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Stylists Sue Former High-Profile Boss For \$4 Million

Women Contend Chreky Sexually Harassed Them

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WASHINGTON -- Andre Chreky has been a stylist to First Lady Laura Bush, but now the salon owner could be headed from the White House to the courthouse.

Two former employees claim that working for Chreky was a nightmare -- that he constantly sexually harassed them and tried to destroy them professionally when they refused his advances.

Ronnie Barrett, who once worked at Chreky's salon on K Street in Northwest, filed suit Thursday, alleging years of sexual harassment, threats and retaliation.

"I don't want anyone else to go through the same thing, and I know there are a lot of people that have," she said.

Barrett said Chreky deliberately touched her breasts and routinely slapped or spanked her on her buttocks, using enough force to leave red marks that remained for hours.

Barrett also claims that when she went to a private meeting in Chreky's office in 2004, she believed that they were going to discuss a raise for her, but he tried to force her into a sexual act.

"He pushed me and I fell into the chair and he was grabbing me by my back and trying to push me toward his groin and he was opening his pants and his belt and I pushed him really hard and I ran away," she said.

Barrett also claims that Chreky made lewd comments about female employees' bodies and sex lives on an almost daily basis. She charges that the salon owner would also corner other female employees and make the same advances toward them that he did her.

David Sullivan, Chreky's attorney, says his client vehemently denies Barrett's claims.

Sullivan said Barrett worked for Chreky for years, following him from two other salons. He said the Chreky salon is a busy and professional workplace and the situations that Barrett asserts simply never happened. Sullivan also pointed out that Chreky's wife worked at the salon.

"It doesn't matter how powerful you might be or how prominent you might be in your industry, or how vulnerable the victim might be, no one's above the law," said Ari Wilkenfeld, Barrett's attorney.

A second former employee, Jennifer Tong, filed a similar suit against Chreky in October.

Both women also claim Chreky withheld tips and wages from them. Each is seeking a minimum of \$4 million in damages.

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