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NEW JERSEY 101.5

ALAN FREED'S PAYOLA CONTROVERSY AS TOLD BY HIS SON



By [Steve Trelise](#) September 25, 2017 4:30 PM



As the Senator [Menendez corruption trial drags](#) on, and Lt. Gov. Kim Guadagno wants to [limit gifts to state officials](#), I'm reminded of [Alan Freed](#), the disc jockey who coined the phrase "rock 'n' roll" and whose [story is being told](#) at the Bucks County Playhouse. Freed played music for kids at a time when the parents, clergy and government were afraid he was corrupting their morals. They wanted to get rid of him hoping to wipe out rock 'n' roll so they accused him of accepting money to play records. Thus the payola scandal was born. Freed, who had successful radio, television shows as well as sold out concerts would go on to lose everything. He died penniless in 1964 at the age of 43.

I'm a huge Freed fan and spoke with his son Lance who got the real story from his father as he lay dying. "It was important for him to tell me and he said I want you to know that I never ever took money to play records, I didn't have to. I played music because I loved it, because the music moved me, a \$100 bill could not buy me."

Lance Freed would go on to say that his father told him, "People after the fact gave me gifts, so when I was asked at those hearings in Washington, 'Did you ever accept gifts to play music' I said yes, then I wanted to finish my answer and I was cut off." There was also no law against taking money at the time.

Freed also told his son he said to the panel "You guys take money up front for your campaigns, and people buy influence ahead of time and if you get elected you have to remember that they gave you money to help you get elected. I on the other hand took gifts afterwards because people wanted to say 'Thank You'."

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