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**HEADLINE:** PALM BEACH MAN FACES LAWSUIT IN TEEN SEX CASE

**BYLINE:** By LARRY KELLER Palm Beach Post Staff Writer

**DATELINE:** WEST PALM BEACH

**BODY:**

The parents of a teenage girl sued part-time Palm Beach resident Jeffrey Epstein for more than \$50 million on Thursday, alleging that the wealthy money manager had her brought to his mansion for a massage, then engaged in sexual activity with her.

The girl, identified only as Jane Doe, was 14 at the time. She was the youngest of several alleged victims of Epstein, according to Palm Beach police, who spent 11 months investigating him.

The federal lawsuit, filed by Miami attorney Jeffrey Herman, says "Epstein has a sexual preference and obsession for underage minor girls." Epstein "gained access to primarily disadvantaged minor girls in his home, sexually assaulted these girls, and then gave them money."

Herman, who specializes in child sex abuse litigation, sued on behalf of the girl, her father and her stepmother on grounds of sexual assault, intentional infliction of emotional distress and loss of parental consortium.

"Jane Doe ... fell into Epstein's trap and became one of his victims," the lawsuit says.

"We're dismayed by the filing of the lawsuit, but not surprised," said Jack Goldberger, one of Epstein's attorneys. "We think this shows what this case is all about: money."

He and another Epstein attorney, Lilly Ann Sanchez, launched an immediate counteroffensive, even showing up at Herman's news conference outside the federal courthouse in West Palm Beach. They distributed copies of documents showing that the girl's father and stepmother have prior arrests for financial crimes the lawyers say show the lawsuit is financially motivated. Another Epstein lawyer, Gerald Lefcourt, a prominent New York criminal defense attorney, provided some of those documents to Goldberger.

"Jeffrey Epstein did not have sex with this woman," Sanchez said.

Herman suggested that Epstein masturbated in front of the alleged victim and used a vibrator on her after she was brought to his home in February 2005. The girl is now 17.

"This was a typical 14-year-old girl at the time she met Epstein," Herman said. "What happened here was despicable."

The girl told police investigators that she informed Epstein she was 18 when she met him, and she said that was her age on her Web page, Sanchez said.

The girl's father and stepmother also attended the news conference.

"We're very angry," the father said. "It's not right that this wealthy man can fly into town and destroy my daughter's innocence." He did not take questions.

Epstein, 55, is a mysterious New York money manager who owns a Manhattan mansion, as well as homes in Palm Beach, New Mexico and the Virgin Islands.

A Palm Beach County grand jury indicted him in July 2006 on one count of felony solicitation of prostitution stemming from alleged incidents between Aug. 1 and Oct. 31, 2005.

Epstein is scheduled to enter a plea in the case on March 10, but he has postponed other court dates to resolve the case.

His indictment followed an exhaustive investigation by the Palm Beach Police Department, which concluded that Epstein paid underage girls and young women to be brought to his five-bedroom, 7 1/2-bath Intracoastal home for massages and sometimes sex play. Much of the language in the Jane Doe suit mirrors that of police reports in the case.

Herman's client said her meeting with Epstein was set up by ██████████ of Loxahatchee, who was a Palm Beach Community College student at the time. When Jane Doe arrived at Epstein's home, she was escorted by an Epstein assistant, ██████████, to a room with a massage table, police reports and the lawsuit say.

Epstein walked in wearing only a towel, removed it and lay naked on the massage table, the lawsuit says. He demanded that Jane Doe remove her clothing, and she did, except for her underwear, the lawsuit alleges. The sexual activity followed, the suit says.

Epstein paid her \$300 afterward, and ██████████ got \$200 for bringing the girl to him, the lawsuit says.

██████████ and ██████████ helped Epstein arrange other liaisons with girls, Palm Beach police concluded. Neither was charged.

This is not the first time Epstein has been sued over purported activities with teenage girls. He was sued in New York in October by a woman who says she had sex with Epstein when she was 16 and had sought his help in becoming a model.

The lawsuit filed Thursday also alleges that Epstein has assaulted girls on his private island in the Virgin Islands. Herman declined to elaborate on that assertion.

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**NOTES:** Ran all editions.

**GRAPHIC: PHOTO (C & B&W)**

1. (C) BILL INGRAM/Staff Photographer Lawyer Jeffrey Herman (left) conducts a news conference Thursday with the father and stepmother of a girl who claims wealthy money manager Jeffrey Epstein assaulted her in 2005. The parents seek more than \$50 million in their lawsuit. Epstein, who faces a prostitution solicitation charge, is scheduled to enter a plea March 10. 2. (B&W) Jeffrey Epstein (mug)

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