



OFFICE OF THE STATE ATTORNEY

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STATE ATTORNEY ARONBERG ANNOUNCES CRIMINAL CHARGES IN PROSTITUTION RING

WEST PALM BEACH -- State Attorney Dave Aronberg announced today that prosecutors have charged 25 individuals with Soliciting Another to Commit Prostitution, pursuant to Sections 796.07(2)(f) and (5)(a)1 of the Florida Statutes. This charge is a First Degree Misdemeanor, punishable by up to one year in jail, a \$5,000 civil penalty, and a mandatory 100 hours of community service and educational program on the negative effects of prostitution and human trafficking.

State Attorney Aronberg praised the Jupiter Police Department for its professionalism and success in investigating the alleged prostitution ring over several months. He said that his office also expects to receive filing packets for the two women who have been arrested by Jupiter police for, among other things, Deriving Support from the Proceeds of Prostitution, which is a Second Degree Felony.

“These cases aren’t about any one defendant or any group of defendants,” Aronberg said. “The larger picture, which we must all confront, is the cold reality

that many prostitutes in cases like this are victims, often lured into this country with promises of a better life, only to be forced to live and work in a sweatshop or a brothel, subject to force, fraud or coercion.”

These charges begin the court process, with local defendants being mailed a summons to appear in court. Out of county defendants will have a capias issued – which is essentially a low-level warrant – and will have to either surrender or have an attorney contact law enforcement to satisfy the warrant. The Clerk’s office will publicly release court dates for those receiving a summons. The names of all defendants have been released by the Jupiter Police Department.

Noting that his office works closely with the FBI and the Palm Beach County Sheriff’s Office on a Human Trafficking Task Force to investigate and prosecute “modern-day slavery,” Aronberg said that “human trafficking often occurs in plain sight, which is why I am hopeful that these cases will encourage people to say something if they see something, and for victims of this underreported crime to gain the courage to speak up and let their voices be heard.”

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