

[Lawmakers demand probe of DNC financier sex offender Jeffrey Epstein's sweetheart deal \(nbcnews.com\)](#)

By Dareh Gregorian

A top Republican senator is demanding answers about why the U.S. Department of Justice cut a 'sweetheart deal' with politically connected sex offender Jeffrey Epstein.

Sen. Ben Sasse, R.-Neb., wrote a series of letters to the DOJ this week after the [Miami Herald reported](#) that federal prosecutors had appeared to bend over backwards to accommodate demands from the multimillionaire's high-powered legal team and let him walk away with a light sentence.

"The fact that this monster received such a pathetically soft sentence is a travesty that should outrage us all," Sasse wrote to the DOJ. "I am particularly disturbed by this reporting indicating that federal prosecutors went out of their way to arrange this sweetheart deal for Epstein and conceal it from the women and girls that he abused who could have objected to it, in apparent violation of federal law."

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One letter asked that the DOJ's inspector general review how the department handled Epstein's case and whether there was any misconduct, and another demanded a briefing on the agency's "decision-making process" in the case.

"We need answers on this epic miscarriage of justice," Sasse wrote.

Although not named in the letters, one of those involved in the decision-making was U.S. Labor Secretary Alexander Acosta, who was a U.S. Attorney in Florida at the time.

Epstein's lawyers included Alan Dershowitz and former Whitewater special prosecutor Ken Starr.

Epstein, 65, was being investigated by the federal government for allegedly sexually abusing dozens of teenage girls he paid for "massages" at his West Palm Beach, Florida, estate in the early 2000s. A 53-page indictment was prepared that could have put him behind bars for life.

But Epstein, who was friends with the likes of Bill Clinton, Donald Trump and Prince Andrew, wound up pleading guilty in 2008 to state charges of soliciting a single underage victim after federal prosecutors agreed to shelve their case and not prosecute him or his enablers.

Acosta's office also agreed not to tell the victims about the nonprosecution agreement, an apparent violation of the [Crime Victims Rights Act](#).

Epstein wound up serving 13 months in the county jail and was allowed to leave during the day six days a week to go to work for much of his sentence.

The letters from Sasse came after 15 Democratic members of Congress sent a letter last week to the DOJ demanding an investigation into Acosta's handling of the Epstein case.

Sasse's letters, which were first reported by [Axios](#), might carry more heft because he's chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee's subcommittee on oversight, agency action, federal rights and federal courts. His letters demanded written responses by Friday.

Acosta has maintained he handled the case appropriately.

The DOJ did not respond to a request for comment.