

# US lawmakers reviewing unredacted Epstein files

[AFP News](#):: US lawmakers began reviewing the unredacted files on convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein Monday, and expressed concern that some names have been removed from the records which have been released to the public.

The Epstein Files Transparency Act (EFTA), passed overwhelmingly by Congress in November, compelled the Justice Department to release all of the documents in its possession related to Epstein.

It required the redaction of the names or personal identifying information about Epstein's victims, who numbered more than 1,000 according to the FBI.

But it said no records could be "withheld, delayed, or redacted on the basis of embarrassment, reputational harm, or political sensitivity, including to any government official, public figure, or foreign dignitary."

Representative Jamie Raskin, a Democrat from Maryland, was among the Democratic and Republican lawmakers who examined the unredacted Epstein files at a secure Justice Department location on Monday.

"I saw the names of lots of people who were redacted for mysterious or baffling or inscrutable reasons," Raskin told reporters.

"There are certainly lots of names of other people who were enablers and cooperators with Jeffrey Epstein that were just blanked out for no apparent reason," he said.

Representative Thomas Massie, a Republican from Kentucky, said he discovered the names of six men whose identities have been redacted from the released documents and who "are likely incriminated by their inclusion in these files."

Representative Ro Khanna, a Democrat from California, said “there’s no explanation why those people were redacted.”

They declined to provide their identities but Massie said one of them “is pretty high up in a foreign government” and Khanna said one of the others “is a pretty prominent individual.”

Massie and Khanna also said that many of the redactions in the released files had actually been made prior to the documents being received by the Justice Department. Those redactions may have been made earlier by the FBI or by prosecutors, they said.

“Our law was very clear,” Khanna said. “Unless something was classified, it required it to be unredacted.”

– Clemency –

Epstein, who had ties to top business executives, politicians, celebrities and academics, was found dead in his New York jail cell in 2019 while awaiting trial for sex trafficking minor girls.

Ghislaine Maxwell, Epstein’s former girlfriend, was convicted in 2021 of sex trafficking underage girls to the financier and is serving a 20-year prison sentence.

On Monday, Maxwell testified from prison to Congress but refused to answer any questions – while stating that she would speak if President Donald Trump granted her clemency.

The Justice Department has said no new prosecutions are expected but a number of political and business leaders have already been tarnished by scandal or resigned after their ties with Epstein were revealed in the files.

Trump fought for months to prevent release of the vast trove of documents about Epstein – a longtime former friend – but a rebellion among Republicans forced him to sign off on the law mandating release of all the records.

The move reflected intense political pressure to address what many Americans, including Trump's own supporters, have long suspected to be a cover-up to protect rich and powerful men in Epstein's orbit.

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