



***United States Attorney
Southern District of New York***

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**QUEENS MAN PLEADS GUILTY IN MANHATTAN FEDERAL COURT
TO SEX TRAFFICKING OF A MINOR**

PREET BHARARA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that MARK LEITZSEY, of Queens, New York, pled guilty today in Manhattan federal court to sex trafficking of a teenage girl ("Victim-1"). From the time she turned 16 years old, LEITZSEY arranged for Victim-1 to perform commercial sex acts. In particular, in August 2010, he arranged for her to work at a bachelor party and to perform commercial sex acts for \$200. LEITZSEY, 45, pled guilty before U.S. Magistrate Judge DEBRA FREEMAN.

Manhattan U.S. Attorney PREET BHARARA said: "The sex trafficking of American teenagers is unfortunately more common than people sometimes realize. This case demonstrates that we will use every resource at our disposal to investigate and prosecute such heinous conduct."

According to the Complaint, the underlying Indictment, the Superseding Information, and LEITZSEY's plea allocution:

Between December 2009 and April 2010, LEITZSEY participated in several sales of narcotics to NYPD undercover detectives at his then-residence on Union Avenue in the Bronx, New York. During one such narcotics transaction, he told a female undercover detective, "I run a brothel upstairs and need girls like you to work for me." Later, in June 2010, in a conversation with an undercover detective ("Detective-1"), LEITZSEY agreed to provide several prostitutes for what he believed would be a bachelor party. The prostitutes were to perform commercial sex acts in exchange for approximately \$200 per prostitute. He sent a text message to Detective-1 that contained a photograph of one of the prostitutes for the bachelor party.

On July 28, 2010, LEITZSEY and Detective-1 met in person in Queens, New York, where he accepted several hundred

dollars from Detective-1 as a down-payment for the bachelor party. In exchange, he again agreed to provide prostitutes who would perform commercial sex acts, including a 17-year old girl. He then provided Detective-1 with a link to BoostHook, a chatroom for Boost Mobile users, and told her to look under his username to see photographs of the girls whom LEITZSEY exploited as prostitutes.

On August 6, 2010, the date of the alleged bachelor party, LEITZSEY arrived at a hotel in New York, New York, with two women, Victim-1 and another individual. Victim-1, who was 18 years old at the time, explained that she met LEITZSEY when she was approximately 14 years old. Victim-1 also said that when she was approximately 16 years old and still a minor, a fact LEITZSEY was aware of, LEITZSEY caused her to engage in commercial sex acts in exchange for money on several occasions and took some or all of the money. Victim-1 also said that LEITZSEY used violence and threats of violence to cause her to engage in a commercial sex act for money with one of LEITZSEY's clients.

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LEITZSEY pled guilty to one count of sex trafficking of a minor. He faces a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years in prison. He also admitted to the forfeiture allegations requiring him to forfeit any property constituting or derived from proceeds obtained by the defendant directly or indirectly as a result of the crime, and any property used in the commission of the crime. He is scheduled to be sentenced by Judge BARBARA S. JONES on August 11, 2011, at 11:00 a.m.

Mr. BHARARA praised the outstanding work of the FBI and the NYPD in investigating this case.

This case is being prosecuted by the Complex Frauds Unit. Assistant U.S. Attorneys AMANDA KRAMER and JESSICA ORTIZ are in charge of the prosecution.

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