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**CHICAGO MAN CONVICTED OF SEX TRAFFICKING MINORS**

CHICAGO — A federal jury today convicted a Chicago man of running a sex trafficking ring between 2006 and 2010 that forced into prostitution at least nine victims, eight of whom were between the ages of 13 and 17. The defendant, **Datquinn Sawyer**, was found guilty of 10 counts of sex trafficking by force, fraud, and coercion and/or sex trafficking of minors, and conspiracy to engage in sex trafficking of minors by force. The jury deliberated approximately several hours beginning Friday afternoon following a two-week trial in U.S. District Court. The trial showed that Sawyer was a pimp who chose vulnerable victims, including girls who were young, homeless, or runaways, and used violence and threats of violence to exploit them sexually, knowing that they were minors.

Sawyer, 32, remains in federal custody without bond and faces a maximum sentence of life in prison on each count, as well as a mandatory minimum sentence of 15 years on nine of the counts. U.S. District Judge Charles Kocoras scheduled sentencing for Feb. 23, 2012.

The conviction was announced by Patrick J. Fitzgerald, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, and Robert D. Grant, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Chicago Office

of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Marc Krickbaum and Michelle Nasser.

Six of the nine victims testified as government witnesses during the trial. The evidence showed that Sawyer recruited and groomed his victims, frequently deceiving them by initially concealing that he was a pimp and promising them riches and glamour if they stayed with him. He convinced victims that he loved them and wanted to be in a long-term romantic relationship with them. Sawyer also used threats and physical beatings to enforce a rigid set of rules that left him with a high degree of control over all his victims. Sawyer required the victims to commit commercial sex acts, and to give him the money they made. To maintain his control, he had sex with many of the victims, and impregnated three of them.

Sawyer gave his victims names beginning with a “P” — Precious, Paradise, Pooh, Peaches, Princess, Passion, Pebbles (Bubbles), and Perfect — based on his own nickname of “P-Child,” and had his victims call him “Daddy.” He also had many victims tattooed with his nicknames, and he prohibited his victims from looking at or speaking to other men (other than customers), and from talking back to or disrespecting him. When his victims broke the rules, he threatened or beat them.

Two co-defendants, **Kevin Sharp**, 53, and **Waymond Orr**, 33, pleaded guilty before trial. The evidence showed that Sharp and Orr lived with Sawyer and the victims for periods of time and worked as drivers and security guards. Sawyer paid Sharp and Orr in cash and gave them clothes, food, and housing, in exchange for driving victims to and from sexual encounters on the street, referred to as “working the track,” including various locations on and around Cicero Avenue. Other locations were arranged through online advertisements, such as on Craigslist and similar web sites. Sharp and Orr watched victims to make sure they were not arrested or “stolen” by another pimp.

On occasion, Sawyer told Sharp and Orr to watch victims and make sure they did not leave while Sawyer was away from the house. Both Sharp and Orr knew about Sawyer's rules and were present when Sawyer beat his victims.

Sharp and Orr also face a maximum of life in prison and are scheduled to be sentenced on Jan. 18, 2012.

The case was initiated by FBI special agents, investigators from the Chicago Police Department's Vice Control Section, and investigators from the Cook County Sheriff's Police Vice Section. Based on this case and the advanced investigative techniques used, the Chicago FBI office has formed an Innocence Lost Task Force to address sex trafficking of minors.

In June 2003, the FBI, in conjunction with the Justice Department's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS) and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, launched the Innocence Lost National Initiative, which is aimed at addressing the growing problem of domestic sex trafficking of children in the United States. In the seven years since its inception, the initiative has resulted in the development of 39 dedicated task forces and working groups throughout the country involving federal, state and local law enforcement agencies working in tandem with U.S. Attorney's Offices.

To date, these groups have worked successfully to rescue more than 1,200 children. Investigations have successfully led to the conviction of over 600 pimps, madams, and their associates who exploit children through prostitution. These convictions have resulted in lengthy sentences, including multiple sentences of 25 years to life in prison and the seizure of real property, vehicles, and monetary assets.

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