State Human Trafficking News

The following is a compendium of news reports over the last month that may be of interest to our AG offices who are dealing with human trafficking issues. Neither the National Association of Attorneys General nor the National Attorneys General Training & Research Institute expresses a view as to the accuracy of news accounts, nor as to the position expounded by the authors of the hyperlinked articles.

News from Attorneys General Offices

Kansas Attorney General Derek Schmidt announced that a jury in western Kansas had convicted a 27-year-old Minnesota man on charges related to human trafficking. He was arrested after a traffic stop on I-70 and accused of transporting a person under 18, knowing that the person would be used for sex.

Massachusetts Attorney General Martha Coakley announced that a statewide grand jury has indicted Ryan Duntin on two counts of human trafficking along with an assortment of other charges. In 2007, Duntin pled guilty to inducing a minor into prostitution and three counts of deriving support from prostitution. He served a three-year prison sentence.

Nevada Attorney General Catherine Cortez Masto will announce the launch of the Southern Nevada Anti-Human Trafficking Billboard Campaign on October 29. The donated billboard space will promote the National Human Trafficking Resource Center hotline at five spaces in the Las Vegas area.

New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman announced the arrest of three members of a sex trafficking ring that operated in New York. The alleged ringleader, Eric Oliver, made calls from jail to continue directing the ring. Some of the victims were as young as 15.

Legislative Activity

In Maine, Rep. Amy Volk has introduced a measure that would allow victims of human trafficking to have their prostitution convictions vacated.

State Investigations/Prosecutions

Jerome Henderson was recently sentenced to 32 years and 8 months imprisonment after his conviction for human trafficking in Kern County, California. Henderson was accused of trying to bring a 13-year-old to Sacramento for prostitution.

Two women have been arrested and charged with human trafficking in Marion County, Florida. The investigation began when a police confidential source reported that one of the women charged, Melissa Rodriguez, agreed to procure Hispanic girls to act as an escort service.
Officials in **Clayton County, Georgia**, announced that they arrested and charged Quincy Jones on human trafficking charges. Prosecutors alleges that Jones was keeping a 17-year old girl at the Comfort Inn in Forest Park and forcing her to prostitute herself. Jones has prior convictions for drug possession.

**Howard County, Maryland**, police have charged three people with human trafficking in two separate cases. The first case came to light when a 24-year old woman sought assistance at a fire station for assault. The second case was opened when the police received a report from a victim that she had been kidnapped by a man and a women three days earlier in Rhode Island. She was then driven to various states and forced to prostitute herself.

**New Jersey** officials announced the arrest of a 21-year old man, Wendy Archelus, and charged him with serving as a combination driver and pimp for a 17-year old girl. He is been charged with human trafficking, third-degree child endangerment, and promoting child prostitution.

Three women have been arrested and charged in connection with child sex trafficking in **Mercer, Wisconsin**. An investigation was initiated when Iron County authorities responded to a disturbance call from a local motel involving a teen-aged girl fleeing from three women. The women are accused of bringing the 14-year old to the area to have sex with a 67-year old Mercer man who had responded to an add on Backpage.com

**Other News of Interest**

The **State of Ohio** is creating a network of agencies that will help youth victims of human trafficking. Two dozen children’s advocacy centers throughout the state will now provide services to victims, such as counseling. The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services is helping to fund the effort.

**Virginia Governor Bob McDonnell’s** Office held a Summit on Human Trafficking in early October. At the Summit, the Governor announced that he had issued an executive directive calling for the creation of an Anti-Human Trafficking Coordinating Committee to expand Virginia’s fight against human trafficking. The Committee’s role will be to follow up on recommendations put forward by an informal workgroup and to develop new recommendations and strategies for strengthening the state’s response to human trafficking.

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