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Attorneys Say Miami Prosecutors Violated Crime Victims' Rights Act

Stephanie Woodrow | March 22, 2011 11:52 am

These attorneys for two girls who contend they were assaulted by billionaire and convicted sex offender **Jeffrey Epstein** filed court papers on Monday claiming the U.S. Attorney's office violated the Crime Victims' Rights Act by signing a nonprosecution agreement with Epstein without notifying them, the Palm Beach Daily News [reported](#).

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U.S. ATTORNEYS CHART (Interactive)



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Epstein served 13 months in jail from June 2008 to July 2009 for one state count of soliciting an underage girl for prostitution. As a result, he is required to register as a sex offender. While he wasn't prosecuted for additional charges, more than 40 girls under the age of 18 say they came to his home and gave him massages. During the massages, they say, he masturbated and sexually assaulted them.

Jeffrey Epstein (gov)

Brad Edwards and **Paul Cassell**, attorneys representing two of his alleged victims, say in the filing that the U.S. Attorney's office for the Southern District of Florida deliberately misled the victims by telling them there was an ongoing investigation into their claims. However, they say, the office was concealing the fact that they already had signed a nonprosecution deal with Epstein.

According to the motion, the U.S. Attorney's office in January 2008 and May 2008 sent "false notification" letters in to Epstein's alleged victims saying "(t)his case is currently under investigation." However, the office had signed the agreement with Epstein in September 2007.

The attorneys want a court hearing during which they will ask that the agreement be invalidated because it violated the victims' rights. In the motion, the attorneys claim the agreement is illegal because the government did not protect the constitutionally mandated rights of victims before it entered this agreement."

If the judge grants the request, Epstein could be charged by the U.S. Attorney's office. If he were charged and convicted on all charges, he could be sentenced to 10 years to life for each charge.

According to the motion, "The only reason that the (U.S. Attorney's office) concealed the existence of the non-prosecution agreement from the victims was not to comply with some legal restriction, but rather to avoid a firestorm of public controversy that would have erupted if the sweetheart plea deal with a politically connected billionaire had been revealed."

John Valle, special counsel for the U.S. Attorney's Office Southern District of Florida, in an email to the newspaper that the U.S. Attorney's office will respond in court filings.

However, as we stated more than two years ago in July 2008 in our response to the plaintiffs' then-emergency petition for enforcement of the Crime Victim Rights Act, the CVRA was not violated because no federal charges were ever filed in the Southern District of Florida," Valle said. "Because the matter remains pending in court, it would be inappropriate at this time to issue any additional comment on the merits of the current motion."

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