

Federal prosecutors request halt to “Jane Doe” civil lawsuit against Ghislaine Maxwell and Epstein estate

By Kevin Reed
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In an extraordinary development, the US Justice Department is arguing alongside attorneys for Ghislaine Maxwell, the deceased sex offender Jeffrey Epstein’s collaborator and confidante, that a civil lawsuit filed by a former child sex abuse victim must be halted.

In a letter submitted to a judge in New York’s Southern District Court in Manhattan, federal prosecutors requested this week that the civil lawsuit filed by “Jane Doe” last January against Maxwell and the estate of the Jeffrey Epstein be immediately stayed.

The US attorneys prosecuting the criminal case against Maxwell—in which the Epstein “social coordinator” has been charged with six offenses involving sex trafficking of underage girls and for which she sits in a New York City jail awaiting trial—wrote that there is a “significant risk” that proceeding with the civil case “would adversely affect the ongoing criminal prosecution against Maxwell.”

The New York prosecutors, led by acting US Attorney for the Southern District of New York Audrey Strauss, argued that a “factual overlap between the civil and criminal cases” could result in disclosure of evidence and testimony from witnesses who may be called upon in both cases. The prosecutors also wrote, “Such witnesses may be forced to testify about any efforts to assist the criminal investigation and prosecution and may thereby expose facts about the investigation ... and could potentially expose witnesses and/or their families to harassment.”

The US attorney’s letter adds, “Moreover, permitting any discovery to proceed in this [civil] lawsuit would enable Maxwell to seek a preview of trial testimony in the criminal case, and would afford her with a broader

array of discovery than she is entitled to in the criminal case.”

The civil lawsuit was filed on January 16 of this year by attorneys representing “Jane Doe” against Maxwell and two executors of Epstein’s estate, Darren K. Indyke and Richard D. Kahn. Epstein left behind an estate worth an estimated \$577 million after he was found dead in his jail cell under suspicious circumstances five weeks after his arrest on July 6, 2019 on multiple sex-trafficking charges.

The unnamed victim states in the lawsuit that she was abused and sexually exploited beginning in 1994, after she “met Jeffrey Epstein and Ghislaine Maxwell at Interlochen Arts Camp in Michigan when she was only 13-years-old.” When Jane Doe returned home to Florida, following a similar pattern described by other accusers, Epstein and Maxwell “over the course of the next several months” proceeded to “groom and mentor the 13-year-old” for sexual abuse by Epstein.

The Jane Doe lawsuit also says that Epstein “took her to Mar-a-Lago where he introduced her to its owner, Donald J. Trump.” Epstein introduced Doe, just 14 years old at the time, and “elbowed Trump playfully asking him, referring to her, ‘This is a good one, right?’ Trump smiled and nodded in agreement.”

Attorneys for Maxwell have persistently argued against the release of court documents from previous cases against her, including the text of her deposition in the defamation lawsuit filed by Epstein victim Virginia Roberts Giuffre in 2015. While this case was settled out of court by Maxwell for an undisclosed amount in 2017, a batch of documents from it were unsealed in late July that elaborate on the extensive sex-trafficking operation run by Epstein, including the participation of

various rich and famous people, power brokers, politicians and royal figures such as Prince Andrew of England.

Similarly, Maxwell's lawyers have been arguing that the Jane Doe civil lawsuit should be stayed by the New York District Court on the grounds that it is superfluous given the criminal prosecution and that Doe can present her claims to an Epstein estate fund set aside to compensate his victims.

Maxwell's lawyer, Laura Menninger, submitted her own letter on the civil lawsuit last week, writing, "Absent a stay, Ms. Maxwell will be forced to choose between her constitutional right to remain silent and her active and vigorous participation in defending against and refuting [Doe's] false claims in this case." Menninger furthermore states of Jane Doe, "If it is money she seeks, she can pursue it in the claims program. If it is 'justice' she seeks, the criminal case will resolve those issues one way or the other."

The strange coincidence of the legal position of Maxwell and that of US prosecutors in the criminal case is revealing in that both are seeking to limit the amount of information that is released to the public about the depraved abuse of primarily working-class teenage girls from West Palm Beach by Epstein and his elite friends.

As Jane Doe's attorneys have argued, a stay of their case against Maxwell and the Epstein estate would deprive the victim as well as the public the opportunity to learn the truth about what was going on for nearly three decades at the wealthy socialite's residences in New York City, Palm Beach, Florida, New Mexico, his private island in the Caribbean and aboard his "Lolita Express" private jetliner.

Robert Glassman of Panish Shea & Boyle LLP, representing Jane Doe, wrote in a letter to the court that his client "is best served by pressing forward with her claims—not waiting even longer for justice." Jane Doe is among the only remaining publicly declared Epstein victims who has refused to submit her allegations to the estate compensation fund in exchange for remaining silent.

As Glassman further explains: "The continuation of this last remaining civil avenue can furnish the public with critical information as to defendant Maxwell's well-known criminal enterprise, how it was operated and all those involved. A stay of the civil proceedings

would provide what defendant Maxwell has sought for years—concealing her heinous acts from public view."

The question remains as to the real reasons behind the federal prosecutors agreeing with Maxwell's lawyers about halting the civil court case. Who are the "witnesses and/or their families" who could be potentially exposed to harassment if the Jane Doe lawsuit goes forward?

Meanwhile, it must be recalled that it was the intervention of then-US Attorney for the Southern District of Florida Alex Acosta—who intervened in the 2005 case against Epstein by the Palm Beach Police Department after a 13-month investigation that uncovered the abuse of 34 teenage girls—that resulted in a "non-prosecution agreement," which prevented any of the victims from testifying in court.

It is certain that many elite and powerful individuals—some named, and others not yet named—who participated in Epstein's trafficking of young girls for sex, are working behind the scenes to make sure that nothing more is released to the public about who they are and what they were doing.

While US Magistrate Judge Debra Freeman has yet to issue a ruling on the now joint request to stay the Jane Doe civil lawsuit, she did agree on August 26 to postpone the deposition of one of the defendants, co-executor of Epstein's estate Darren Indyke. In a letter to the court at that time, attorney Glassman wrote that he has "reason to believe" that Indyke personally has "firsthand knowledge" of Epstein's relationship with Doe while she was a minor and "even acted on Jeffrey Epstein's behalf to communicate with [Doe] on several occasions."

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