

EXHIBIT E

Porn star's lawyer says Russian paid Trump attorney Cohen

AP

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WASHINGTON (AP) — Stormy Daniels' lawyer says he has information showing that President Donald Trump's longtime personal attorney received \$500,000 from a company associated with a Russian billionaire within months of paying hush money to the porn star who claims a long-ago affair with Trump.

Lawyer Michael Avenatti also said hundreds of thousands of dollars streamed into Trump attorney Michael Cohen's account from companies, including pharmaceutical giant Novartis, AT&T and Korea Aerospace, with U.S. government business interests. Those three companies have confirmed the connection.

Avenatti isn't disclosing the source of his information or releasing documentation. But in a seven-page memo, Avenatti details what he says were wire transfers into and out of the account Cohen used to pay Daniels \$130,000 in October 2016 to stay silent about her alleged tryst with Trump in 2006. He denies having an affair with Daniels, whose real name is Stephanie Clifford.

Financial documents reviewed Tuesday by The Associated Press appeared to back up Avenatti's report.

The memo says Viktor Vekselberg, a Russian billionaire, and his cousin "routed" eight payments totaling approximately \$500,000 to Cohen's company, Essential Consultants, between January and August 2017. The reason for the payments was not immediately known.

Avenatti's memo says the deposits into the account controlled by Cohen were made by Columbus Nova, an American investment company headed by Vekselberg's cousin, Andrew Intrater, and affiliated with the Renova Group, which Vekselberg controls.

Andrey Shtorkh, a spokesman for Vekselberg and the Renova Group, said in a statement that "neither Victor Vekselberg nor Renova has ever had any contractual relationship" with Cohen or Essential Consultants.

He said questions about a relationship between Columbus Nova and Cohen would have to be answered by Intrater "because Columbus Nova is a company owned and managed by him."

Columbus Nova's lawyer, Richard Owens, said in a statement the company is "solely owned and controlled by Americans." He said that after Trump's inauguration in January 2017, the company hired Cohen as a business consultant "regarding potential sources of

capital and potential investments in real estate and other ventures," but that it had nothing to do with Vekselberg.

"Neither Viktor Vekselberg nor anyone else, other than Columbus Nova's owners, were involved in the decision to hire Cohen or provided funding for his engagement," he said.

Cohen and his lawyer did not immediately respond to requests for comment. Cohen is under investigation by federal prosecutors in New York, but hasn't been charged.

At the time of the payments, there was an FBI counterintelligence investigation, which special counsel Robert Mueller took over last May, into Russian election interference and any possible coordination with Trump associates.

Vekselberg was targeted for U.S. sanctions by the Trump administration last month. He built his fortune, currently estimated by Forbes at \$14.6 billion, by investing in the aluminum and oil industries. More recently, he has expanded his assets to include industrial equipment and high technology.

Eric Althoff, a spokesman for Novartis, a multinational pharmaceutical company, said it entered into a one-year agreement with Essential Consultants in February 2017 to focus on health care policy.

He said in an emailed statement Wednesday that Novartis hired Cohen for \$100,000 a month, but determined after a single meeting with Cohen that he wouldn't be of use. Novartis still paid out the \$1.2 million contract.

"The decision was taken not to engage further," he said, but the contract could not be terminated, so the payments continued.

Althoff said Novartis complied with requests for information about the payments from Mueller's investigators in November.

AT&T said in a statement that Essential Consultants was one of several firms it "engaged in early 2017 to provide insights into understanding the new administration."

Avenatti alleged that the company made four \$50,000 payments to Cohen totaling \$200,000 in late 2017 and early 2018.

AT&T said Cohen's company "did no legal or lobbying work for us, and the contract ended in December 2017." Cohen is not a registered lobbyist, according to public records.