

ESSEX COUNTY PROSECUTORS OFFICE PRESS RELEASE



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Subject: Man Pleads Guilty to Human Trafficking
Date: May 01, 2014
Category: Human Trafficking
Defendant(s): Charles P. Torres

Acting Essex County Prosecutor Carolyn A. Murray announced today that Charles P. Torres, 55, of North Bergen pled guilty in Superior Court today before the Honorable Sherry Hutchins-Henderson, Judge of the Superior Court, to multiple counts, including human trafficking and sexual assault.

Specifically, Torres pled guilty to two counts of first degree human trafficking, promoting prostitution, sexual assault, possession of child pornography and endangering the welfare of a child.

According to Assistant Prosecutor Kelly Sandler, who handled the case, his pleas to human trafficking fall under the State's Human Trafficking Prevention, Protection and Treatment Act which went into effect only last year. These are the first guilty pleas under the revised statute in the state.

Assistant Prosecutor Sandler said, "The comprehensive nature of the amended human trafficking statute allows the state to prosecute these crimes aggressively to ensure that defendants like Torres will be punished for these horrific crimes. Hopefully this resolution will deter others from participating in these crimes and continue to educate the public on its pervasive presence in our communities."

Torres told the court that he recruited and enticed a minor child to work as an underage prostitute in both Essex and Hudson counties. The child was only 15 years old at the time. Torres stated that he advertised the victim on the internet and accepted money from adult men who had sex with the child.

He additionally stated that he committed a sexual assault against the victim and photographed her in sexual situations.

Torres is expected to be sentenced on June 27. Under the terms of the plea agreement the state will recommend that he be sentenced to no less than 20 years in New Jersey State Prison with 20-year period of parole ineligibility. The defendant will be required to register as a Sex Offender under Megan's Law and is subject to parole supervision for life.

Additionally, he is required to pay a \$25,000 fine to help support the Human Trafficking Survivor's Assistance Fund.

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.

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