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QUEENS MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO SEX TRAFFICKING CHARGE
FOR FORCING YOUNG TEENAGE RUNAWAY INTO PROSTITUTION

*Will Be Sentenced To Up To 10 Years In Prison;
Guilty Plea Marks Office's Fifth Sex Trafficking Conviction*

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown announced today that a 33-year-old South Ozone Park man has pleaded guilty to sex trafficking a female runaway between the ages of 14 and 15 whom he forced to perform sexual acts for pay at various locations in Queens County.

District Attorney Brown said, "This defendant preyed on a vulnerable and troubled teenage girl, using her first for his own sexual gratification and then as a commodity to be sold to others for cash which he then pocketed for himself. Today's guilty plea and the promised sentence of incarceration will help to deter others who traffic in vulnerable girls by first gaining their trust and then betraying that trust."

The District Attorney identified the defendant as Michael Summerville, 33, of 135-50 128th Street in the South Ozone Park section of Queens. Summerville, who has been held in jail in lieu of \$250,000 bail since his arrest in December 2010, pleaded guilty yesterday to the crime of sex trafficking before Acting Supreme Court Justice James P. Griffin, who set sentencing for April 17, 2012, at which time he indicated that he would sentence Summerville to an indeterminate term of five to ten years in prison.

District Attorney Brown noted that Summerville's guilty plea is the fifth sex trafficking conviction obtained by his office since state legislation strengthening penalties against human trafficking and providing assistance to victims took effect on November 1, 2007. The defendants in the four other cases are all serving state prison sentences ranging from two to six years to 25 years to life.

District Attorney Brown said that, according to the criminal charges in the Summerville case, Summerville befriended the then 14-year-old victim in January 2010 after she ran away from home. Engaging in sexual activity with her, Summerville eventually pimped her out until she managed to return home. In October 2010, the victim, then age 15, ran away again and returned to Summerville's Brooklyn home to retrieve a cell phone and computer that he had taken. She was then brought to his Queens home, where she stayed with him until approximately October 31, 2010, and during which time he engaged in sexual activities with her and had her engage in prostitution on a daily basis – along with other females – and forced her to give all of her earnings to him.

(MORE)

On approximately October 31, 2010, Summerville then turned the girl over to another pimp who had sex with her and forced her to engage in prostitution until she was eventually able to escape.

Summerville was summarily arrested in December 2010 following an undercover investigation by the NYPD's Vice Enforcement Division based on information provided by the victim – the telephone number that Summerville used in his backpage.com ad. On the night of December 1, 2010, undercover officers went to Summerville's residence and were met by four females, each of whom offered to have sexual intercourse with the officers in exchange for money. The officers paid one of the females a total fee of \$360 (\$90 per girl) in pre-recorded buy money, which she then brought to a back room. Shortly thereafter, the officers entered the back room where they observed Summerville and recovered the \$360 in buy money from his pants pocket.

The investigation was conducted by Detective Salvatore Molino, of the New York City Police Department's Special Victims Squad, under the supervision of Lieutenant Arthur Hall, and by Detective Brian Stassi of the NYPD's Queens Vice Enforcement Division under the supervision of Sergeant Michael Jones and the overall supervision of Chief Brian Conroy.

Assistant District Attorney Jessica L. Melton, of the District Attorney's Special Proceedings Bureau, prosecuted the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Anthony M. Communiello, Bureau Chief, and Assistant District Attorney Oscar W. Ruiz, Deputy Bureau Chief, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Peter A. Crusco and Deputy Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Linda M. Cantoni.

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Note to Editors: Press release e-version posted on www.queensda.org