



**U.S. Department of Justice**

***United States Attorney  
Eastern District of Arkansas***

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**LITTLE ROCK MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO FEDERAL  
SEX TRAFFICKING AND RELATED CHARGES**

**LITTLE ROCK** – United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Arkansas, Jane W. Duke, and Thomas J. Browne, Special Agent in Charge of the Little Rock Field Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation announced today that Everett Cooney waived indictment and pleaded guilty to a federal charge of sex trafficking an underage female. Chief United States District Judge J. Leon Holmes accepted Cooney's guilty plea.

During the hearing, Cooney admitted he knew an underage female with the initials of "DB" was between the ages of 14 and 18 when she was caused to engage in commercial sex acts and that Cooney benefitted from her engaging in the commercial sex acts. Pursuant to the plea agreement, the pending indictment was dismissed upon the Court's acceptance of Cooney's plea to the sex trafficking charge. Cooney's plea exposes him to a minimum of ten years and up to life imprisonment. A sentencing hearing will be scheduled by the court. Cooney remains in custody pending his sentencing.

Cooney's co-defendant, Tommy Handy, is also in custody awaiting trial. The trial is scheduled for October 5, 2009. Handy was indicted on February 5, 2009, on one count of conspiracy to commit sex trafficking and four counts of sex trafficking; two counts of possessing a firearm in furtherance of a crime of violence; and conspiracy to distribute crack cocaine. Handy is also charged with being a felon in possession of a firearm on July 25, 2005. If found guilty on the federal charges, Handy faces a maximum sentence of life in prison and a fine in excess of \$1 million.

The case is the result of a joint investigation conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation; the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; and the Little Rock Police Department. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Joe J. Volpe and Civil Rights Division Trial Attorney Jim Felte.

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For more information, see news release dated February 5, 2009 at  
[http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/are/news\\_releases/PDFs\\_2009News\\_Releases/2009\\_index.html](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/are/news_releases/PDFs_2009News_Releases/2009_index.html).