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**SOUTH FLORIDA: Spitzer Miami tryst alleged
A GOP strategist said he alerted the FBI months ago that New York Gov. Eliot Spitzer hired prostitutes.**

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Article Text:

Almost four months before Gov. Eliot Spitzer resigned in a sex scandal, a lawyer for Republican political operative Roger Stone sent a letter to the FBI alleging that Spitzer "used the services of high-priced call girls" while in Florida.

The letter, dated Nov. 19, said Miami Beach resident Stone learned the information from "a social contact in an adult-themed club." It offered one potentially identifying detail: The man in question hadn't taken off his calf-length black socks "during the sex act."

Stone, known for shutting down the 2000 presidential election recount effort in Miami-Dade County, is a longtime Spitzer nemesis whose political experience ranges from the Nixon White House to Al Sharpton's presidential campaign. His lawyer wrote the letter containing the call-girl allegations after FBI agents had asked to speak to Stone, though he says the FBI did not specify why he was contacted.

"Mr. Stone respectfully declines to meet with you at this time," the letter states, before going on to offer "certain information" about Spitzer.

"The governor has paid literally tens of thousands of dollars for these services. It is Mr. Stone's understanding that the governor paid not with cred! it cards or cash but through some pre-arranged transfer," the letter said.

"It is also my client's understanding from the same source that Gov. Spitzer did not remove his mid-calf length black socks during the sex act. Perhaps you can use this detail to corroborate Mr. Stone's information," the letter said. It was signed by attorney Paul Rolf Jensen of Costa Mesa, Calif.

The letter also notes that while Stone believes the information is true, he "cannot swear to its accuracy" because it is second-hand.

James Margolin, a spokesman for the FBI's New York office, would not say whether the bureau had received the letter. A spokeswoman for Spitzer also had no comment.

The letter was written several months after allegations were leveled at Stone that he had left a threatening phone message at the office of Bernard Spitzer, the ex-governor's father, regarding "phony" campaign loans involving his son's unsuccessful 1994 bid for attorney general. Stone denied! making the call but resigned as a consultant for state Senate! Republi cans in Albany.

Spitzer, the crusading attorney general who became governor, resigned March 12 amid allegations he was a client of a high-paid prostitution ring. Four people have been charged with operating the ring. Spitzer has not been charged. A federal affidavit described a rendezvous between Spitzer and a prostitute known as Kristen, since identified as Ashley Alexandra Dupré, at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington on Feb. 13.

One of Stone's lawyers, Fort Lauderdale attorney Robert Buschel, said the letter's release is an attempt to set the record straight about Stone's possible part in the Spitzer drama.

Stone confirmed details of the letter, saying a high-end call girl at an adult-themed club called Miami Velvet told him she was disappointed to have missed a call to entertain Spitzer. She said her friend had taken the call, and she described the details about the socks, Stone said. He referred The Miami Herald to his lawyer for comments.

"! The conspiracy enthusiasts on the Internet are going wild over Roger Stone's role in the fall of Eliot Spitzer. We felt it was important to lay out for the public exactly what Mr. Stone did tell the government," Buschel said.

The copy of the letter obtained by The Miami Herald was addressed to the FBI but had the names of the addressees blacked out.

Buschel is a partner in Rothstein, Rosenfeldt, Adler of Fort Lauderdale. Stone works as a partner in a separate public affairs and consulting company with the same name -- Rothstein, Rosenfeldt, Adler -- in the same office as the law firm.

"We trust this information was helpful to federal authorities in making their case against Mr. Spitzer," Buschel said.

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