

Al Sharpton Faults HBO Airing of FBI Tape

By ABC News [GMA](#)
July 24, 2002, 9:51 AM



NEW YORK, July 24 -- The Rev. Al Sharpton says he plans to sue HBO for \$500 million and pledges that his plans to explore a run for the White House would not be derailed by what he calls a "smear campaign."

His announcement came in response to cable channel HBO's airing of an 1983 FBI surveillance videotape that shows Sharpton talking with an undercover agent about a drug deal.

The tape, shot nearly 20 years ago, aired Tuesday evening on HBO. It was obtained for an episode of HBO's Real Sports with Bryant Gumbel that reported on possible ties between the sports world and organized crime.

The grainy, 90-second clip shows Sharpton listening as an undercover FBI agent proposes a drug deal. At one point on the tape, the agent is heard offering a 10 percent cut to Sharpton for finding a buyer.

"Every kilogram we bring in -- \$3,500 to you. How does that sound?" asks FBI Agent Vincent Quintana as Sharpton appears to nod. "So if we bring in 10, you'll make \$35,000."

"I hear you," Sharpton responds.

"But that's a drip in the bucket," the agent adds.

"Well if [the buyer] can, if he's gonna do it, he'll do it much more than that," says Sharpton, who can be seen wearing a large cowboy hat while holding an unlit cigar in his mouth.

A Second Tape?

But Sharpton told ABCNEWS' Good Morning America that there is another tape that would erase any suspicions about his actions. He says he asked HBO to air that additional footage and criticized the network for not telling the whole story.

"If they [HBO] brought out all of the tapes, which the lawsuit will do -- and you know there were tapes brought out 10 years ago -- we wouldn't do anything," said Sharpton. He did not identify who possesses the second tape.

In a Tuesday press conference, Sharpton threatened to sue HBO for "knowingly omitting information that would clearly show what my character and activity was at that time."

During the HBO broadcast, reporter Bernard Goldberg denied there is "no tape or any other evidence" to support Sharpton's claims. And HBO spokesperson Ray Stallone said, "Our report speaks for itself."

Top Stories



Trump's attorneys in his civil fraud case double down on criticism of judge's clerk
Nov 6, 4:06 AM



Donald Trump set to testify in his own \$250 million civil fraud trial
Nov 6, 3:13 AM



Trump fraud trial live updates: Trump arrives at courthouse
5 minutes ago



'Baby Holly' speaks out for the 1st time after being missing for over 40 years
Nov 3, 7:49 AM



14th Amendment challenges to Trump's candidacy are likely Supreme Court bound
Nov 5, 8:38 AM

ABC News Live



24/7 coverage of breaking news and live events



Want the latest politics news? Get it in your inbox.

Sign up for our emails to get the latest politics news from 538.

Email Address*

example@email.com

- Yes, I would like to receive weekly top politics news from 538 Top Politics Stories
- Yes, I would like to receive the 538 Morning Distribution for daily briefings, news, and more

By creating an account, you agree to our [Terms of Use](#) and acknowledge that you have read our [Privacy Policy](#) and [US State Privacy Rights Notice](#).

Sign Up