

# Billionaires and corporate lawyers resign following latest Epstein file release

**Jacob Crosse**  
**19 February 2026**

The release of nearly 3 million Justice Department documents related to convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein has begun to shake the upper tiers of corporate America: billionaires, chief executives and top law firm partners whose connections to Epstein can no longer be concealed. Yet, despite the mounting evidence and the growing list of resignations, the Trump Justice Department has brought no new charges against Epstein's associates.

Among the most prominent figures to resign is billionaire Hyatt executive chairman Tom Pritzker, an heir to the Hyatt hotel fortune and cousin of Illinois Governor JB Pritzker. On Monday, Pritzker announced he was resigning and that he "deeply" regretted his "association with Jeffrey Epstein and Ghislaine Maxwell."

The Pritzker family is one of the wealthiest dynasties in the United States, with deep ties to finance, hospitality and Democratic Party politics.

Emails released this month show that Tom Pritzker remained in direct communication with Epstein years after his 2008 Florida conviction for sex crimes involving minors.

In a June 6, 2011 email sent to Epstein, Pritzker wrote: "I am in a remote valley of Afghanistan (its my birthday wish) with Boys with Toys. Spent time w Petraeus yesterday and he loaned me a chopper (actually two with one as a back up). Can't call till tomorrow."

The email indicates that Pritzker was in communication not only with Epstein but also with General David Petraeus, who would later serve as CIA director. Pritzker's casual reference to the use of military helicopters underscores the social proximity between billionaire corporate executives and the upper echelons of the US military and intelligence apparatus.

The correspondence did not end there.

In a 2018 email exchange, Epstein asked Pritzker to

assist in securing hotel reservations in Asia for a woman traveling on his behalf. The woman later wrote to Pritzker that she was "going to try to find a new girlfriend for Jeffrey." Pritzker replied, "May the Force be with you," followed by a smiley face emoji.

The flippant tone of the exchange, coming a decade after Epstein's conviction, undercuts any claim that Pritzker was unaware of his reputation.

In another 2018 email, as architect Richard Meier faced sexual misconduct allegations, Epstein wrote to Pritzker:

"I assume your buddy Richard Meier has counsel. Kathy Ruemmler has done 6 of these now for me."

Epstein's remark suggests that Ruemmler had previously provided legal assistance in matters involving sexual misconduct allegations, by his own account.

At the time this email was written Kathryn Ruemmler, a White House counsel under President Barack Obama, held a senior legal position at Goldman Sachs. Her biography on Goldman Sachs website notes, "As President Obama's longest-serving White House Counsel, Ms. Ruemmler advised the President on all legal matters related to domestic and foreign policy and national security. Ms. Ruemmler also served as a federal prosecutor for seven years, including as Principal Associate Deputy Attorney General, Deputy Director of the Enron Task Force, and Assistant United States Attorney for the District of Columbia."

Days after the latest tranche of files was released, Ruemmler resigned from her position at Goldman. For years, Ruemmler and Goldman Sachs maintained that her relationship with Epstein was strictly professional.

However, the emails released show Ruemmler was described in the documents as a "counselor, confidante and friend" to Epstein beginning in 2014, six years after his Florida conviction. In emails, she addressed him as "sweetie" and "Uncle Jeffrey," signed messages "xoxo,"

and referred to their relationship as a “friendship.”

The documents show that Ruemmler advised Epstein on how to respond to questions about his sex crimes, helped him edit legal materials defending his 2008 plea agreement for soliciting prostitution from a minor, and discussed strategies to undermine the credibility of accusers. In one 2015 email, she explained the legal distinction between underage victims and adult prostitutes, writing, “I think the point is that if she was underage, she could not legally consent to engaging in prostitution.” In another exchange, she suggested that Epstein’s lawyer might push an accuser into a “perjury trap.”

Ruemmler discussed her dating life with Epstein, sought his career advice while interviewing for her position at Goldman Sachs, and told him in 2019 that she was wearing gifts he had given her. “Am totally tricked out by Uncle Jeffrey today!” she wrote.

In total, Ruemmler was referenced in more than 10,000 of the documents released by the Justice Department.

Ruemmler’s resignation came just one week after the departure of Brad Karp, the longtime chairman of Paul Weiss, one of the most powerful corporate law firms in the United States. Last year, Paul Weiss became the first major law firm to capitulate to threats from the Trump administration, agreeing to provide millions of dollars in pro bono work after facing political pressure.

Karp had come to know Epstein through his legal representation of billionaire Leon Black, the co-founder of Apollo Global Management. Black paid Epstein nearly \$170 million for tax and estate planning advice after Epstein’s 2008 conviction, a relationship that has been the subject of sustained scrutiny.

But newly released emails showed that Karp’s relationship with Epstein extended beyond professional obligations.

According to reporting by the *New York Times*, the correspondence revealed that Karp socialized with Epstein and, at one point, asked him for assistance in helping his son secure a job on a film directed by Woody Allen.

After attending a 2015 dinner at Epstein’s Manhattan townhouse that included Allen, Karp wrote to Epstein thanking him for “an evening I’ll never forget.” He described Epstein as “an extraordinary host” and told him he was “amazing.”

The pattern is not limited to billionaires and corporate attorneys in New York. It extends to the nexus of celebrity culture, sports marketing and Democratic Party

fundraising in Los Angeles. In response to the public outcry, Casey Wasserman announced plans to sell his namesake agency, but he has so far resisted stepping down as chair of the organizing committee for the upcoming 2028 Los Angeles Olympics.

Through Wasserman Media Group, named after himself, Wasserman represents major artists, entertainers and athletes and is deeply embedded in Democratic Party fundraising networks.

Documents in the Justice Department release show Wasserman in email communication with Ghislaine Maxwell in the early 2000s seeking sexual encounters while married at the time. The revelations have triggered an exodus of some clients from his agency as public pressure mounts.

Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass on Monday called for Wasserman’s resignation from the L.A. Olympic committee, which he currently chairs. But not all leading Democrats have followed suit. Governor Gavin Newsom declined to weigh in when asked about the controversy last week, stating that he needed to speak with Wasserman first. A spokesperson indicated to the *Los Angeles Times* on Tuesday that there has been no change in the governor’s position.

Meanwhile, despite the mounting evidence and the cascade of high-profile departures, the Trump Justice Department has not brought a single new criminal charge against Epstein’s powerful associates. The only person currently incarcerated in connection with Epstein’s trafficking operation is Ghislaine Maxwell, who has been transferred to a minimum-security facility while reportedly awaiting a possible pardon from President Trump.



To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

**[wsws.org/contact](http://wsws.org/contact)**