

ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

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October 7, 2026

Mr. Brandon Weber, Chair, Board of Trustees
Mr. Jonathan Becker, Acting President
Bard College
30 Campus Road, PO Box 5000
Annandale-on-Hudson, NY 12504

Dear Mr. Weber and Mr. Becker:

On June 17, 2026, I wrote to the Bard College Board of Trustees about the scope and adequacy of WilmerHale's internal investigation of Bard College and its former president's engagement with Jeffrey Epstein.¹ At the time, a raft of public evidence in the partially released Epstein files indicated that, over the course of several years following Epstein's sweetheart deal with federal prosecutors, then-Bard President Leon Botstein and other school leaders provided Epstein favors that may have facilitated his international sex trafficking scheme.

I write to share damning evidence that Botstein likely enabled and possibly even participated in Epstein's abuse while serving as Bard's President, as well as deeply troubling whistleblower reports that Botstein used his position on Bard's campus to influence Title IX proceedings and protect sexual predators on the Bard faculty. I trust that, in light of these revelations, Bard will continue its commendable cooperation with our investigation and help ensure all students are protected at Bard and on all college campuses.

Records in the Department of Justice's (DOJ) Epstein files indicate that, throughout 2014, Jeffrey Epstein groomed a young foreign model and aspiring vocalist—referred to as “Jane Doe” in this letter—by offering her advice and help with her plans to attend school and develop her career in the United States. Instead of helping her pursue nursing or the arts, Epstein pressured her to take sex education and massage courses. In exchange for arranging her visas and paying her educational and medical expenses, Epstein “employed” Jane Doe while he sexually abused her. Epstein then attempted to convince her to “become a mistress”—though it is not clear to whom—rather than pursue gainful employment outside of his control.

By all appearances, Epstein was trafficking this young woman across state and international lines by mid-2014. Epstein had his assistant, Lesley Groff, arrange several private

¹ Letter from The Hon. Jamie Raskin, Ranking Member, H. Comm. on the Judiciary, to Mr. James Cox Chamber, Chair, Bard College Board of Trustees (June 17, 2026), <https://democrats-judiciary.house.gov/sites/evo-subsites/democrats-judiciary.house.gov/files/evo-media-document/2026-06-17-raskin-to-chambers-bard-re-epstein.pdf>.

flights for Jane Doe to travel from Europe to Canada and a series of destinations across the United States, including New York, Florida, New Mexico, and his Caribbean island. Before one of these visits, Jane Doe sent Epstein a picture of herself giving a woman, possibly Ghislaine Maxwell, a nude massage.

Epstein used his relationship with Leon Botstein to convince Jane Doe that she could have a successful musical career after modeling. In May 2014, Epstein sent Jane Doe to meet Botstein, then the President of Bard College and Director of the American Symphony Orchestra and other Bard music programs, ostensibly for him to assess her musical talents and provide her with educational guidance. We have reviewed one startling email, redacted by DOJ, sent from Botstein's Bard email account, President@Bard.edu, to Epstein that reads: **"Is [Jane Doe] for me, or are you keeping her for yourself."**²

From: "jeffrey E." <jeevacation@gmail.com>
To: Jeffrey Epstein <jeevacation@gmail.com>
Subject: Fwd:
Date: Thu, 15 May 2014 12:33:06 +0000

----- Forwarded message -----
From: President <[REDACTED]>
Date: thu May 15, 2014 at 12:45AM
Subject: Re:
To: "jeffrey E." <jeevacation@gmail.com>

Is [REDACTED] for me, or are you keeping her for yourself. I need some help. I am only available on sat. I will be all the help I can to her but you need to help me.
----- Original Message -----
From: "jeffrey E." <jeevacation@gmail.com>
To: "President" <[REDACTED]>
Sent: thurs 6 AM

OK understood

It appears that Botstein was referring to his meeting with Jane Doe scheduled to take place two days later on Saturday, May 17, 2014, when Botstein was supposed to assess Jane Doe's singing ability.

Epstein further leaned on Botstein to convince Jane Doe's parents of his legitimacy, just as he did with the leery parents of other survivors. A couple of weeks after Epstein sent Jane Doe to Botstein, Epstein asked Botstein for four orchestra tickets, apparently for Jane Doe's parents and the parents of another woman who "works" for him to attend a Bard concert abroad. Epstein gave Botstein instructions on how to charm the parents, telling him to shake their hands and that

² Despite redacting Botstein's email, DOJ failed to redact her name hundreds of times, seemingly at random. I have provided a list of documents to DOJ that both contain her name and remain unredacted, in the hope that, nearly a year after Congress passed the Epstein Files Transparency Act, Attorney General Todd Blanche and FBI Director Kash Patel will follow the law and fully redact information that reveals her identity. In the meantime, we have not cited the relevant documents to preserve whatever small shred of her anonymity that remains.

“any special treatment [would] be appreciated.” Following the concert, a Bard administrator forwarded an email exchange and photos from the concert to Botstein: “Jeffrey Epstein’s guests. Another woman in the group took the photo.”

It is hard to construct any kind of innocent explanation for Botstein’s question and the surrounding events. Botstein asked the most famous sexual predator of our time about a woman Epstein was trafficking: “**Is [Jane Doe] for me, or are you keeping her for yourself.**” We know that Epstein was neither a college president recruiting students nor a symphony director recruiting players, so what would it mean for Botstein to ask Epstein whether Jane Doe was for him or whether Epstein was “keeping her for yourself”? These emails implicate DOJ in a widespread and knowing cover-up. But Botstein and any individuals assisting him at Bard must be held accountable for their participation in, or willful blindness to, this egregious misconduct.

Despite this sordid history, Botstein remains a force on your campus. He continues to reside in the President’s House and serve as the conductor of a Bard orchestra with numerous concerts scheduled this fall and next spring.³

There is significant evidence that Botstein’s misconduct extended well beyond Epstein. In the course of this investigation, the Committee on the Judiciary has received information from over a dozen whistleblowers about a culture of sexual misconduct at Bard that has been allowed to fester for several decades.⁴ Botstein was at the heart of this culture. The Committee has received multiple reports that he personally engaged in sexual misconduct and abused his power, from groping women to asking sexualized questions in tenure interviews. Those he trusted to keep his advances secret were rewarded, while others were pushed out. But Botstein also protected other offenders: faculty were often told that certain individuals were “protected by Botstein.” In highly irregular fashion, he personally oversaw the adjudication of Title IX cases at Bard for the majority of his tenure as president, to the detriment of its students, staff, faculty, and the truth. Even after he relinquished his formal role in that process, he reportedly continued to exert significant influence over the adjudicators. From the reports of a number of whistleblowers, under his protection, multiple faculty engaged in repeated and egregious sexual misconduct with little consequence, and Bard students and faculty alike learned that the Title IX process would not protect them.

Some staff, such as a senior dean at the college, were eventually forced to leave after repeated instances of misconduct. Others, like a senior tenured professor, remain on campus and in good standing with the university. According to documents reviewed by the House Judiciary Committee, the professor sent an email to all faculty joking he had sex with a boy named Tadzio after a night of heavy drinking—a reference to the novella *Death in Venice* where an older man becomes obsessively and lustfully infatuated with a 14-year-old boy named Tadzio. This disturbing allusion to fiction appears to reflect attitudes that infiltrated real life. Among other complaints, the professor invited a male student into his bed, plying him with alcohol to the point

³ *Schedule*, LEON BOTSTEIN, <https://www.leonbotstein.com/concerts> (last visited Oct. 2, 2026).

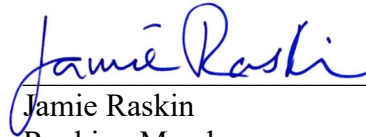
⁴ We understand some of this information was made available to the Board around the time of its recent investigation of Bard’s Epstein connections.

of alcohol poisoning.⁵ This professor apparently made bringing students around his home a habit, sharing with them that his Wi-Fi password was the Greek word for “pedophile.” Despite this, Bard reportedly did not conduct an investigation.

I am aware that both of you took over your respective positions in the last several months and that the previous investigation conducted by WilmerHale did not take place under your leadership. Under your direction, Bard has been cooperating with our investigation. I ask that you continue to do so. These revelations reveal significant concerns regarding the scope and integrity of WilmerHale’s investigation. Through this letter, I am reiterating several prior requests for immediate and complete production of all Bard and Smolny College records relating to Epstein and his associates as well as the records WilmerHale reviewed. I am also seeking records related to sexual misconduct complaints and Title IX investigations relating to a number of Bard faculty and administrators, with specific requests provided under separate cover.

The Jeffrey Epstein saga was never just about Jeffrey Epstein alone. It was about a network of accomplices, enablers, and co-conspirators that made his path of serial exploitation possible. There were many other perpetrators who, in their own turn, abused and manipulated girls and women—even when Epstein was nowhere to be seen. I ask your assistance in ensuring that nothing like this can ever happen again at Bard or on any other college campus.

Very truly yours,



Jamie Raskin
Ranking Member

cc: The Honorable Jim Jordan, Chairman

⁵ This allegation was made in a sworn complaint against Bard in federal court and has been corroborated by whistleblower statements. While the case was dismissed and re-filed in state court on agreement of the parties, it appears counsel for the plaintiff stood by the veracity of the examples detailed in the original complaint. *See* Transcript of Proceedings, *Jane Doe v. Bard College*, 7:22-cv-07258-CS, ECF 43, at 31 (S.D.N.Y. Dec. 22, 2022), <https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.nysd.585321/gov.uscourts.nysd.585321.43.0.pdf>. The documents in the state matter remain, unfortunately, under seal despite the allegations made against Bard professors and administrators being, without a doubt, a matter of significant public concern.