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JUSTICE NEWS

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Georgia Man Sentenced to 17 Years in Prison for Sex Trafficking of a Minor

WASHINGTON – An Atlanta man was sentenced today to 17 years in prison and 10 years of supervised release for sex trafficking of a minor, announced Assistant Attorney General Lanny A. Breuer of the Justice Department's Criminal Division and U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Georgia Sally Quillian Yates.

Marcelo Alejo Desautu, 39, was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Orinda D. Evans in Atlanta. He pleaded guilty to the charge on Jan. 10, 2012.

“Mr. Desautu gave drugs and alcohol to a 12-year-old girl and then prostituted her to adult men,” said Assistant Attorney General Breuer. “He will now, appropriately, spend the next 17 years of his life paying for his horrific crimes. While no prison sentence can repair the harm caused by such appalling conduct, today’s sentence sends a strong message that we will pursue child sex traffickers to the fullest extent of the law.”

“This defendant earned a substantial sentence in federal prison when he drugged and sexually exploited a 12-year-old girl, forever altering the course of her life,” said U.S. Attorney Yates. “It is unfathomable that there is even a market for the sale of such a young child for sex. This lengthy sentence should deter others who would consider engaging in similar heinous acts.”

According to court documents and proceedings, between December 2007 and March 2008, Desautu agreed to care for a 12-year-old girl. Desautu instead gave the girl alcohol and drugs and then arranged for her to engage in sex acts with adult males for money. Desautu took the money the men paid to the young victim and used it to buy drugs for himself and the victim. Desautu also had sex with the young girl. One of the men who paid to have sex with the 12-year-old was Gwinnett County businessman Peter Privateer. Privateer has been charged in both Cobb and Gwinnett Counties, in Georgia, and has entered a guilty plea in Cobb County.

This case was investigated by the Cobb County Police Department and the FBI. This case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jill Steinberg of the Northern District of Georgia and Trial Attorney Andrew McCormack of the Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS) in the Justice Department's Criminal Division.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice. Led by U.S. Attorneys' Offices and CEOS, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend and prosecute individuals who exploit children, as well as to identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafchildhood.gov.

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Criminal Division