

## Alex Jones Replaces Lawyers As Depositions Loom In Sandy Hook Cases

The Infowars conspiracy theorist has replaced his lawyers with two controversial figures: Robert Barnes and Norman Pattis.

By Sebastian Murdock

Alex Jones, a conspiracy theorist who falsely claimed the Sandy Hook massacre was a hoax, has replaced two of his lawyers in multiple lawsuits brought against him by parents of children killed in the 2012 school shooting.

The host of the right-wing conspiracy outlet Infowars is being sued by nearly a dozen Sandy Hook parents in four separate defamation cases for his repeated claims that the shooting in Newtown, Connecticut, that left 20 children and six adults dead was staged. He has previously tried and failed to shut down the lawsuits and avoid being deposed.

Jones' latest legal maneuvers appear to be a Hail Mary as he prepares to be deposed later this year by lawyers representing families who filed lawsuits in Texas and Connecticut. Jones has hired two new lawyers to represent him in separate Sandy Hook cases. Both lawyers, like Jones himself, have

Attorney **Norman Pattis**, who will be tasked with defending Jones in a lawsuit brought by six Sandy Hook parents and an FBI agent, says he “represents people who face powerful foes.”



Alex Jones continues to face consequences for his actions.

a history of conspiracy-mongering and social media posts that appear to show a tenuous grasp of basic decency.

In a Monday court filing obtained by HuffPost, Jones said he would “shortly name Robert Barnes as lead counsel in this case” against Sandy Hook parent Scarlett Lewis, who is suing Jones for more than \$1 million for the “intentional infliction of emotional distress.”

Barnes told HuffPost he is replacing Marc Randazza, who was previously hired in July of last year to represent Jones. Randazza, who is representing the co-founder of the neo-Nazi website Daily Stormer, also violated legal ethics by soliciting bribes from legal opponents, among other indiscretions.

Barnes has been a regular contributor to Infowars and was featured in an episode last month titled “Lawyer Breaks Down The Real Sandy Hook Conspiracy & More.” In it, Jones refers to Barnes as the “chief legal counsel for Infowars.” In another video about the special counsel’s investigation into Russian influence in the 2016 presidential election, Barnes “lays out the history of Robert Mueller’s crimes and coverups for the Deep State,” according to the video’s description.

Barnes has previously defended Jones on Twitter, saying, “What [Jones] actually said in full about Sandy Hook was he didn’t know what happened.” (That’s not true. Jones has repeatedly called the parents “crisis actors” and said that interviews with CNN were faked with green screens, among other falsities). In another tweet, he quoted a story suggesting a conspiracy in which Jones was being set up by people with dark money funding the Sandy Hook parents.

Barnes also recently appeared on Fox News to offer his legal services to the Covington Catholic teens who were captured on video appearing

to mock a Native American man.

In a promotional video on his website, Barnes sits next to a bottle of liquor as he compares himself to the Swiss mercenaries of the Middle Ages. The video is set to dramatic music.

Connecticut lawyer Norman Pattis, meanwhile, was hired earlier this week by Jones to replace his original lawyer, Jay Wolman of Randazza’s law firm, the Connecticut Post reported. Pattis, who will be tasked with defending Jones in a lawsuit brought by six Sandy Hook parents and an FBI agent, says he “represents people who face powerful foes.”

But, as the Connecticut Post points out, Pattis was also condemned by the NAACP earlier this year after he posted a photo on his Facebook page depicting three beer cans in white hoods surrounding a brown beer bottle hanging from its neck.

“Ku Klux Coors,” the caption read. He deleted the image, but defended the post by railing against the “P.C. police” that “disgust me.”

In another Facebook post, Pattis commented on a story about a video game that lets users play as a school shooter. “Candidly, it looks sort of fun,” he wrote. And in a New Year’s Eve Twitter post last year, Pattis thanked comedian Louis C.K. for his jokes mocking the survivors of the Parkland, Florida, school shooting.

“Much needed,” he tweeted. “Thank you Louis CK.”

And when Rep. Rashida Tlaib (D-Mich.) was elected to serve in Congress, Pattis tweeted to her: “No suicide bombings?” The lawyer has since deleted his Twitter account.

Mark Bankston of the Houston law firm Farrar & Ball represents Lewis, along with Sandy Hook parents Neil Heslin, Leonard Pozner and Veronique De La Rosa.

“It remains to be seen whether this sudden change in counsel is a desperate gambit or whether it’s a sign that Mr. Jones is ready to take this lawsuit seriously,” Bankston told HuffPost in a statement. “But regardless of who ultimately represents InfoWars, my clients remain focused on holding Mr. Jones accountable for his reckless and disgusting conduct.” ■