

Sex sold from congressman's apartment; Frank's lover was 'call boy'

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A male escort ran and provided homosexual and bisexual prostitution services from a U.S. congressman's house on Capitol Hill on a periodic basis from late 1985 through mid-1987, The Washington Times has learned.

"I had reason to believe that he might be trying to do that," said Rep. Barney Frank, Massachusetts Democrat, who confirmed in an interview with The Times on Wednesday that the escort had access to his house in the 200 block of 8th Street SE.

"And when I found out about it, I kicked him out [in August 1987]," Mr. Frank said.

Mr. Frank said he knew that the call boy - who asked to be identified by his professional name Greg Davis - was a practicing prostitute. But he denied knowing that his former lover was involved in a prostitution ring.

"I thought I could get him to stop," Mr. Frank said of Davis, whom he employed with personal funds as a housekeeper and chauffeur.

A senior-level Senate staffer, whom The Times has interviewed and chosen not to identify, confirmed this week that he called Davis' "massage" advertisement in City Paper, a District weekly newspaper, "about two years ago" and went as instructed to meet the male escort at a Capitol Hill house.

Davis told him the house was Mr. Frank's, and from the aide's description and documents obtained by The Times, the place they met has been identified as the congressman's home.

Davis said that when he used Mr. Frank's residence to operate the escort services, he or an accomplice would transfer the escort services' telephone calls from his residence to the congressman's number via call-forwarding.

The prostitute, who was living with a fiancée at the time, said he used the ploy because she was unaware of his activities.

Davis also said that he serviced customers at the congressman's house.

A former call girl who worked with Davis and often spoke to Mr. Frank on the phone confirmed this telephone switching operation. She said that she helped run the escort services, and also had sexual relations with clients in Mr. Frank's basement home.

Mr. Frank confirmed that he sometimes spoke to the female escort but assumed she was just a friend of Davis', not a prostitute. He also said that on at least one occasion he remembered a "strange phone call" from somebody asking for Davis and his service.

"The guy said a woman's name that he was supposed to meet," Mr. Frank said. "I was suspicious, but could not prove anything at the time."

The congressman also said that he was told by his landlords several months before asking Davis to leave that there were "strange things going on" in the apartment with lots of people "coming and going."

Mr. Frank said, too, that "one time, somebody came to the door and I told him to get out."

When asked why he did not inform the police about Davis' activities, Mr. Frank replied: "I had reason to believe that he was doing that [running an escort service], but I didn't have anything to take to a judge or to the cops."

Mr. Frank initially denied either knowing of or condoning Davis' profession. But during questioning, he acknowledged that he was aware that his lover was a working prostitute.

"I had no idea that he was doing anything other than personal [prostitution]," Mr. Frank said.

"I knew that he personally did some [sex-for-hire] stuff, but had no idea" about a larger operation that advertised in local newspapers, including City Paper and The Washington Blade, a weekly gay newspaper, the congressman said.

Mr. Frank, one of two openly homosexual members of Congress, said he met Davis by responding to Davis' "escort/model" advertisement in The Washington Blade.

"I met him sexually and had a personal relationship with him," Mr. Frank said.

He said he subsequently allowed the male escort to use his house and car for almost 18 months after first having paid sex with him in April 1985.

Mr. Frank also said that Davis accompanied him on several politically oriented functions and also helped to arrange a speaking engagement at a conference put on by the American Association of School Administrators.

Davis said he accompanied Mr. Frank to the White House in 1986 to witness President Reagan's signing of immigration and naturalization legislation.

"He said he was on probation and I tried to help him out. I got him a lawyer and I hired him [Davis] to work for me - no governmental money," Mr. Frank said. "He was my driver, my housekeeper . . . who took care of the car and took it to get it inspected."

The congressman said he wrote a letter to the U.S. Capitol Police authorizing Davis, who also has been linked to the homosexual prostitution ring now under investigation by federal authorities, to have access to the House garage as his driver. Mr. Frank also said Davis played on his congressional softball team.

"That was the only official thing I did," Davis said.

Mr. Frank said he did not withhold federal income taxes or Social Security from Davis's salary. "I considered him to be a consultant," he said.

Davis did not receive regular paychecks because "I tended to pay for some of his expenses. He had use of the car, I bought him a lot of meals, I bought him food to use here, and I paid for his lawyer," Mr. Frank said.

Describing his four years with Davis as "a sexual relationship that turned into a friendship," Mr. Frank said he also paid for the prostitute's court-ordered psychological counseling stemming from four felony convictions in 1982: possession of obscene material, production of obscene items involving a juvenile, oral sodomy and possession of cocaine. Davis also was convicted in 1975 of cocaine distribution.

Mr. Frank said he wrote at least four letters to Alexandria probation officials on behalf of Davis. The letters had been obtained by The Times from Alexandria criminal records with a signed privacy waiver from Davis.

In one of the letters, dated March 10, 1986, Mr. Frank told the Alexandria probation officer: "Mr. [Davis] works for me on personal and political matters which should not be paid out of my congressional allowance."

Each of the letters signed by Mr. Frank has the letterhead, "Congress of the United States, House of Representatives, Washington, D.C.," lists the committees the congressman serves on and the addresses of his Washington and home-district offices.

Two of the letters include the disclaimer "Not Printed At Government Expense." Mr. Frank said it is his personal stationery.

"I needed those letters to continue to operate my escort services in Washington," Davis said. "As a condition of my probation, I was not supposed to live outside of Virginia and I had to have a reason why I was still in D.C.," he said.

On two occasions the probation officer visited Davis at Mr. Frank's Capitol Hill residence.

Chevy Chase Elementary School principal Gabriel A. Massaro - another Davis client who met Mr. Frank through the call boy - went to the congressman's house for one of the meetings with probation officials, both Davis and Mr. Massaro told The Times.

Mr. Frank said he was aware of the meeting with the probation officials but did not attend them.

Mr. Massaro said Davis lived during this period in an apartment in the 1000 block of 25th Street NW.

"I never lived at Barney's house," Davis said.

"It was a favor for me," he said, referring to Mr. Frank's decision to write letters to the probation department.

But Davis said Mr. Frank was constantly worried about the escort activities being discovered by the probation department, police and the news media.

"He was concerned about security and he was concerned about the publicity if this were to come out," the prostitute said. "He was concerned about the things that a person would be concerned about.

"Yet the excitement, the thrill, so to speak, with being connected to that type of world, which he found to be titillating in various ways, obtaining vicarious thrills being around this type of world, he [Mr. Frank] didn't discourage it, and he was fully aware of the situation as it occurred," Davis said.

Interviews with resident managers and an owner of one of the apartments at the 25th Street location confirmed that Davis had a rented apartment there and was running his male and female prostitution services from the dwelling.

One of those prostitution services called Saxons eventually was disbanded and Davis then opened his own services providing heterosexual, homosexual and bisexual sex-for-hire. The services were called Touch of Class, Male Ad and Bi-Couples, according to Davis.

When Mr. Frank first responded to Davis's prostitution ad in The Washington Blade, he paid for one hour's worth of sex, Davis said.

"The first time the cost was \$80," the prostitute said. "He [Mr. Frank] called and asked for Greg and he asked me if I was versatile [willing to assume either a male or female sex role]".

The two had sex at Mr. Frank's basement townhouse apartment in the early evening of April 1, 1985, Davis said.

"He said he would like to see me again . . . and at the door he asked me if I had recognized him," the prostitute said. Mr. Frank, according to Davis, "said his picture had appeared in The Washington Blade . . . It was very, very abnormal to be told who he really was."

Davis said he "wasn't blown over or anything . . . I've been with priests and others in public office . . . It was just kinda strange."

Davis said Mr. Frank continued to purchase sex from him for several weeks and was provided discounted or free sex as their relationship grew.

Davis also said that he later arranged discounted and free sex for Mr. Frank from other male prostitutes in return for use of the lawmaker's house to run the escort services.

"That's an absolute lie," Mr. Frank said in an initial interview on Wednesday. But yesterday the Massachusetts Democrat said he did remember discussing with Davis procurement of male prostitutes for himself.

"He did offer that [call boys] to me. . . . We talked about it . . . and I put him off and finally told him no," Mr. Frank said.

The congressman said he never knew such sexual services were being provided to others at his house while he was at his congressional office or out of town.

"I had instructed him [Davis] not to use my apartment for his illegitimate purposes," Mr. Frank said Thursday. **"It just never occurred to me that he'd bring people over. I guess I was lied to."**

When asked how he could not have known that his admitted prostitute friend was having sexual liaisons with paying clients in his own bed, Mr. Frank said, "I was emotionally vulnerable at that time. I guess I was still coming to terms with being gay . . . It was a difficult period."

Concerning Davis' actions, the congressman said, "He suckered me."

Illustration, ANATOMY OF A FRIENDSHIP; BOX, Rep. Barney Frank, THE WASHINGTON TIMES