

# US Regulator Orders Review Of ABC License After Trump Criticizes Kimmel

**AFP** :: US President Donald Trump accused comedian Jimmy Kimmel of a 'despicable call to violence' over a joke about the first lady (MANDEL NGAN, ROBYN BECK)

The agency that regulates the US airwaves on Tuesday ordered an early review of the license of broadcaster ABC after President Donald Trump and his wife demanded it fire comedian Jimmy Kimmel.

The order from the US Federal Communications Commission (FCC) affects Disney, which owns ABC, and its television subsidiaries.

It comes after both Donald and Melania Trump demanded the network cancel Kimmel's late-night comedy show over a joke they described as a call to violence, days before an alleged attempt to assassinate the US president.

The comedian said the response was "ridiculous" and that the administration was "making a big thing of this joke" during his "Jimmy Kimmel Live" show on Tuesday.

Trump had demanded Kimmel be fired for likening the first lady to an "expectant widow."

In a show last week, Kimmel had portrayed himself as MC of the upcoming White House Correspondents' Association dinner in Washington on Saturday, addressing the first lady and saying "Mrs Trump, you have a glow like an expectant widow."

Trump turns 80 in June and is the oldest president to take office in the United States. His wife, a former model who was born in Slovenia, is 56.

The first lady also lashed out at Kimmel in a statement, calling on broadcaster ABC to “take a stand” against the late-night host.

Kimmel brushed off the criticism on his show Monday, saying the gag was “obviously... a joke about their age difference.”

“It was a very light roast joke about the fact that he’s almost 80 and she’s younger than I am,” Kimmel said. “It was not by any stretch of the definition a call to assassination, and they know that.”

The White House went back on the attack Tuesday, with communications director Steven Cheung on X describing Kimmel as a “shit human” for “doubling down on that joke instead of doing the decent thing by apologizing.”

The suspect accused of attacking Saturday’s media gala was charged in court Monday with trying to assassinate the president.

At his Tuesday show, Kimmel played a clip of Trump joking about his own age in a speech as he welcomed King Charles III earlier in the day.

Noting that his parents were married for 63 years, Trump turned to Melania during the speech and remarked: “That’s a record we won’t be able to match, darling, I’m sorry.”

“Wait a minute, did he just make a joke about his death?” Kimmel asked during his program.

“Only Donald Trump would demand I be fired for making a joke about his old age, and then a day later, go out and make a joke about his own old age.”

As a prominent late-night comedy host, Kimmel has been at the heart of the debate over constitutionally protected speech.

He was briefly suspended from his show in September following

government pressure after he said Trump's hard-right MAGA movement was trying to gain political capital from the assassination of influencer Charlie Kirk.

The Trump administration has sought to penalize media outlets and comedians who challenge him, while the Republican leader's rhetoric toward political opponents has been criticized as polarizing and sometimes violent.

Network CBS last year axed Stephen Colbert's "The Late Show" in a "financial decision" that critics say smacks of censorship.

Trump's appointee to chair the FCC, Brendan Carr, turned heads when he told a Congressional hearing that "the FCC is not formally an independent agency," implying that his actions could justifiably be aligned with the political priorities of the White House.

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