

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Plaskett Took Contributions From Accused Child Molester Jeffery Epstein For Last Two Campaigns, Federal Election Commission Record Shows

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Delegate to Congress Stacey Plaskett

Even though the accusation of sexual exploitation of dozens of underage girls has dogged financier billionaire Jeffery Epstein since 2002, U.S.V.I. Delegate to Congress Stacey Plaskett took financial contributions from Mr. Epstein for her last two campaigns, according to a Federal Election Commissioner record, [CNBC news reported](#) late Monday.

According to CNBC, citing Ms. Plaskett's Communications Director Mike McQuery, the delegate to Congress has decided to keep the money, even after Mr. Epstein was arrested in New York on Saturday, at least for now.

"I'm pretty sure she's not," he said and later confirmed in a follow-up phone call to verify her position, that Ms. Plaskett is unlikely to return the contribution, CNBC said. Mr. McQuery declined to comment further about the investigation and how Ms. Plaskett knew Mr. Epstein, CNBC said.

CNBC noted Ms. Plaskett's decision as significant, "as it shows that at least one politician is remaining defiant with holding onto donations from Epstein, even after Epstein's arrest," wrote the publication.

Mr. Epstein, 66, owns a mansion on an island in the U.S. Virgin Islands that he also owns, called Little Saint James. Charges against the financier also allege that the USVI home was part of Mr. Epstein's sex trafficking operation. On Monday, he was charged with two counts related to sex trafficking of minors, which together carry a maximum sentence of 45 years in prison. He was arrested Saturday night at Teterboro Airport in New Jersey as he was returning from Paris on his private jet, [according to The Wall Street Journal](#).

Mr. Epstein contributed \$2,700 to Ms. Plaskett, the most an individual donor can give directly to a candidate in both the primary and the general election, during her 2018 run for re-election, according to a F.E.C. record, CNBC said. In 2016, he wrote two separate \$2,700 checks for Ms. Plaskett, including one during her primary campaign which she eventually won. Ms. Plaskett finished the 2018 congressional midterms raising just over \$359,000, according to the F.E.C. record.

According to WSJ, Mr. Epstein, wearing a short-sleeved navy jail uniform, pleaded not guilty before a federal magistrate judge Monday. He will be detained at a jail in lower Manhattan until a federal judge decides next week whether to grant him bail. Prosecutors have asked for him to stay in detention until trial, citing his "exorbitant" wealth and frequent international travel, a bid his lawyers objected to in court Monday.

Mr. Epstein's legal team Monday laid out what they said would be the centerpiece of their defense: that Manhattan federal prosecutors were seeking an improper re-do of an investigation into Mr. Epstein more than a decade ago in Florida, which ended in a federal nonprosecution agreement, WSJ said.

"How in the world can that deal be undone?" said Reid Weingarten, a lawyer for Mr. Epstein. "To us, this indictment is essentially a do-over,"

Federal agents searched Mr. Epstein's Manhattan townhouse after his arrest Saturday and found hundreds of nude photographs of young women, some of whom appeared to be underage, officials said. Some of the photographs were discovered in a locked safe alongside compact discs with handwritten labels like "Girl pics nude."

In court Monday, Mr. Epstein's lawyers said the images seized were likely not of underage victims, WSJ said.

Mr. Epstein is a former asset manager whose source of wealth has long been a mystery on Wall Street. After his arrest, he refused to answer any of the government's questions

about his income or assets, prosecutors said Monday; his lawyers said they needed time to pull that information together.

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