

Miss New Jersey blackmailed

by UPI

ASBURY PARK, N.J. -- Miss New Jersey says someone is trying to blackmail her into giving up her crown.

"Being crowned as Miss New Jersey is a dream come true. But that dream has now turned into a nightmare. I am presently the victim of blackmail and possible extortion," Amy Polumbo, 22, told a news conference in Asbury Park Thursday, The Newark Star-Ledger reported.

Polumbo said she received a letter with copies of photographs she had posted on a private Internet photo-sharing site for friends and family to see. The letter-writer threatened to go public with the photos unless she stepped down, the beauty queen said.

Neither Polumbo nor her attorney, Anthony R. Caruso, would characterize the photos, except to say they were not lewd, the Star-Ledger reported.

Caruso said he will ask state and federal authorities to track down the extortionist, whom he guessed is "someone close to Amy," the newspaper said.

The Miss New Jersey organization also received a copy of the photos with a typed note, spokesman Mark Soifer said.

"It's under review," Soifer told the Star-Ledger. "We just got the material. We're hoping the best for her. The board has to review it and make a decision."

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