

# ESSEX COUNTY PROSECUTORS OFFICE PRESS RELEASE



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**Subject:** Four Indicted in First Human Trafficking Case Under New Law  
*First indictment under new comprehensive anti-trafficking law.*

**Date:** January 15, 2014

**Category:** Human Trafficking

**Defendant(s):** C.B. Torres, C.P. Torres, P. Munoz, V. Reyes

Acting Essex County Prosecutor Carolyn A. Murray announced today that four defendants have been charged in a 35-count indictment, alleging they were part of a human trafficking conspiracy involving a 15-year-old Essex County girl.

"This is our first human trafficking indictment under the new comprehensive anti-trafficking law. It was brought in coordination with the Attorney General's Human Trafficking Task Force," said Acting Prosecutor Murray. "We plan to aggressively go after those who would attempt to exploit children and others in this manner."

"This is a heartbreaking case which starkly illustrates the type of sexual abuse and exploitation of the very vulnerable that our new anti-trafficking law is meant to address," said Acting Attorney General John J. Hoffman. "I commend all those who worked on this investigation. Their efforts will prevent these defendants from harming other young women."

Charles P. Torres, 59, of North Bergen; Patricia Munoz, 23, of Jersey City; Victor Reyes, 38, of Union City; and Charles B. Torres, 26, of Ridgefield Park have all been charged with a conspiracy that involved promoting prostitution, money laundering and other charges.

The indictment was handed up today in Essex County. The defendants will be ordered to appear in court for arraignment at a later date before the Honorable Sherry Hutchins-Henderson, Judge of the Superior Court. The indictment is merely an accusation and the defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty.

Assistant Prosecutor Kelly Sandler, who is handling the case, said in May of 2013 Patricia Munoz met a 15-year-old girl at a party. Munoz befriended the girl and introduced her to Charles P. Torres for the purpose of causing the victim to become a prostitute.

Through manipulation and coercion the victim worked as a prostitute for Charles P. Torres from May 2013 to August 2013. During that time the child was transported from different locations in Belleville and North Bergen to various hotels and apartments where she was forced to have sex with adult men for money.

The victim was then required to turn the money over to Charles P. Torres, who advertised the victim with contacts he already had over the telephone, via text message and online where he posted advertisements with her photo to sell her body for sex, Assistant Prosecutor Sandler said.

Charles P. Torres also took photos of the victim in various states of undress and entirely naked, performing sexual acts and using sex toys. These photos were maintained on his cellular phone, camera and computer and were distributed via text and posted in online advertisements, Assistant Prosecutor Sandler explained.

Additionally, Charles P. Torres is charged with sexually assaulting the victim on at least two different occasions in his home in North Bergen.

Charles P. Torres was arrested on Aug. 7, 2013 and incarcerated at the Essex County Correctional Facility where his operation remained ongoing. He continued to collect money from men who had previously had sex with the victim in this case and at least one other adult prostitute.

The collection of outstanding payments was facilitated through phone calls placed by the defendant from the jail to his son, Charles B. Torres, and Victor Reyes. Both Charles B. Torres and Reyes communicated with different individuals who owed money to Charles P. Torres for previous sexual encounters and they set up collections.

Reyes was photographed making at least two money pick ups on behalf of Charles P. Torres. Those illegal proceeds were shared between Charles B. Torres and Reyes. These incidents occurred at least twice and maintained the prostitution business. This created an enterprise of Racketeering in which Charles P. Torres, Reyes and Charles B. Torres all participated in varying degrees.

Charles P. Torres and Munoz both face 20 years to life in New Jersey State Prison for their roles in these crimes. Reyes and Charles B. Torres both face 10 to 20 years in New Jersey State Prison for their roles in this enterprise.

The defendants were indicted on the following charges:

Charles P. Torres, the father, was indicted on four counts of 1st degree Human Trafficking. He was also indicted for Racketeering, Promoting Prostitution, Conspiracy to Commit Racketeering, Sexual Assault, Promoting Prostitution of a Minor, Production of Child Pornography, Distribution of Child Pornography, Endangering the Welfare of a Child, Terroristic Threats, Money Laundering and other Conspiracy counts.

Patricia Munoz was indicted for Human Trafficking, Promoting Prostitution, Conspiracy to Commit Human Trafficking, Conspiracy to Promote Prostitution, Endangering the Welfare of a Child and Conspiracy to Endanger the Welfare of a Child.

Victor Reyes was indicted on Racketeering, Conspiracy to Commit Racketeering, Promoting Prostitution, Money Laundering, Conspiracy to Commit Money Laundering and Conspiracy to Promote Prostitution.

Charles B. Torres, the son, was charged with Racketeering, Conspiracy to Commit Racketeering, Conspiracy to Commit Money Laundering and Conspiracy to Promote Prostitution.

Acting Prosecutor Murray said the investigation and prosecution was a joint effort brought in coordination with the Attorney General's Human Trafficking Task Force. She lauded the FBI, the Belleville Police Department and the Hudson County Prosecutor's Office for their help in this case.

[ NOTE: The ECPO web site has additional material for this Press Release, such as photos or links to documents. To access this media material, please open the web site page for this Press Release at: <http://www.njecpo.org/?p=1881> ]

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