

Report: Florida Judge In Jeffrey Epstein Grand Jury Case Has ‘Ties’ To Key Players

Carlie Porterfield

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The judge who has refused to unseal grand jury records related to disgraced financier Jeffrey Epstein's 2006 charges in Florida may have a conflict of interest in her ties to three officials involved who could benefit from those records remaining sealed off from the public, the *Miami Herald* reported Saturday.

A judge has refused to unseal the grand jury documents related to Jeffrey Epstein's 2006 case in Florida.

KEY FACTS

- According to the *Herald*, Circuit Court Chief Judge Krista Marx has “rebuffed” two attempts this year to unseal grand jury records related to Epstein’s charges in Florida almost 15 years ago.
- According to the report, Marx has connections to three politicians who could benefit from the records staying sealed: Palm Beach State Attorney Dave Aronberg, Palm Beach Sheriff Ric Bradshaw and former State Attorney Barry Krischer.
- Marx’s daughter, an assistant state attorney, works for Aronberg; her son is reportedly a sheriff’s deputy employed by Bradshaw; and Marx herself used to work for Krischer as an assistant state attorney, according to the story.
- Marx blocked the release once in January as part of an investigation by Florida state criminal prosecutors and dismissed a similar request Wednesday by attorneys from the *Palm Beach Post*, who sued Aronberg and county clerk Sharon Bock for the grand jury transcripts.
- Bradshaw and Krischer are both part of the state investigation into the handling of the Epstein case, from the call to not prosecute Epstein to the lax treatment he reportedly received in jail.
- The *Herald* reported Marx did not disclose her connections to those three key players in the Epstein case, and when asked for comment Friday by the newspaper, Marx said judges are prohibited from commenting on open cases.

KEY BACKGROUND

Last year, Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis ordered a state criminal investigation into how Epstein's Florida case was handled after Epstein was charged with sex trafficking minors in New York. Krischer has faced scrutiny for his decision not to prosecute Epstein on charges related to sex with children, as has Bradshaw for Epstein's reportedly relaxed time in sheriff's custody, in which he reportedly was permitted to leave as part of work-release privileges that are rare for sex offenders. Special prosecutors attempted to unseal Krischer's 2006 state grand jury presentation in January to see if state prosecutors withheld evidence from Epstein's case from members of the grand jury, who returned with a charge of solicitation of prostitution against Epstein. More recently, the *Palm Beach Post*'s attorneys claimed that unsealing the transcripts would help stamp out speculation that Epstein used his wealth and power to evade a harsh punishment. Marx said that neither Aronberg nor Bock has control of the records the *Palm Beach Post* is after, a claim the *Palm Beach Post* attorneys dispute. Last year Alexander Acosta resigned as labor secretary over his role in Epstein's plea deal when he was a Miami U.S. Attorney.

TANGENT

There's been a renewed interest in the Epstein case this week, with the new Netflix docuseries *Jeffrey Epstein: Filthy Rich* detailing the events and becoming one of the platform's most popular programs, along with the rehashing of the contents of his little black book online. It contained the names of the world's rich and powerful, including presidents Bill Clinton and Donald Trump, and royalty like Prince Andrew, the son of Queen Elizabeth II. Some of the people listed denied being close or even ever having met Epstein, whose death in prison last year was ruled a suicide.

FURTHER READING

Judge in Jeffrey Epstein grand jury case has ties to those with a stake in outcome (*Miami Herald*)

Judge ‘puzzled’ by suit aimed at lifting secrecy of Epstein grand jury records (*Palm Beach Post*)

Judge Rules Against Releasing Jeffrey Epstein Documents ‘Based on Legal Technicality’ (Law & Crime)

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