

Department of Justice

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**FORMER JUDGE PLEADS GUILTY TO TRANSPORTING
A WOMAN FROM WESTERN NEW YORK TO KENTUCKY
FOR THE PURPOSE OF ENGAGING IN PROSTITUTION**

BUFFALO, N.Y.—Terrance P. Flynn, U.S. Attorney for the Western District of New York, announced today that RONALD H. TILLS, 73 , a former State Supreme Court Judge from Hamburg, New York, pleaded guilty to an Information charging him with knowingly transporting a female in interstate commerce with the intent that the female engage in prostitution (Mann Act). The charge carries a maximum penalty of ten (10) years in prison, a fine of \$250,000 or both.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Robert C. Moscati, who handled the prosecution, stated the defendant admitted that in late October 2005, he, John Trowbridge, Michael Stebick, and others, transported a woman from the Western New York area to Kentucky and intended for the woman to engage in prostitution in Kentucky with members of a men’s organization of which the defendant was a member. As part of his plea proceedings, Mr. Tills admitted to five (5) additional occasions where he engaged in similar conduct involving the transportation of women across state lines for purposes of prostitution. Moreover, all of these instances were related to the defendant’s membership in the aforementioned men’s organization which held weekend meetings where it was their custom to make women available to the members for sexual activities in exchange for money. John Trowbridge and Michael Stebick previously entered pleas of guilty for this same conduct and are awaiting sentencing.

U.S. Attorney Flynn commended the work of the District’s Human Trafficking Task Force and Alliance (WDNY HTTFA) lead by AUSA Moscati, which has been investigating this matter. The joint investigation culminating in this plea proceeding included the participation of the Federal Bureau of

Investigation, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Laurie Bennett; the United States Border Patrol, under the direction of Acting Chief Patrol Agent Kevin Oaks; Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Lev J. Kubiak; and the Erie County Sheriff's Office, under the direction of Sheriff Timothy Howard.

Sentencing is scheduled for January 12, 2009, at 9:00 am, in Buffalo, N.Y., in front of U.S. District Judge William M. Skretny.