what she believed would be a discussion about concluding their relationship for good.” Instead, he “forced himself into her apartment and tried to kiss Ms. Ventura” as she “told him to stop and attempted to push him away.”

“Mr. Combs then forcibly pulled off Ms. Ventura’s clothing and unbuckled his belt,” she says. “He proceeded to rape Ms. Ventura while she repeatedly said ‘no’ and tried to push him away.”

Combs is the latest high-profile music executive to face disturbing accusations of sexual wrongdoing over the past month. Former Recording Academy president/CEO **Neil Portnow** was [sued over allegations of sexual assault \(https://www.billboard.com/pro/neil-portnow-sued-sexual-assault-recording-academy/\)](https://www.billboard.com/pro/neil-portnow-sued-sexual-assault-recording-academy/) last week; the the same day, label exec **Antonio “L.A.” Reid** was [hit with similar accusations \(https://www.billboard.com/pro/la-reid-accused-sexual-assault-lawsuit-former-employee/\)](https://www.billboard.com/pro/la-reid-accused-sexual-assault-lawsuit-former-employee/). Last month, longtime publishing exec **Kenny MacPherson** was sued for sexual harassment, accused of subjecting a woman to an [“onslaught](#)

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windows for alleged survivors to take [legal_\(https://www.billboard.com/t/legal/\)](https://www.billboard.com/t/legal/) action over years-old accusations that would typically be barred under the statute of limitations. In New York, the look-back window closes later this month.

In her complaint against Combs, Ventura specifically thanked lawmakers for passing those new laws, saying they would allow her to seek “justice” after she had been “unable to speak up against the years of abuse she endured.”

“After years in silence and darkness, I am finally ready to tell my story, and to speak up on behalf of myself and for the benefit of other women who face violence and abuse in their relationships,” Ventura said in a statement. “With the expiration of New York’s Adult Survivors Act fast approaching, it became clear that this was an opportunity to speak up about the trauma I have experienced and that I will be recovering from for the rest of my life.”

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Read Cassie’s full legal complaint here:

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