



MEMORANDUM

From: Shared Hope International
To: Members of the Arizona Governor's Task Force
Date: September 9, 2013
Re: Facilitation of Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking

Online classified websites, like Backpage.com, are now a primary venue for traffickers to sell sex with minors and for buyers to purchase sex with child victims of trafficking. This is domestic minor sex trafficking. These classified websites provide anonymity and accessibility—a perfect storm for the proliferation of sex trafficking. Over the past four years, Shared Hope International has joined policy, faith and NGO leaders in national advocacy efforts to hold classified websites providing this venue accountable for their role in facilitating sex trafficking.

Arizona's anti-trafficking legislation includes the facilitation of sex trafficking as a crime.¹ Facilitators aid and abet, conspire or benefit from sex trafficking. Backpage.com has been identified through research and expert testimony as the industry leader in the facilitation of commercial sex. A recent Advanced Interactive Media Group (AIM) report estimated that Backpage.com nets more than 82% of the total \$45 million dollars in industry revenue. Some 69,450 advertisements for "escorts" and "body rubs"—both euphemisms for prostitution—were counted on Backpage.com in May 2013.² (See attached 2013 AIM report).

Facilitation of commercial sex by classified websites is widely viewed as responsible for the explosion in sex trafficking in the United States. Research by Shared Hope International in the *National Report on Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking* cited an 800% increase over a two-year period of reports by child victims of sex trafficking that they were prostituted with the aid of technology. The industry giant Backpage.com is most often named as that technology. Service providers working with child sex trafficking victims have documented between 80% and 100% of their clients have been bought and sold on Backpage.com. A study by the non-profit YouthSpark in Atlanta, Georgia, surveyed service providers across the nation on

¹ The act of assisting or facilitating in some manner the crime of sex trafficking is prohibited in the state trafficking law. Ariz. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 13-1308 (Trafficking of persons for forced labor or services) makes it a crime to "[k]nowingly benefit, financially or by receiving anything of value, from participation in a venture that has engaged in an act in violation of section 13-1306 [Unlawfully obtaining labor or services], section 13-1307 [Sex trafficking] or this section." Also, Ariz. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 13-3553 (Sexual exploitation of a minor) states,

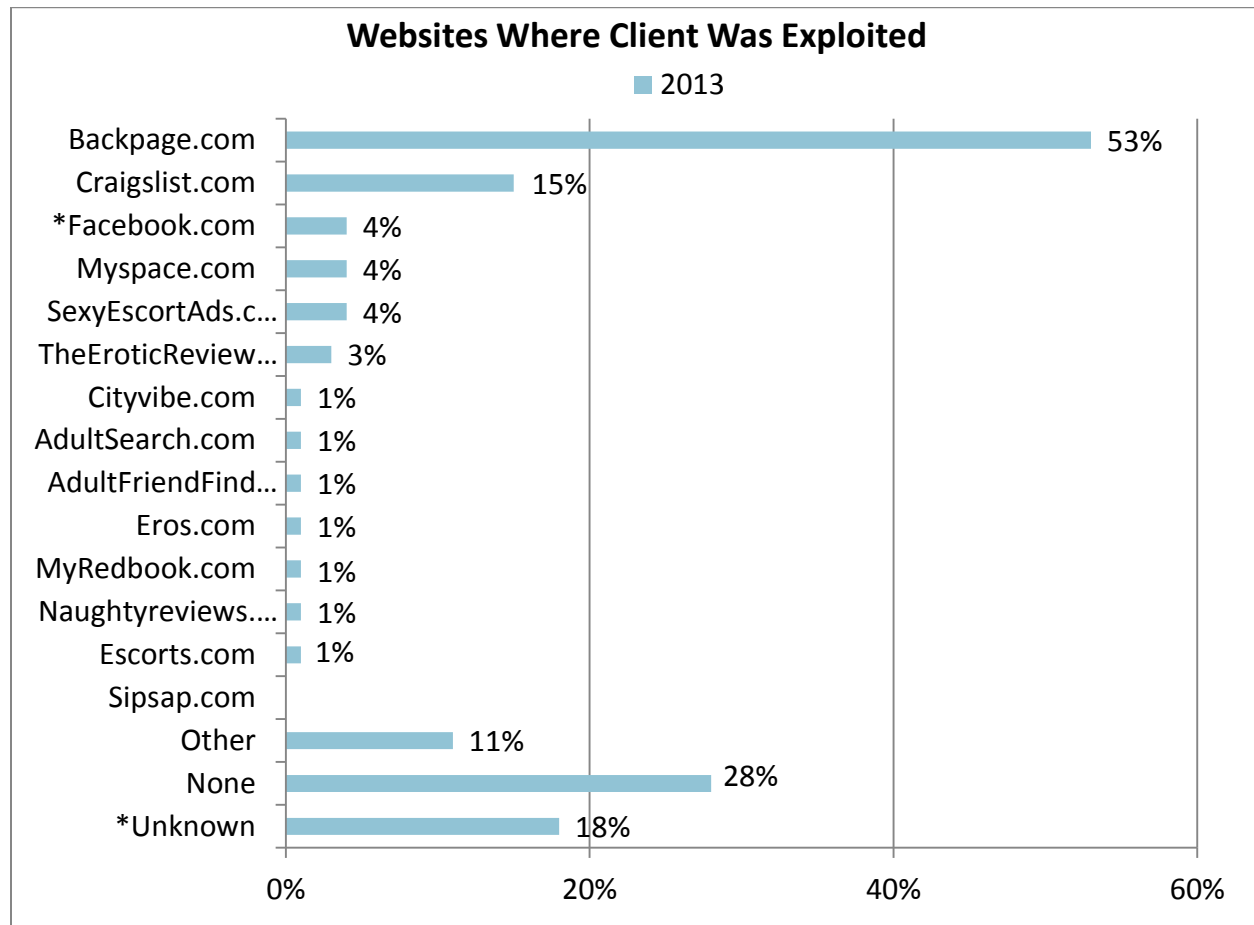
A. A person commits sexual exploitation of a minor by knowingly:

1. Recording, filming, photographing, developing or duplicating any visual depiction in which a minor is engaged in exploitive exhibition or other sexual conduct.
2. Distributing, transporting, exhibiting, receiving, selling, purchasing, electronically transmitting, possessing or exchanging any visual depiction in which a minor is engaged in exploitive exhibition or other sexual conduct.

² Note: This number was incorrectly stated in the original memorandum to the Task Force as an average of 17,000 over a two-month period.



questions related to domestic minor sex trafficking victims in their care. Seventy-two percent of the child victims in their care were bought and sold for sex online; 53% reported being trafficked on Backpage.com.



Backpage.com admits that its website is being used for the commercial sexual exploitation of children. Two instances of their admissions are documented in an August 31, 2011 letter signed by nearly every state attorney general in the country to Village Voice Media (see attached August 31, 2011 letter from NAAG to Village Voice Media). The letter recounts statements made by Village Voice Media (then parent company to Backpage.com) board member Don Moon in a meeting with the Washington State Attorney General's Office, readily admitting that prostitution advertisements regularly appear on Backpage.com, and Backpage.com's vice president Carl Ferrer acknowledging that the company identifies more than 400 "adult services" posts every month that may involve minors.

Research, law enforcement, and service provider testimony all indicate online advertising of commercial sex with children has been one of the most utilized platforms for traffickers to sell minors. *Backpage.com is consistently named as the source.* Shared Hope has documented 303 cases in 45 states of children being sex trafficked through Backpage.com through media reports. Many of these cases involve children trafficked in and out of Arizona for prostitution (see attached Backpage.com Cases Tracking document).

The federal Communications Decency Act (CDA) provides Internet Service Providers with immunity from any civil suit and from state criminal liability. In 1996, when the CDA was enacted, the threat of sex trafficking through online classifieds was unforeseen. Now, however, online classified websites promoting commercial sex are free to do in the virtual world what would not be permissible in the physical world—maintain a venue for the advertising, purchase and sale of prostitution within which sex trafficking occurs.

Backpage.com, and similar sites that promote prostitution, have employed the CDA in the courts to defend their business from the commercial sex advertisements they are permitting and defeat the claims of damages by child victims (see *M.A. v. Village Voice Media Holdings*, 809 F.Supp.2d 1041 (ED Miss. 2011)). Backpage.com is fighting hard to protect this special status they enjoy under the CDA, but Shared Hope International, the National Association of Attorneys General, and hundreds of other advocacy groups and individuals continue to put pressure on the online classified industry to stop the sex trafficking occurring on their website. At the same time, these groups are working with Congress to correct the federal laws, and advocating for state legislatures to prepare for the ability to hold these online facilitators criminally liable under state law.

Backpage.com asserts that it assists law enforcement to investigate sex trafficking by corralling the criminal activity and reporting to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC). Backpage.com may be serving as a tool for law enforcement, but they are facilitating the very activity they claim to be combatting and defending their operations. At the same time, law enforcement admits there is not enough capacity to adequately investigate and respond to the extent of sex trafficking advertised on classified websites. And the trafficking activity continues to grow.

Other actions directed at Backpage.com as the profit giant of commercial sex advertisements include:

- 53 mayors from cities across the country joined in a letter from the United States Conference of Mayors urging Backpage.com to require identification for people posting escort ads on their website (see attached May 7, 2012 letter from U.S. Conference of Mayors to Backpage.com CEO (*then Backpage.com parent company Village Voice CEO*) Jim Larkin).
- Resolutions were submitted by both the U.S. Senate and U.S. House of Representatives expressing the sense that Backpage.com should eliminate its “Adult” section (see attached April 25, 2012 U.S. Senate Resolution 439 and May 7, 2012 U.S House Resolution 646).
- U.S. Representative Frank Wolf (R-VA) sent a letter to U.S. Attorney General Holder urging the investigation into the activities on Backpage.com (see attached March 27, 2013 letter from Rep. Wolf to AG Holder).
- 46 state Attorneys General contacted Backpage.com’s counsel, Samuel Fifer, documenting illicit activity on Backpage.com and requesting removal of the “adult services” section of the website (see attached August 31, 2011 letter from NAAG to Samuel Fifer).
- 266,809 concerned clergy and citizens, including John Buffalo Mailer, the son of Village Voice founder Norman Mailer, signed a Change.org petition to shut down the “adult services” section on Backpage.com (see <http://www.change.org/petitions/tell-village-voice-media-to-stop-child-sex-trafficking-on-backpage-com>). A dozen more petitions have been started on Change.org by

concerned citizens from across the country, including one from Phoenix, Arizona that garnered 92 signatures in the time it was live (see <http://www.change.org/petitions/tell-village-voice-media-to-stop-child-sex-trafficking-on-backpage-com>).

- Goldman Sachs, a financier of Backpage.com's former parent company, Village Voice Media, owning a 16% stake in the company, sold its shares after learning of the child sex trafficking on Backpage.com.
- Shared Hope International joined 51 non-profit leaders in sending a joint letter to leadership at Backpage.com requesting the removal of the "adult services" section of the website (see attached December 12, 2011 letter from NGOs to Backpage.com).

Arizona law makes it a crime to "[k]nowingly benefit, financially or by receiving anything of value, from participation in a venture that has engaged in an act in violation of section 13-1306 [Unlawfully obtaining labor or services], section 13-1307 [Sex trafficking]. . ." Backpage.com and other classified websites are profiting from the sex trafficking occurring on the websites. At present, however, Backpage.com and its ilk are immune from state criminal actions pursuant to the CDA. Two proposals are on the table to change this. First, a regulatory approach requiring inspection of business and professional licenses and the identity of individuals posting advertisements can bring accountability to the classified website business and could assist in curtailing the illegal activities occurring on the online classified sites. Second, a surgical amendment to the CDA has been proposed by 48 state attorneys general in a letter to Congress in July of this year that would open the door to state criminal actions for the facilitation of prostitution on these online classified sites (see July 24, 2013 letter from NAAG to Congress). Arizona can prepare for these changes and be poised to take action against online classified entities facilitating sex trafficking. Arizona can and should develop policy to combat online facilitation of sex trafficking, demonstrating the continued commitment to intolerance for any criminal activity that endangers children.



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Online prostitution-ad revenue crosses Craigslist benchmark

Revenue from U.S. online prostitution advertising totaled \$45 million in the 12 months ended in May, surpassing a benchmark set when Craigslist abandoned its adult services section in September 2010.

For the first time, the estimated 12-month revenue generated on five websites tracked by the AIM Group has exceeded the \$44.6 million a year that Craigslist alone made from selling ads for escorts and body rubs, which are both euphemisms for prostitution.

Most of the \$45 million generated from June 2012 through May --- 82.3 percent --- has been generated by Backpage.com, a general classifieds site that has succeeded Craigslist as the nation's leading publisher of online prostitution advertising. The 12-month total for all five sites, however, still falls short of the estimated \$71 million the AIM Group expected Craigslist and other sites to generate in 2010.

Backpage's monthly revenue from online escort and body-rub advertising already exceeds the Craigslist estimates from three years ago. In May, Backpage generated \$4.5 million from online prostitution ads in 23 U.S. cities. That's up 2 percent from \$4.4 million in April and up 78.3 percent from \$2.5 million in May 2012. The revenue increase is due primarily to rate increases. At its peak, Craigslist generated about \$3.7 million a month from escort and body rub ads.

May listings for escorts and body rubs on Backpage totaled 69,450, a 2.4 percent increase from 67,800 in April, but a 30.5 percent drop from the 99,880 listings counted in May 2012.

Unique visits to Backpage in May totaled 4 million, according to Compete.com, down 1.6 percent from 4.1 million in April, and up 6.2 percent from 3.8 million in May 2012. (Backpage.com has many categories other than adult services, and thus much of its traffic is to sections not identified with sex ads.)

All five of the other tracked websites --- Backpage, Eros.com, CityVibe.com, MyRedbook.com and AdultSearch.com --- generated \$5.3 million in May, up 2.6 percent from \$5.1 million in April, and up 67 percent from \$3.2 million the same month in 2012.

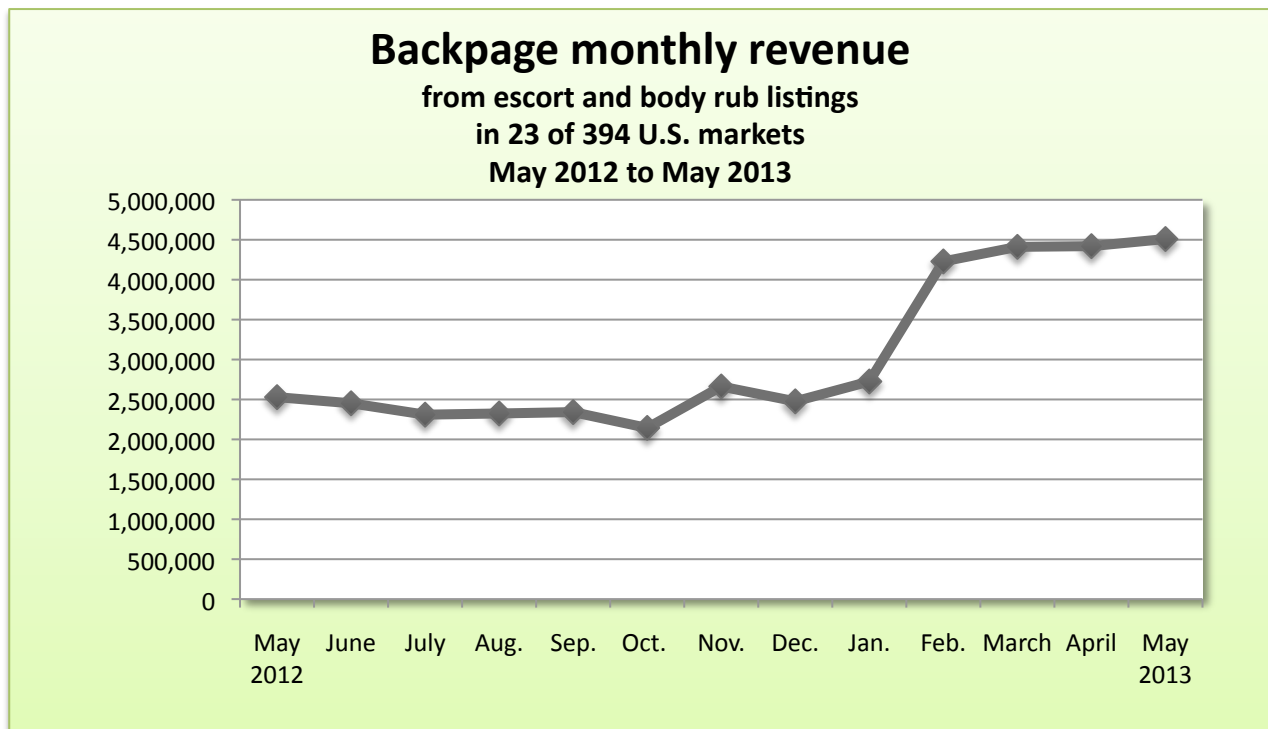
Backpage is operated by Backpage.com LLC, an independent company that until January owned a group of 13 alternative weeklies, including the Village Voice in New York City. In September, the owners of Village Voice Media and Backpage agreed to sell its papers to a new company, Voice Media Group. The move separated Backpage from the weeklies, which no longer carry Backpage classified ads on their websites or in print.

Like Craigslist before it, Backpage.com has been under pressure from religious leaders, politicians and anti-trafficking organizations to stop selling prostitution ads. However, in early December the attorney general in Washington state agreed to work to repeal a law intended to force Backpage.com and other websites to verify the age of people who place online escort ads. Tennessee has passed a similar law, but federal judges have enjoined both states from enforcing it. Other states, including Connecticut, are considering similar legislation. The New York City Council and the city councils of Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minn., have passed resolutions urging the old Village Voice Media to eliminate adult ads on Backpage.

The U.S. Communications Decency Act protects publishers of online advertising posted directly by advertisers if the ads have not been reviewed before they appear online - even if they promote prostitution or include illegal references to discrimination in housing, for example.

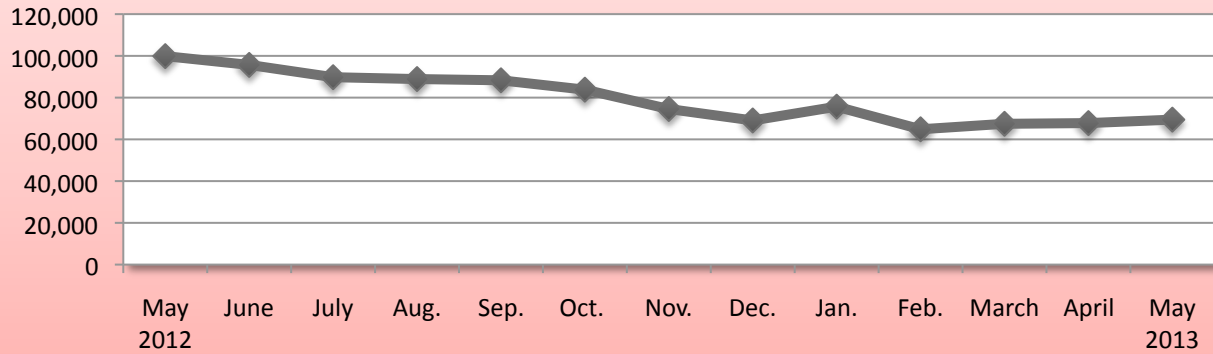
The AIM Group revenue estimates include only advertising in 23 of the 394 markets where Backpage.com offers localized sites in the U.S. Thus, its estimates of the company's revenue from prostitution ads are extremely conservative. (Backpage covers 600 cities in 30 countries and territories, including sites in Canada, Australia, Ireland, New Zealand, the U.K., the Caribbean, Mexico and 12 countries in Europe, South America and Asia.)

Here are the trends in revenue, listings and unique visitors at Backpage.com during the last year:



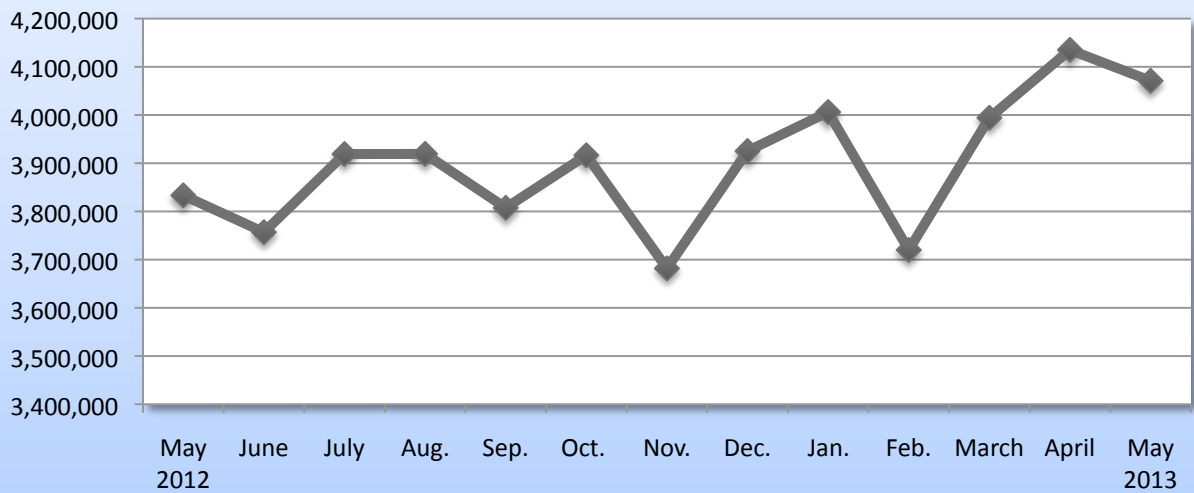
Backpage monthly escort and body rub listings

in 23 of 394 U.S. markets
May 2012 to May 2013



Backpage.com unique visitors

May 2012 to May 2013
according to Compete.com

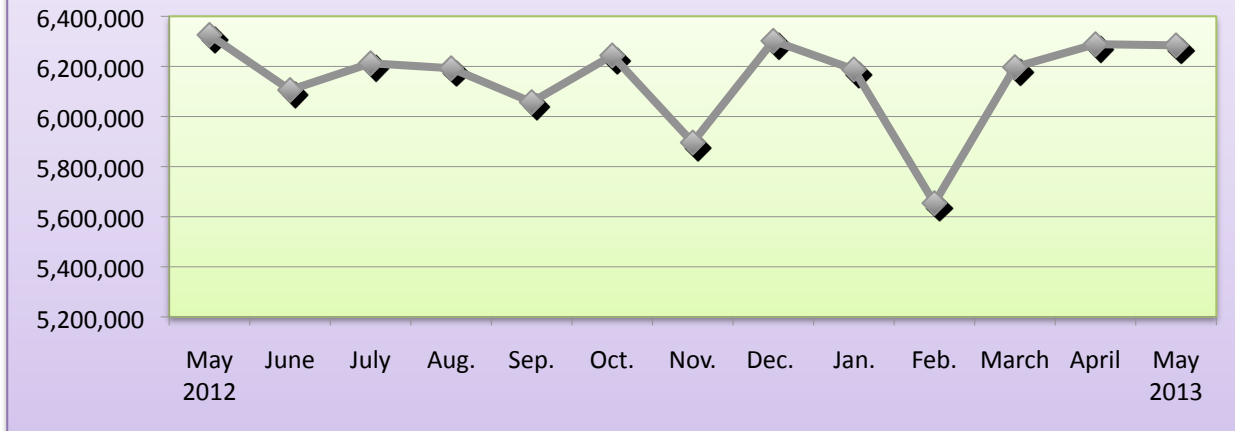


Unique visits to 15 tracked sites totaled 6.3 million in May, according to Compete.com, the same as in April, and the same as in May 2012.

(The AIM Group previously tracked traffic to 25 sites but dropped nine whose traffic is insignificant.)

The following chart shows the change since April 2012 in unique visitors to sites that advertise escorts.

Unique visitors to 15 sites that advertise escorts May 2012 to May 2013 according to Compete.com



Listings for escorts and body rubs on seven sites totaled 175,055, up 1.3 percent from 172,787 in April and up 5.6 percent from 165,824 in the same month last year.

The AIM Group, an interactive-media consultancy based in Altamonte Springs, Fla., has tracked revenue on Craigslist since 2004 and began tracking Craigslist’s prostitution-ad revenue in 2009, when the site first began charging for adult-services ads.

The AIM Group counts the number of Backpage ads for female escorts and body rubs in 23 U.S. cities over a 30-day period. Revenue is estimated by multiplying the number of ads by the advertising rates in each city, plus an assumed additional charge to republish the ads four times. The research does not count ads published outside the primary cities, so revenue has been substantially underestimated.

The AIM Group has also tracked revenue for four other sites that sell prostitution advertising: Eros.com, CityVibe.com, MyRedbook.com and AdultSearch.com. Here is the estimated monthly revenue from the last 12 months (June 2012 through May 2013) at sites that sell prostitution advertising or listings:

Estimated monthly prostitution advertising revenue (in 1000s)

Site	June 2012	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May 2013
Backpage.com	\$2,452	\$2,310	\$2,324	\$2,341	\$2,143	\$2,662	\$2,477	\$2,725	\$4,229	\$4,411	\$4,420	\$4,509
Eros.com	\$477	\$459	\$453	\$501	\$461	\$485	\$407	\$430	\$461	\$447	\$475	\$461
CityVibe.com	\$91	\$85	\$103	\$91	\$100	\$112	\$99	\$112	\$165	\$216	\$170	\$247
MyRedbook.com	\$20	\$16	\$15	\$16	\$16	\$15	\$17	\$19	\$14	\$14	\$14	\$11
AdultSearch.com	\$41	\$40	\$56	\$62	\$61	\$61	\$57	\$61	\$66	\$56	\$66	\$50
Total	\$3,080	\$2,910	\$2,951	\$3,011	\$2,783	\$3,336	\$3,057	\$3,348	\$4,934	\$5,143	\$5,144	\$5,278

The AIM Group also tracks the number of unique visitors to 15 sites that promote prostitution either with listings or by allowing “reviews” of prostitution services.

Here are the May unique visitors to the top 10 most-visited sites carrying adult services or prostitution ads, according to Compete.com:

Top 10 Sites (Unique Visits)	May Uniques	Change
Backpage.com	4,070,919	-1.6%
AdultSearch.com	476,081	-6.6%
MyRedBook.com	278,185	-1.4%
TheEroticReview.com	276,251	14.2%
Eros.com / Eros-Guide.com	262,422	30.9%
NaughtyReviews.com	246,890	-0.3%
MyProviderGuide.com	163,893	2.6%
CityVibe.com	127,019	15.3%
Eccie.net	78,585	-11.1%
Preferred411.com	76,519	-3.4%

Although Eros.com and Eros-Guide.com are separate URLs, they both resolve to the same website, and the unique visitors for each have been combined.

The AIM Group tracked prostitution ads and, where possible, calculated the revenue they generate in these 23 cities: Atlanta, Boston, Charlotte, N.C., Chicago, Dallas / Fort Worth, Denver, Houston, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Miami, Minneapolis, New Orleans, New York City, Orlando, Fla., Philadelphia, Phoenix, San Diego, San Francisco, Sarasota, Fla., Seattle, St. Louis, Tampa and Washington, D.C.

Overall, the AIM Group studies 15 websites that either sell listings or promote prostitution in other ways. Of those 15, we are able to compute revenue based on the number of listings and published advertising rates for five: Backpage.com, Eros.com, CityVibe.com, MyRedbook.com and AdultSearch.com. We also count listings on two additional sites: NaughtyReviews.com and Eccie.com. We count 30-day listings where possible. Because MyRedBook.com displays just 500 ads at a time, we use numbers published on the site as our count.

For the remaining eight, we track only unique visitors because the other data are not publicly available or because the sites have so little traffic that their revenues or listings would be insignificant. Those sites are TheEroticReview.com, Sipsap.com, Preferred411.com, SexyEscortAds.com, BigDoggie.net, LocalEscortPages.com, HotLocalEscorts.com, and TNABoard.com.

The unique-visitors metric counts a user - a computer or IP address - only once no matter how many times the site is visited from that same location. It does not account for more than one person using the same computer, or one person visiting the same site from two or more different computers (one at work and one at home, for example).

About the AIM Group: The AIM Group, formally known as the Advanced Interactive Media Group LLC, is the world's leading consultancy in interactive media and classified advertising. It publishes Classified Intelligence Report, a continuous advisory service often called "the bible of the classified advertising industry." The AIM Group works with leading media companies, broadcasters, dot-coms, yellow-page publishers and technology companies. It provides strategic and tactical consulting; sales training; proprietary and published research about interactive

media, and other services. Founded in 1998, it is based in Altamonte Springs, Fla. For more information call (407) 788-2780 or see <http://AIMGroup.com>.

This monthly report has been funded by a foundation that has asked not to be identified.

The AIM Group's most recent report about Craigslist, Backpage and free classified advertising sites worldwide is available through AIMGroup.com at <http://aimgroup.com/new-release-2012-global-classifieds-annual/> .

Note: Mark A. Whittaker, senior consultant for the AIM Group, and Peter M. Zollman, founding principal of the AIM Group, are available for comment on the research. Whittaker is available at 724-553-8428 or markw@aimgroup.com; Zollman is available at 407-788-2780 or peterz@aimgroup.com.



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August 31, 2011

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**Re: Backpage.com's ongoing failure to effectively limit
prostitution and sexual trafficking activity on its website**

Mr. Fifer:

This letter is in response to Backpage.com's assurances, both public and in private, concerning the company's facilitation of the sexual exploitation of children, and prostitution. As our state's chief law enforcement officers, we are increasingly concerned about human trafficking, especially the trafficking of minors. Backpage.com is a hub for such activity.

While Backpage.com professes to have undertaken efforts to limit advertisements for prostitution on its website, particularly those soliciting sex with children, such efforts have proven ineffective. In May, for example, a Dorchester, Massachusetts man was charged for forcing a 15-year-old girl into a motel to have sex with various men for \$100 to \$150 an hour. To find customers, the man posted a photo of the girl on Backpage.com. He was later found with \$19,000 in cash. In another example, prosecutors in Washington state are handling a case in which teen girls say they were coerced, threatened and extorted by two adults who marketed them on Backpage.com.

We have tracked more than 50 instances, in 22 states over three years, of charges filed against those trafficking or attempting to traffic minors on Backpage.com. These are only the stories that made it into the news; many more instances likely exist. These cases often involve runaways ensnared by adults seeking to make money by sexually exploiting them. In some cases, minors are pictured in advertisements. In others, adults are pictured but minors are substituted at the "point of sale" in a grossly illegal transaction.

Nearly naked persons in provocative positions are pictured in nearly every adult services advertisement on Backpage.com and the site requires advertisements for escorts, and other similar "services," to include hourly rates. It does not require forensic training to understand that these advertisements are for prostitution. This hub for illegal services has proven particularly enticing for those seeking to sexually exploit minors.

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In a meeting with the Washington State Attorney General's Office, Backpage.com vice president Carl Ferrer acknowledged that the company identifies more than 400 "adult services" posts every month that may involve minors. This figure indicates the extent to which the trafficking of minors occurs on the site – the actual number of minors exploited through Backpage.com may be far greater. The company's figures, along with real world experience, demonstrate the extreme difficulty of excising a particularly egregious crime – the sexual exploitation of minors – on a site seemingly dedicated to the promotion of prostitution.

On a regional basis, there has been no change in postings for prostitution services on Backpage.com. For example, between July 28 and August 1, the Missouri Attorney General's Office on behalf of the Attorneys General Working Group conducted a review of adult content on Backpage.com. This review revealed numerous daily postings for "escort" services in the Adult>Escorts section. On Sunday, July 31, in the St. Louis-area alone, there were one hundred and three (103) new postings for such services. Other regional examples include:

- On August 1, the Washington State Attorney General's Office found one hundred and forty two (142) advertisements that are obviously for prostitutes in the Seattle area; and
- On August 2, even the Connecticut State Attorney General's Office found advertisements for prostitutes in the Connecticut area on the Springfield, Massachusetts and Rhode Island pages, circumventing Backpage.com's omission of a Connecticut adult section.

Missouri investigators further confirmed that Backpage.com's review procedures are ineffective in policing illegal activity. On July 28 and July 29, investigators flagged twenty five (25) new postings advertising prostitution in the St. Louis, Kansas City, Springfield, Columbia, and Jefferson City areas. By August 1, at least four days later, only five of these postings, or less than a quarter, had been removed.

The prominence of illegal content on Backpage.com conflicts with the company's representations about its content policies. Backpage.com claims that it "is committed to preventing those who are intent on misusing the site for illegal purposes."¹ To that end, Backpage.com represents that it has "implemented strict content policies to prevent illegal activity," and that the company has "inappropriate ad content removed."² Backpage.com also requires those who post "adult services" advertisements to click a link indicating they agree not to "post any solicitation directly or in 'coded' fashion for any illegal service exchanging sexual favors for money or other valuable consideration."³ However, a cursory look at a relevant section demonstrates that this guideline is not enforced.⁴

In fact, in a meeting with the Washington State Attorney General's Office, Village Voice Media Board Member Don Moon readily admitted that prostitution advertisements regularly appear on Backpage.com. This shows that the stated representations about the site are in direct

¹ Backpage.com, Safety and Security Enhancements, <http://blog.backpage.com/> (last visited August 05, 2011).

² *Id.*

³ See Backpage.com, Posting Rules, <http://posting.seattle.backpage.com/gyrobase/classifieds/PostAdPPI.html/sea/posting.seattle.backpage.com/?section=4381&category=4443&u=sea&serverName=posting.seattle.backpage.com&superRegion=Seattle> (last visited August 05, 2011)..

⁴ See Backpage.com, Seattle Escorts, <http://seattle.backpage.com/FemaleEscorts/> (last visited August 05, 2011).

conflict with the reality of Backpage's business model: making money from a service illegal in every state, but for a few counties in Nevada.

Based on an independent assessment by the AIM Group, Backpage.com's estimated annual revenue from its adult services section is approximately \$22.7 million. This figure, along with information you provided to the Working Group, indicates that Backpage.com devotes only a fraction of the revenue generated from its adult section advertisements to manual content review. We believe Backpage.com sets a minimal bar for content review in an effort to temper public condemnation, while ensuring that the revenue spigot provided by prostitution advertising remains intact. Though you have stated "all new ads are moderated by a staff member,"⁵ there appear to be no changes in the volume of prostitution advertisements resulting from this "moderation."

As a practical matter, it is likely very difficult to accurately detect underage human trafficking on Backpage.com's adult services section, when to an outside observer, the website's sole purpose seems to be to advertise prostitution. That is why Craigslist's decision to shut down its adult services section was applauded as a clear way for it to eradicate advertising on its website that trafficked children for prostitution. It is also why we have called on Backpage.com to take similar action.

Furthermore, in lieu of a subpoena, the Working Group asks that Backpage.com provide additional information so that we may better understand the company's policies and practices. As noted earlier, Backpage.com represents that it has "strict content policies to prevent illegal activity."⁶ We ask that Backpage.com substantiate this claim by:

1. Describing in detail Backpage.com's understanding of what precisely constitutes "illegal activity," including whether Backpage.com contends that advertisements for prostitution services do not constitute advertisements for "illegal activity;"
2. Providing a copy of such policies, including but not limited to the specific criteria used to determine whether an advertisement may involve illegal activity;
3. Providing the list of the prohibited terms for which Backpage.com is screening;
4. Describing in detail the individualized or hand review process undertaken by Backpage.com, including the number of personnel currently assigned to conduct such review;
5. Stating the number of advertisements in its adult section, including all subsections, submitted since September 1, 2010;
6. Stating the number of advertisements, in its adult section, including all subsections, submitted since September 1, 2010, which were subjected to individualized or hand review prior to publication; and
7. Stating the number of advertisements in its adult section, including all subsections, submitted since September 1, 2010, rejected *prior to* publication because they involved or were suspected to involve illegal activity.

⁵ Letter from Samuel Fifer, Attorney, SNR Denton, to Attorneys General Working Group (Jan. 27, 2011).

⁶ Backpage.com, *supra* note 1.

Backpage.com's further represents that it has "inappropriate ad content removed."⁷ We ask that Backpage.com substantiate this claim by:

8. Describing the criteria used to determine whether a published advertisement should be removed due to actual or suspected illegal activity;
9. Providing a copy of such policies that detail the criteria used to determine whether a published advertisement should be removed due to actual or suspected illegal activity;
10. Describing in detail the criteria Backpage.com uses, including but not limited to the number of user reports required, before a published advertisement is subjected to further review;
11. Providing a copy of such policies that detail the criteria Backpage.com uses, including but not limited to the number of user reports required, before a published advertisement is subjected to further review;
12. Stating the number of published advertisements posted since September 1, 2010 in its adult section, including all subsections, that Backpage.com has subjected to post publication review;
13. Stating the number of published advertisements posted since September 1, 2010 in its adult section, including all subsections, that Backpage.com removed following post publication review;
14. Stating the number of published advertisements posted since September 1, 2010 in its adult section, including all subsections, that Backpage.com *did not* remove following post publication review;
15. Stating the number of published advertisements posted since September 1, 2010 that were not subjected to further review by Backpage.com despite the receipt of user reports.

Lastly, Backpage.com also represents that it is "partnering with law enforcement and safety advocates/experts."⁸ We request that Backpage.com support this assertion by:

16. Identifying the specific "law enforcement [agencies] and safety advocates/experts" with whom Backpage.com has partnered and describing the actions taken by Backpage.com in connection with such partnerships;
17. Stating the number of advertisements submitted since September 1, 2010 that Backpage.com has reported pre-publication to local, state or federal law enforcement agencies, or to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children's Cyber Tipline, because of actual or suspected illegal activity;
18. Stating the number of user reports of suspected exploitation of minors and/or human trafficking Backpage.com requires before subjecting a published advertisement to further review;
19. Stating the number of published advertisements posted since September 1, 2010 that Backpage.com removed in response to such user reports;
20. Stating the number of published advertisements posted since September 1, 2010 that Backpage.com reported to local, state or federal law enforcement agencies, or to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children's Cyber Tipline, as a result of such reports; and

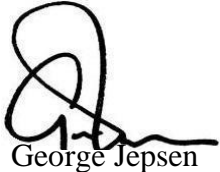
⁷ Backpage.com, *supra* note 1.

⁸ Backpage.com, *supra* note 1.

21. Stating the number of published advertisements posted since September 1, 2010 that Backpage.com did not remove following a review prompted by user reports.

The National Association of Attorneys General requests Backpage.com's response on or before September 14, 2011.

Respectfully,



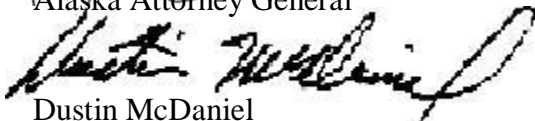
George Jepsen
Attorney General of Connecticut



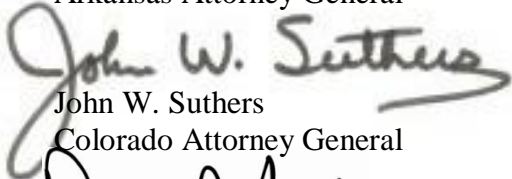
Rob McKenna
Attorney General of Washington



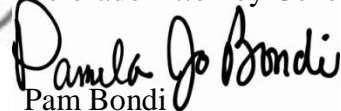
John J. Burns
Alaska Attorney General



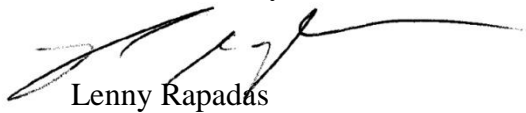
Dustin McDaniel
Arkansas Attorney General



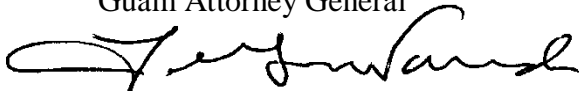
John W. Suthers
Colorado Attorney General



Pam Bondi
Florida Attorney General



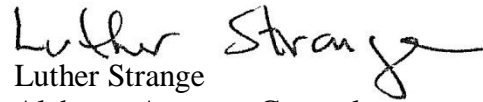
Lenny Rapadas
Guam Attorney General



Lawrence Wasden
Idaho Attorney General



Chris Koster
Attorney General of Missouri



Luther Strange
Alabama Attorney General



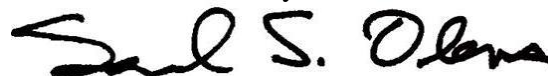
Tom Horne
Arizona Attorney General



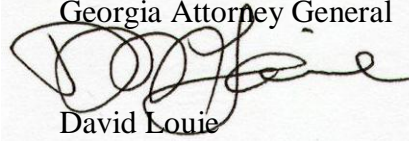
Kamala Harris
California Attorney General



Joseph R. "Beau" Biden III
Delaware Attorney General



Sam Olens
Georgia Attorney General



David Louie
Hawaii Attorney General



Lisa Madigan
Illinois Attorney General

Greg Zoeller
Indiana Attorney General

Tom Miller
Iowa Attorney General

Derek Schmidt
Kansas Attorney General

Jack Conway
Kentucky Attorney General

James "Buddy" Caldwell
Louisiana Attorney General

William J. Schneider
Maine Attorney General

Douglas F. Gansler
Maryland Attorney General

Martha Coakley
Massachusetts Attorney General

Bill Schuette
Michigan Attorney General

Lori Swanson
Minnesota Attorney General

Jim Hood
Mississippi Attorney General

Steve Bullock
Montana Attorney General

Jon Bruning
Nebraska Attorney General

Catherine Cortez Masto
Nevada Attorney General

Michael Delaney
New Hampshire Attorney General

Gary King
New Mexico Attorney General

Roy Cooper
North Carolina Attorney General

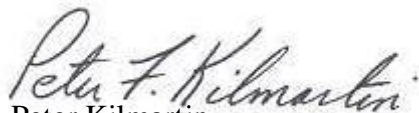
Wayne Stenehjem
North Dakota Attorney General


Mike Dewine
Ohio Attorney General

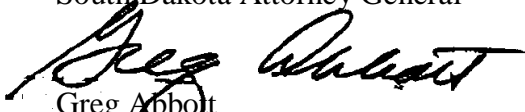
Scott Pruitt
Oklahoma Attorney General


John Kroger
Oregon Attorney General


Linda L. Kelly
Pennsylvania Attorney General

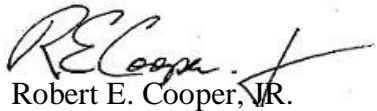

Peter Kilmartin
Rhode Island Attorney General

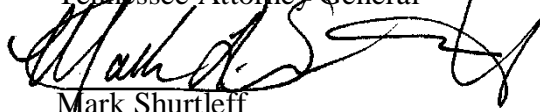

Marty J. Jackley
South Dakota Attorney General



Greg Abbott
Texas Attorney General


Kenneth T. Cuccinelli, II
Virginia Attorney General


Alan Wilson
South Carolina Attorney General


Robert E. Cooper, JR.
Tennessee Attorney General


Mark Shurtleff
Utah Attorney General


Greg Phillips
Wyoming Attorney General

Minor Sex Trafficking via Backpage.com Cases

232 cases; 45 states; At least 303 victims in recorded cases

Alabama

1. July 18, 2012 – Solomon Manasseh Mustafa, 38, of Stole Mountain, Georgia was found guilty on sex trafficking, kidnapping, and enticement of a minor charges. Before being indicted by a grand jury in May 2011, Mustafa and 25-year-old Kalandra Annette Wallace used websites like Craigslist and Backpage.com to recruit young women and force them into prostitution. Prosecutors say the two operated a sex trafficking ring in Atlanta and sometimes transported young women to North Carolina and Alabama to engage in sex acts.
<http://www.sfgate.com/news/article/Man-convicted-for-operating-sex-trafficking-ring-3717803.php>
2. April 26, 2012 – Dwane Washington, 32, of Memphis, Tennessee was arrested on accusations of assisting a 14-year-old runaway from Baltimore, Maryland to engage in prostitution in multiple states. Washington allegedly assisted the girl for prostitution in Alabama, Tennessee and Virginia. Washington met the minor through an advertisement she allegedly put on Backpage.com.
<http://www.justice.gov/usao/vac/news/2012/04/20120426washingtonnr.html>
3. March 15, 2010 – Dmarcus Antwain Ward, 25, of Louisiana was charged with two counts of sex trafficking of minors and two counts of transportation for prostitution. Authorities allege Ward brought two girls from Atlanta to Birmingham and back on separate occasions from late September 2009 through Nov. 7, 2009. The minors are ages 16 and 17.
http://blog.al.com/spotnews/2010/03/post_511.html

Alaska

1. August 31, 2012 - Sidney Lamar Greene, 41 of Anchorage, was sentenced to 144 months in prison for attempted child sex trafficking and for conspiring to defraud the government. He was the last of four defendants in a child sex trafficking and prostitution ring. Greene used websites such as Craigslist.com and Backpage.com to prostitute women and children. Keyana “Koko” Marshall, Rand Hooks, and Sabil Mumin Mujahid were Greene’s partners in the trafficking ring.
<http://www.fbi.gov/anchorage/press-releases/2012/final-defendant-sentenced-in-child-sex-trafficking-and-prostitution-ring>

Arizona

1. August 14, 2012 – Joel-Davis Covington, also known as “Cash,” was taken into custody outside of a Quality Inn and Suites hotel by Phoenix police after police said he was involved in prostituting a 16-year-old girl. Investigators say the girl’s cell phone number was in Backpage.com escort advertisements, along with pictures. Authorities say Covington had knowledge of the victim’s age and the activities she was involved in; he faces child prostitution and transportation for purpose of prostitution charges.
<http://www.myfoxphoenix.com/story/19155283/man-accused-of-prostituting-teen-at-phoenix-hotel>

Minor Sex Trafficking via Backpage.com Cases

2. June 15, 2012 – Eric Lamar Wells has admitted to his selling minor girls, ages 14 and 17, and interstate transportation of minors for prostitution. He also admitted to using Backpage.com to sell the girls. He was facing life in prison but because of his pre-trial admission he is likely to see his sentence reduced to just 10 years in prison – the judge has the final say and he will be sentenced on October 22, 2012. Wells recruited the minors in Las Vegas and sold them in multiple cities including Anaheim near Disneyland, Phoenix, and Sacramento. Tonisha Alecia Moore was also arrested for helping Wells prostitute the minors and she remains in custody as well.
http://blogs.ocweekly.com/navelgazing/2012/06/eric_lamar_wells_disneyland_pi.php
3. May 28, 2012 - Kendrick Pennington of Phoenix was charged with child prostitution. The minors were 15- and 17-years-old. He allegedly advertised the minors on Backpage.com.
<http://www.myfoxphoenix.com/story/18577121/2012/05/21/man-accused-of-prostituting-teens>
4. May 25, 2012 – In Phoenix, Eric Hobson has been charged with two counts of child prostitution for facilitating the prostitution of a 16-year-old girl. Hobson advertised the minor for sex on Backpage.com.
<http://www.kpho.com/story/18629531/phoenix-pd-bust-man-with-prostitution-ad-on-backpagecom>
5. May 19, 2012 – Rachael Dawn Kellogg Swank, 23, was charged with child prostitution of a 15-year-old runaway in Phoenix. Swank taught the minor how to be a prostitute and placed advertisements for sex with the teenager on Backpage.com
<http://www.azcentral.com/arizonarepublic/local/articles/2012/05/16/20120516backpage-adult-ads-targeted.html>
6. November 16, 2011 – Al O’Neal was arrested on child prostitution charges. Police say he recruited a 14-year-old girl and forced her to turn tricks. Police say there was a second 15-year-old victim rescued. He had posted ads for the girls on Backpage.com.
<http://www.kpho.com/story/16061039/police-pimp-arrested-for-trafficking-14-year-old-girl>
7. October 21, 2011 – Chad Walker, 26, was charged with three counts of sexual conduct with a minor, 18 counts of child prostitution, one count unlawful imprisonment and one count of aggravated assault. The victim was a 15-year-old girl who had to jump out of a car to escape the vicious beating of her pimp. She called 911 and informed authorities that Walker used Backpage.com to obtain clients for her.
<http://phoenix-on.us/2011/10/21/ariz-pair-arrested-in-child-prostitution-ring/>
8. June 16, 2011 – A 22-year-old woman arrested after undercover detectives set up a date with her from the website Backpage.com. When authorities showed up at her house a deal was made for \$80 to have sex with a woman. The woman informed authorities that 22-year-old Whitney Williams posted the ad of her and a 17-year-old girl on Backpage.com.
<http://www.azcentral.com/news/articles/2011/06/16/20110616glendale-woman-accused-of-pimping-girl-abrk.html>
9. February 13, 2011 – Michael Gilliland the founder of Boulder-based Wild Oats Markets arrested on a charge of soliciting prostitution from a minor using Backpage.com. Gilliland was busted during an undercover sting.
http://articles.nydailynews.com/2011-02-13/news/28613627_1_child-prostitution-organic-food-food-executive

Minor Sex Trafficking via Backpage.com Cases

10. September 8, 2010 – Four men are facing federal charges for sex trafficking with a minor with 4 additional charges in Phoenix, AZ. Jacob Heckstall, 39, of Phoenix, Arizona; George Calvin Windley, 31, of Las Vegas, Nevada; Muttaqui Windley, 28, of Phoenix, Arizona; and Michael Lazar, 42, of Scottsdale, Arizona used backpage.com for promotion and advertisement of their human trafficking ring.
<http://www.fbi.gov/phoenix/press-releases/2010/px090810.htm>
11. May 13, 2010 – Two teen women are accused of kidnapping, prostitution and child porn charges. Savoya Mansfield, 18, and Mattique Johnson, 19, offered to allow a 14-year-old runaway to stay with them if she earned her keep. Johnson and Mansfield put pornographic advertisements of the minor on Backpage.com.
<http://www.azfamily.com/news/Female-teens-pimp-out-14-year-old-on-website-threaten-her-family-93737599.html>

Arkansas

1. May 25, 2012 – Nation-wide trafficking ring led by Johnelle L. Bell, 27, used Backpage.com to research, recruit and sell 17- to 21-year-old minors and women to act as his sex workers between November 2009 and June 2011. Women and girls were recruited and sold in Arkansas, Iowa, Nebraska as well as a dozen states in one two-month span last year. The ring said they headquartered their sex trafficking operation out of Little Rock, Arkansas. He and his counter-part Brittany Lawson, 21, are being charged in Des Moines, Iowa because the ring did business there on at least four occasions.
<http://www.businessweek.com/ap/2012-05/D9UVNGT00.htm>

California

1. August 20, 2013 - Martell Davis, 34, was collared by San Diego Police Department vice cops conducting an “incall” operation at a Best Western hotel, according to federal court filings. As part of that probe, a detective located an ad on backpage.com “advertising a female for prostitution” and arranged for a July 26 “date” at the hotel. The victim – a 17-year-old girl – was arrested for prostitution. Officers then used the girl’s phone to text a person they believed to be her pimp. After exchanging a series of texts with the suspected pimp Martell Davis arrived. Davis was named in a July 29 federal complaint charging him with sex trafficking of a minor.
<http://www.thesmokinggun.com/documents/pimp-busted-in-pimp-shirt-685419>
2. April 24, 2013 – Marquis Maurice Lamount Sweet of Las Vegas and Domaniece Latrice Roy of San Diego, both 24, were charged in federal court with transportation of a minor to engage in sexual activity as well as production of child pornography. They were arrested in Texas after the 16-year-old girl they were holding captive escaped. Upon further investigation, officers discovered escort advertisements on Backpage.com with photos of the girl. They could face up to 30 years in federal prison and a \$250,000 fine.
http://www.oaoa.com/news/crime_justice/courts/article_28ce8972-ad30-11e2-997b-001a4bcf6878.html
UPDATE: August 1, 2013 - Marquis Maurice Lamount Sweet, of San Diego, pleaded guilty to transportation of a minor to engage in sexual activity in connection with his April 24 arrest. Sweet and girlfriend Domaniece Latrice Roy were accused in April of holding a 15-year-old girl captive at Studio 6 Motel, 3081 E. Highway 80. Sweet also was accused of having sex with the girl, and according to a federal complaint, admitted to it. Roy pleaded guilty to the same charge on May 21.

Minor Sex Trafficking via Backpage.com Cases

When sentenced, both could receive between 10 years and life in federal prison. Sweet was also charged with production of child pornography, but that count was dismissed.

http://www.oaoa.com/news/crime_justice/courts/article_134b2db6-fa2a-11e2-a891-0019bb30f31a.html

3. March 8, 2013 – Tyler Elkins, 20, was charged with promoting sexual abuse of a minor and child rape for having sex with, then prostituting a 15-year-old girl. In November, the victim was kidnapped by an acquaintance, “Hollywood,” an unknown man in California. She was then advertised for sex on Backpage.com. She was eventually transported to Tacoma, Washington where she was forced to have sex with several men. The victim called the police at a fast food joint, and Elkins was arrested.
<http://villagevoicepimp.com/case-225-man-charged-prostituting-and-rape-minor>
4. October 26, 2012 – CJ Cottingham, 21, and his brother Gregory Cottingham, 23, pleaded guilty to child sex trafficking charges for their roles in a local sex trafficking ring. They face more than 10 years in prison at their sentencing in Dec. 14 in San Diego’s federal courthouse. The Cottingham brothers’ accomplice, Heaven Johnson (admitted stripper and prostitute), 20, pleaded guilty to racketeering and faces four years behind bars.
<http://www.cbs8.com/story/19920720/teenage-escort-talks-to-news-8-about-sex-trafficking-in-san-diego>
5. October 20, 2012 – Tynisha Marie Hornbuckle (24) and Tamrell Rena Hornbuckle (26) were sentenced to 15 years and eight months and 12 years and seven months in prison respectively for sex trafficking of minors. Latrelle Alicia Hornbuckle, Cherrelle Elizabeth Hornbuckle, Tammy Rena Brown, and Jacqueline Lanoise Radisha Wade have all plead guilty to their involvement in sex trafficking of minors and await sentencing. Defendants conspired to force and coerce minors to engage in commercial sex acts. Tynisha Hornbuckle had a 13-year-old runaway and two other minors work for her until Hornbuckle was indicted. Tamrell Hornbuckle had a minor work for her after the minor turned 18. Two of the minors who testified, were beaten and branded by the Hornbuckles. Additionally Tamrell and Latrelle Hornbuckle told one of the victims to provide false information and lie to FBI detectives if the victim was questioned.
<http://www.imperialvalleynews.com/index.php/news/california-news/2041-sacramento-sisters-sentenced-for-child-sex-trafficking.html>
6. June 15, 2012 – Eric Lamar Wells has admitted to his selling minor girls, ages 14 and 17, and interstate transportation of minors for prostitution. He also admitted to using Backpage.com to sell the girls. He was facing life in prison but because of his pre-trial admission he is likely to see his sentence reduced to just 10 years in prison – the judge has the final say and he will be sentenced on October 22, 2012. Wells recruited the minors in Las Vegas and sold them in multiple cities including Anaheim near Disneyland, Phoenix, and Sacramento. Tonisha Alecia Moore was also arrested for helping Wells prostitute the minors and she remains in custody as well.
http://blogs.ocweekly.com/navelgazing/2012/06/eric_lamar_wells_disneyland_pi.php
7. April 4, 2012 – FBI agents are searching for Marquist Bradford who has been charged with sex trafficking of children by force, fraud, or coercion. The FBI began to look into Bradford after a 15-year-old victim came to them. Bradford had a long history of pimping minors and has continued to work in Chicago, Virginia, and New York when he’s not in California. He frequently uses sites like Backpage.com to pimp out his girls.
<http://www.thesmokinggun.com/documents/fbi-hunts-twitter-pimp-king-kutta-896523>

Minor Sex Trafficking via Backpage.com Cases

Colorado

1. July 22, 2013 - Gary D. Campbell, an employee with Aurora Public Schools, was one of eight men who were arrested last Friday, the district attorney's office announced Monday. The seven other men in the case were identified as Phillip Alex Lovato, Michael Quarm, Rene Perez Varela, Celso Ordonez Rascon, John Gregory Dosch, Donald Wesley Allen Lyle and Mark Anthony Soliman. They are all charged with patronizing a prostituted child and contributing to the delinquency of a minor. All of the men responded to a Backpage.com advertisement, the DA's office said. The investigation began when an Aurora police investigator found the 17-year-old girl at a Super 8 Motel at East 6th Avenue, near Interstate 225, on Jan. 8, said District Attorney George Brauchler. The investigator worked backwards to find the eight men who paid for sex acts with the girl between Dec. 20, 2012 and Jan. 8, 2013.
<http://www.thedenverchannel.com/news/front-range/aurora/school-district-employee-accused-of-patronizing-child-prostitute-discovered-through-backpagecom-ad>
2. December 10, 2012 – A dozen people have been arrested in a sex trafficking ring that involved minors. Attorney General John Suthers announced Monday that four of those arrested are accused of paying underage girls to have sex with them and three are accused of posting ads on Backpage.com, offering sexual services from the minor girls.
<http://www.therepublic.com/view/story/b27d5546ed5b473d85aeфеaedfa798ae/CO--Sex-Trafficking>
UPDATE: December 17, 2012 – Twelve people have been arrested in connection with a sex trafficking ring that spanned from Denver to Colorado Springs. Eight suspects are accused of running the criminal operation that trafficked and pimped underage girls at Backpage.com. Three of the accused are self-reported members of the Crips gang: Lawrence Richard Martinez, 22; Reginald James Ryan, 31; and Angela Jeanine Ryan, 42. Four suspected johns were arrested in the bust: Hayatullah Khazi, 28; Grant Richard Schoengarth, 32; Richard Neil Gottbreht, 63; and Nathan Theodore Hom, 36. They are charged with sexual assault and patronizing a prostituted child, among other charges. All suspects face charges relating to sex trafficking in Denver, Aurora, Commerce City, Lakewood, Parker, and Colorado Springs.
<http://villagevoicepimp.com/12-arrested-gang-based-sex-trafficking-ring-0>
3. May 16, 2012— In Colorado Springs, police have uncovered what could be a child prostitution ring in Southern Colorado. The man accused of using the internet to pimp a teenager in the Colorado Springs area told police he completed transactions with three different men. He also reportedly told police he had sex with the 16-year-old. 11 News spoke with the teen girl's mother involved in this case. She says her daughter was forced into the prostitution. She alleges that Trevor Baker was soliciting her daughter as an escort on Backpage.com. The mother also wrote in a restraining order request that Baker drove her daughter “to motels and collected money for her having sexual relations with men.”
http://www.kktv.com/news/headlines/Child_Prostitution_Suspect_Appears_In_Court_151783065.html
4. January 31, 2012 – Fourteen people in Colorado have been indicted in a human trafficking ring that victimized children throughout the state. The suspects would find the teens on Backpage.com and bring them into prostitution.
<http://www.9news.com/news/article/245934/222/14-accused-of-trafficking-children-for-sex-across-Colorado->

Minor Sex Trafficking via Backpage.com Cases

5. September 4, 2011 – 29-year-old Christian Laswell was arrested on allegations he was prostituting a 17-year-old girl and operating a ring that generated more than \$10,000 a day. The minor told police she worked for Laswell for three weeks and had already met with 30 johns. The ads for her services were posted on Backpage.com. In this case, an adult took pictures of herself for the Backpage.com advertisement, but sent the teen is who had the encounter with the johns. This makes it difficult for authorities to know if the ads on Backpage.com are for minors.
http://www.denverpost.com/news/ci_18823156
6. August 31, 2010 – Six indicted on sex charges after teen's kidnapping and posting nude and semi-nude of a 17-year-old on Backpage.com.
http://www.denverpost.com/crime/ci_15822633

Connecticut

1. January 30, 2012 – Theodore Briggs used Backpage.com to place ads for minor girls, ages 14 and 17, on Backpage.com. He was sentenced to 120 months in prison. Briggs admitted that he and others transported the 14-year-old from Connecticut to Atlantic City to engage in prostitution.
<http://wilton.patch.com/articles/norwalk-sex-trafficker-gets-120-years>
UPDATE: February 2, 2012 – Harry Franklin was sentenced to 51 months in prison for his part in the prostitution ring that Theodore Briggs ran last year that included the sex trafficking of two minor victims. Franklin introduced Briggs to one of the women and the 14-year-old who then began to work for the ring. Franklin helped to facilitate the transportation for the girls between Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey. The ring advertised the girls on Backpage.com.
<http://www.thedailynorwalk.com/news/man-sentenced-norwalk-sex-trafficking-case>
UPDATE: April 11, 2012 – Giovanni Vasquez was sentenced to 33 months in prison for his part in the prostitution ring Theodore Briggs ran last year that included the sex trafficking of two minor victims. Vasquez drove the teenage prostitutes back and forth throughout Connecticut, New Jersey, and New York to meet their clients. He pleaded guilty last year. The ring advertised the girls on Backpage.com and one of the victims was just 14-years-old.
<http://www.thehour.com/story/523413/third-man-sentenced-for-role-in-prostitution-ring>

Minor Sex Trafficking via Backpage.com Cases

District of Columbia

1. June 25, 2013 – Ronnie P. Holmes, 29, pleaded guilty to recruiting and prostituting a 15-year-old girl, admitting in federal court that he and his girlfriend, Stephanie Chapman, 27, arranged for the 15-year-old girl to perform various sex acts for money across the D.C. area. The minor called her mother to say she “was being prostituted and needed help.” Holmes had been prostituting the girl since February 2012, calling her “Diamond” and advertising her on Backpage.com. He met the girl outside a Lorton apartment. He faces 10 years in prison, at minimum.
http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2013-06-25/local/40177414_1_man-pleads-court-filings-15-year-old-girl
2. November 12, 2012 – D. C. resident Melvin Douglas (32) and Capitol Heights resident Dennis Smith (31) both pleaded guilty to transporting a minor across state lines to engage in prostitution. Smith also pleaded guilty to a separate case to sex trafficking of a minor. Douglas recruited and prostituted a 15-year-old runaway advertising her on Backpage.com for sexual services. Authorities set a meeting with the girl and confronted Douglas in his SUV. Smith met a 16-year-old girl on Tagged.com and recruited her to come on a trip to Richmond. Additionally Smith also picked up the 16-year-old girl and a 15-year-old girl and advertised them online. Authorities set up a meeting and found Smith with the 15-year-old girl and a 17-year-old girl. If Douglas accepts his plea deal he will receive 10 years in prison and Smith faces a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years in prison.
<http://washingtonexaminer.com/two-men-plead-guilty-to-pimping-teenage-girls/article/2513030#.UKDn9YZiO9p>
3. June 12, 2011 – Mall security guard Cooper Kweme of Arlington, VA was charged with transportation of a minor for prostitution. Kweme admitted to walk around the mall looking for girls to recruit for prostitution. A 16-year-old girl reported him to the police. Kweme had posted photos of minors on Backpage.com and drove girls to clients. Kweme told minors that he was an undercover police officer. Kweme admitted he drove girls to clients in Maryland, Virginia, and D.C.
<http://washingtonexaminer.com/article/114986>

Florida

1. July 16, 2013 – Keosha Renee Jones, 22, from St. Petersburg, FL, faces federal charges she engaged in the sex trafficking of two 14-year-old girls who had run away from home. She arranged for the girls to have sex with men for money at various locations in Pinellas County, including the Bayway Inn in St. Petersburg, in December and January, according to an affidavit filed by an FBI agent. Jones advertised the girls in nude photographs on Backpage.com.
<http://tbo.com/pinellas-county/st-pete-woman-accused-of-child-sex-trafficking-20130716/>
2. May 22, 2013 – Ashley Rose Clark, 19, was arrested on charges that she helped a 15-year-old girl to commit sex acts with men in exchange for money, according to sheriff's officials through ads placed on Backpage.com. After the sex acts had taken place, the girl would give the money to Clark. The girls were found May 12 in Pinellas, FL of 21-year-old Donnell Jenkins, authorities said. Detectives said Jenkins helped force the girls into prostitution, threatening them with violence if they did not comply. He worked with two other people, Stacy Jo Baumgartner, 28, and her boyfriend, the alleged ringleader, Antron Smith, 30. Clark was booked in the Pinellas County Jail on charges of procuring a minor for prostitution and deriving proceeds from prostitution. She was held without bail.
<http://www.tampabay.com/news/publicsafety/crime/deputies-arrest-fourth-suspect-in-sex-trafficking-investigation/2122528>

Minor Sex Trafficking via Backpage.com Cases

3. April 24, 2013 – George McLeod III, “Pimp Stick Quezzy,” was arrested after being caught running an internet prostitution ring and has plead guilty to sex trafficking charges. He posted photos of women, including at least one minor from Montana, to Backpage.com. He would then travel with the women to hotels and strip clubs in South Carolina, Tennessee, and Florida. When sentenced, McLeod could spend up to 12 years in federal prison and have to pay a \$250,000 fine.
<http://www.thestate.com/2013/04/24/2740508/pimp-stick-quezzy-pleads-guilty.html>
4. April 9, 2013 – David Minasian, 24, and Madonna Say, 23, of Lynn were charged via federal complaint with sex trafficking of a child and sex trafficking by force, fraud, and coercion. Minasian allegedly transported a 15-year-old girl to Florida and forced her to engage in prostitution. Minasian and Say also transported the victim to motels inside Massachusetts where they paid for rooms for purpose of prostituting her. Photos of the girl were posted to Backpage.com.
<http://www.wickedlocal.com/malden/topstories/x848266591/Malden-man-charged-with-child-trafficking#axzz2Q4LqEe6w>
5. March 30, 2013 – Roman Thomas III, 25, and Shanteria Sanders, 23, were arrested on March 18 and face charges of human trafficking, false imprisonment, lewd and lascivious exhibition and delivery of a controlled substance to a child under 18. A 13-year-old girl was forced to work as a prostitute after meeting Thomas at a flea market in Liberty City. Thomas and Sanders coerced the girl to become a prostitute, posting photos of the girl on Backpage.com.
<http://www.nbcmiami.com/news/weird/Pimp-Branded-Girls-Eyelids-With-Words-Suave-and-House-Police-200612011.html>
6. March 18, 2013 – Joshua Dumas, 21, of Atlanta pleaded guilty to running a commercial sex business that prostituted multiple juvenile girls in Herndon, VA, and other locations throughout Virginia, Maryland, North and South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. He faces a mandatory minimum of 20 years and a maximum of life in prison. The leader of the venture, Edwin Barcus pleaded guilty to founding and leading a child exploitation service.
<http://www.fbi.gov/washingtondc/press-releases/2013/atlanta-man-admits-his-role-in-operating-an-interstate-juvenile-sex-trafficking-enterprise>
7. February 22, 2013 – Dontavious Mingel Blake, 32, and Tara Jo Moore, 26, are facing federal child-sex-trafficking charges after pimping a 15-year-old girl on Backpage.com. Charges against them include sex trafficking of children and conspiracy to commit sex trafficking of children, and inducing a minor to engage in commercial sex act. If convicted, they could face life in prison.
http://articles.sun-sentinel.com/2013-02-22/news/fl-west-palm-child-trafficking-20130222_1_underage-girl-escort-services-fbi-agents
8. February 7, 2013 – Benson December “Haiti” Coriolant, 30, of Orlando, FL. was sentenced to 40 years in prison after a unanimous jury convicted him last September for counts on sex trafficking of children after enticing a 14-year-old girl into advertising for sex on Backpage.com. The federal case stemmed from the arrest of the girl in April of 2010. Coriolant was arrest in November of 2011.
http://www.nola.com/crime/index.ssf/2013/02/federal_judge_hands_down_40-ye.html

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9. December 10, 2012 – Deangelo Jones, 20, lured three young girls, ages 12 to 14 who were runaways at the time, to prostitute themselves in exchange for protection. Jones would instruct the girls on when it was time to post advertisements for sexual services on Backpage.com. Customers would meet Jones at area hotels and engage in sexual activity with the minor girls. Jones was found guilty of one count of conspiracy to commit sex trafficking of minors and two counts of sex trafficking of minors.
<http://miami.cbslocal.com/2012/12/10/lauderhill-man-convicted-of-pimping-young-girls/>
10. November 20, 2012 – Cassidy Hines, 18, and Eric Raymundo Rodriguez, 25, were arrested for advertising the sexual services of a 14-year-old girl. Osceola County deputies responded to an ad on backpage.com, the girl was then arrested on a charge of battery on a law-enforcement officer. Hines, who is suspected to have placed the ad, was arrested on charges of procuring a minor for prostitution, transporting for purposes of prostitution, buying or selling a minor for prostitution and battery on a law-enforcement officer. Rodriguez, who is suspected to be the one the teens work for, was charged with procuring a minor for prostitution, buying or selling a minor for prostitution, aiding and abetting prostitution, resisting arrest, battery on a law-enforcement officer, harming a police dog and violating probation in a drug case out of Sarasota County.
http://www.orlandosentinel.com/news/local/breakingnews/os-child-sex-trafficking-westgate-20121119_0_6175186.story
11. October 24, 2012 – Van Lawson Williams (49) methodically recruited runaway girls, one 12-years-old, to prostitute for him. Williams took in troubled children into his home offering them a place to stay in exchange for selling their bodies. Girls got word through other minors in group homes and detention centers. Williams is charged with four counts of sex trafficking of minors and two counts of attempted sex trafficking of minors, if convicted he can face up to life in prison.
http://articles.sun-sentinel.com/2012-10-23/news/fl-trial-van-lawson-williams-20121022_1_underage-girls-girls-place-young-girl
12. October 5, 2012 – Reginal Hardy (39) was in jail for drugging and threatening to kill a 14-year-old runaway for sexual services. He is now facing three prostitution-related charges, kidnapping and human trafficking charges. The minor was advertised under the name “Jennifer” and was driven down to Orlando by Hardy. She was drugged and told to have sex with customers. An Orlando police officer found the girl under the influence of drugs on a traffic stop and took her to the hospital. The minor recounted her story to police and picked him out of a photo lineup, and then police picked up Hardy.
http://articles.orlandosentinel.com/2012-09-18/news/os-sex-trafficking-arrest-20120914_1_prostitution-international-drive-investigators
13. August 6, 2012 – Frank Smith Jr., a 58-year-old Jupiter man, faces charges of producing child porn and enticing a minor to engage in sex. One of Smith’s victims, a girl identified as T.H. who was 15-years-old at the time of her exploitation, stated the Smith responded to an ad she was featured in on Backpage.com. T.H. said she often saw Smith searching Backpage.com for advertisements featuring young girls.
<http://www.palmbeachpost.com/news/news/jupiter-man-58-charged-with-producing-child-porn-a/nQCK3/>
14. July 1, 2012 – Gregory Goellet Hodge Jr. was arrested for allegedly recruiting and prostituting a 16-year-old foster child from Jacksonville, Florida. The minor was advertised for commercial sex on Backpage.com.

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<http://www.miamiherald.com/2012/06/30/v-fullstory/2877722/girl-at-another-florida-foster.html#storylink=cpy>

15. May 26, 2012 – James Perdue, 61, was arrested on a felony charge for procuring prostitution from a minor. Perdue admitted to teaching the minors how to post advertisements for commercial sex on backpage.com. The minors engaged in prostitution on at least 10 occasions.

<http://www.tampabay.com/news/publicsafety/crime/sheriff-palm-harbor-man-helped-underage-girls-advertise-sexual-services-on/1232115>

UPDATE: December 6, 2012 – James Perdue of Palm Harbor has been sentenced to six years in prison after pleading guilty to charges based on allegations that he helped prostitute two minor girls on Backpage.com

<http://www.tampabay.com/news/publicsafety/crime/palm-harbor-man-gets-six-years-for-helping-underage-girls-prostitute/1264784>

16. May 10, 2012 – Neang Ty Prom, 30, of Bradenton, and Eric Antwan Bell, 38, of Tampa, pleaded guilty to sex trafficking of minors. The couple forced runaway girls into prostitution in exchange for giving them a place to stay. They advertised at least four victims, ages 15 to 17, on Backpage.com and falsely indicated the girls were at least 18. Both individuals face a possible life sentence in federal prison.

<http://www.heraldtribune.com/article/20120510/BREAKING/120519984?p=all&tc=pgall>

17. March 8, 2012 – A 16 and 17-year-old were brought from Orlando to Michigan where Marcus Manning sold them to strange men for sex via ads posted on Backpage.com. He was sentenced to 15 to 40 years in prison.

http://www.mlive.com/news/grand-rapids/index.ssf/2012/03/judge_doesnt_buy_that_teen_gir.html

18. February 14, 2012 – Agents found a 16-year-old girl in Tampa who had ads posted on Backpage.com where men then bought sex with her. Jeremy Coburn who pimped the victim is now in jail awaiting trial.

<http://www.orlandosentinel.com/news/local/crime/os-sex-trafficking-arrest-orlando-20120214,0,6137419.story>

19. February 9, 2012 – Leighton Curtis posted sexually explicit photos of a 15-year-old in an escort ad on Backpage.com in order to prostitute her. Curtis has now been sentenced to 30 years in federal prison.

http://articles.sun-sentinel.com/2012-02-09/news/fl-sex-trafficker-gets-30-20120209_1_prostitution-ads-trafficker-federal-prison

20. February 6, 2012 – Rashad Emon Clark, 33, and one of his prostitutes, Mandi Lynn Bowman, 22, face up to life imprisonment on charges of sex trafficking of a runaway minor. The police were able to find the missing 14-year-old when they searched online escort ads on Backpage.com where she was offering prostitution services.

<http://www.sun-sentinel.com/fl-child-prostitution-arrests-20120206,0,5021137.story?track=rss>

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UPDATE: October 18, 2012 – Shagg Dogg (34), plead guilty to enticing a 14-year-old girl who ran away from home to engage in sex for money. Rashad E. Clark plead guilty to conspiring to recruit, entice and harbor a person knowing she was a minor to engage in sex, prostitution, and engage in sexual activity. Clark’s co-conspirator, Mandi L. Bowman (22), plead guilty in April to conspiring to recruit, entice, and harbor a person knowing she was a minor in sex. Clark will be sentenced in December and may face 10 years in federal prison and Bowman was sentenced to four years in federal prison and 25 years of probation. The minor was rescued by police after finding her as an escort on backpage.com and setting up a meeting with her.

<http://www.palmbeachpost.com/news/news/man-pleads-guilty-in-west-palm-beach-to-turning-14/nSgDy/>

21. August 13, 2011 – Fred Collins was convicted and sentenced to over 21 years in prison for conspiring to engage in sex trafficking of a child and other charges. He controlled a 16-year-old girl from Hawaii, selling her for sex by using ads on Backpage.com.
http://articles.sun-sentinel.com/2011-08-13/news/fl-human-trafficking-20110721_1_human-trafficking-advancement-of-human-rights-carmen-pino
22. May 23, 2011 – Jonathan Padilla, 18, was charged with procuring a minor for prostitution and deriving proceeds of prostitution. Padilla had posted advertisements for sexual services from the 15-year-old on Backpage.com.
http://articles.orlandosentinel.com/2011-05-23/news/os-prostitution-arrest-teen-osceola-20110523_1_undercover-sting-undercover-agent-prostitution
23. May 14, 2011 – Miguel Morancy was indicted on 15 counts for coercing girls, some as young as 13-years-old, into prostitution. According to the indictment, he posted ads on Backpage.com for at least 4 girls who he described as “Russian Cutie”.
<http://www.wtsp.com/news/article/192157/250/Orlando-Man-Indicted-On-Child-Sex-Trafficking>
24. April 22, 2011 – Polk County Sheriff’s office arrested 60 people in a prostitution sting dubbed Operation Curtain Call using Backpage.com. Among those arrested was a 15-year-old girl who had her pimp waiting in the car along with her 2 month old baby daughter.
<http://craigscrimelist.org/2011/04/22/15-year-old-girl-and-her-2-month-old-baby-encountered-in-florida-backpage-sting/>
25. August 28, 2010 – Gerald Isaiah Thomason was arrested in a Backpage.com prostitution sting when he brought a 17-year-old girl to the bust. Police say he was trafficking the girl.
<http://trenchreynolds.me/2010/08/28/17-year-old-trafficked-in-polk-county-bust/>
26. August 19, 2010 – Johnny Saintil, 28-year-old, of Fort Lauderdale and Michael DeFrاند and Stanley Wilson are being charged with recruiting minors for prostitution and operating a sex trafficking ring in Broward County. He used Backpage.com to advertise the minors. He faces up to life in prison if convicted.
http://articles.sun-sentinel.com/2010-08-19/news/fl-client-charged-pimp-20100819_1_internet-based-prostitution-ring-jeffrey-epstein-selective-prosecution

Georgia

1. April 30, 2013 - Jessica Loren Posey, 25, of Atlanta was sentenced to seven years in federal prison for prostituting a 16-year-old girl in several states. Posey used a computer to create advertisements for the girl on Backpage.com. The girl, and others, were taken to Tennessee, Ohio, and Kentucky to be

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sold for sex. As well as her sentence, Posey will pay restitution of \$1,200 to the victim, perform 100 hours of community service, and register as a sex offender.

<http://www.examiner.com/article/atlanta-woman-sentenced-for-trafficking-teenage-girl-for-sex-several-states>

2. February 13, 2013 - Jessica M Washington, 27, was arrested and charged with prostitution, keeping a place of prostitution, trafficking persons for labor or servitude, pandering, and enticing minors for indecent purposes. The teens were advertised on Backpage.com in order to make the money to pay Washington for food, shelter, and clothing. The police picked her up after encountering a teen runaway being harbored in the apartment.
<http://www.ajc.com/news/news/crime-law/clayton-woman-charged-with-trafficking-teens-for-s/nWNqR/>
3. February 1, 2013 – Airick Creighton, 20, of Norcross was sentenced to 25 years in prison on charges of aggravated child molestation and pimping a minor after he forced a 14-year-old-girl to advertise on Backpage.com. He is ordered to serve life on probation and must register as a sex offender.
<http://www.wdef.com/news/state/story/Ga-man-sentenced-in-prostitution-molestation/yuu68cuu40i4uIp1a8ULRg.csp?rss=3471>
4. January 11, 2013 - Edwin Barcus and Joshua Dumas, members of the street gang the Bloods have been charged with prostitution-related offenses following the bust of a prostitution ring in Fairfax County after an undercover police officer responded to an ad from Backpage.com. The two were selling four 17-year-old girls for sex in a hotel in Herndon (two having been brought from Georgia). Dumas is charged with sex trafficking of a child, aiding prostitution or illicit sexual intercourse, residing in or frequenting a rowdy place, and contributing to the delinquency of a minor. Two of the girls are also charged with prostitution. Dumas is now in federal custody; his next court date is Jan. 15.
<http://www.wjla.com/articles/2013/01/police-bust-prostitution-ring-in-herndon--83981.html>
UPDATE: March 18, 2013 – Joshua Dumas, 21, of Atlanta pleaded guilty to running a commercial sex business that prostituted multiple juvenile girls in Herndon, VA, and other locations throughout Virginia, Maryland, North and South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. He faces a mandatory minimum of 20 years and a maximum of life in prison. The leader of the venture, Edwin Barcus pleaded guilty to founding and leading a child exploitation service.
<http://www.fbi.gov/washingtondc/press-releases/2013/atlanta-man-admits-his-role-in-operating-an-interstate-juvenile-sex-trafficking-enterprise>
5. November 2, 2012 – Myron Irby, 29, was charged with sex trafficking of a 16-year-old girl. U.S. Attorney Yates, presented information that Irby benefited financially from the commercial sex acts of his “girlfriend.” Irby and the girl were discovered at a traffic stop. The girl was taken to a local treatment facility and police discovered advertisements of the girl on Backpage.com. According to the girl, Irby knew her age and knew she engaged in acts of prostitution. Three months later the girl ran away from the treatment facility and was found through another Backpage.com ad, where police set a meeting with her. Accompanying her was Irby, who was taken into custody by police.
<http://www.fbi.gov/atlanta/press-releases/2012/duluth-man-indicted-for-sex-trafficking-a-minor>

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6. September 14, 2012 – Five men part of the Atlanta “Da M.O.B.” gang are accused of raping three 14-year-old girls and one 16-year-old. Fabian Terran Murray, Joshua Thomas Hill, Richard Douglas King, Clinton Saintvil, and Jonathan Christopher Branch solicited clients on Backpage.com and forced the minors to engage in prostitution at hotels in the metro Atlanta area. The five are charged with conspiring to engage in sex trafficking of minors and sex trafficking of minors.
<http://chronicle.augusta.com/news/metro/2012-09-14/5-atlanta-men-charged-rape-sex-trafficking>
7. July 18, 2012 – Solomon Manasseh Mustafa, 38, of Stole Mountain, Georgia was found guilty on the charges of sex trafficking, kidnapping, and enticement of a minor. Before being indicted by a grand jury in May 2011, Mustafa and 25-year-old Kalandra Annette Wallace used websites like Craigslist.com and Backpage.com to recruit young women and force them into prostitution. Prosecutors say the two operated a sex trafficking ring in Atlanta and sometimes transported young women to North Carolina and Alabama to engage in sex acts.
<http://www.sfgate.com/news/article/Man-convicted-for-operating-sex-trafficking-ring-3717803.php>
8. August 3, 2011 – Demetrius Darnell Homer, 30, of Atlanta was sentenced to 20 years in prison with a lifetime of supervised release on charges of sex trafficking of a minor. One of the trafficked victims was 14-years-old. Homer used backpage.com to market the minors for commercial sex.
<http://www.fbi.gov/atlanta/press-releases/2011/atlanta-man-sentenced-for-sex-trafficking-of-minors>
9. August 31, 2010 – In an undercover sting, police arrest Tyree Walker, 36, and charge him with trafficking for sexual servitude and marijuana possession. Police also arrested two 17-year-old girls, who were charged with prostitution. During the arrest they found hotel room receipt and photos of a Backpage.com ad. One of the teens is from Macon, GA, and the other teen from Norfolk, VA.
<http://nashvillecitypaper.com/content/city-news/metro-police-nab-georgia-man-sex-trafficking-case>
10. March 15, 2010 – Dmarcus Antwain Ward, 25, of Louisiana was charged with two counts of sex trafficking of minors and two counts of transportation for prostitution. Authorities allege Ward brought two girls from Atlanta to Birmingham and back on separate occasions from late September 2009 through Nov. 7, 2009. The minors are ages 16 and 17.
http://blog.al.com/spotnews/2010/03/post_511.html

Hawaii

1. August 13, 2011 – Fred Collins was convicted and sentenced to over 21 years in prison for conspiring to engage in sex trafficking of a child and other charges. He controlled a 16-year-old girl from Hawaii, selling her for sex by using ads on Backpage.com.
http://articles.sun-sentinel.com/2011-08-13/news/fl-human-trafficking-20110721_1_human-trafficking-advancement-of-human-rights-carmen-pino

Illinois

1. April 12, 2013 – Elizabeth Roeder, 33, of Milwaukee and Shannon Hathaway, 41, of Stoughton, Wisconsin were arrested and charged with one count of involuntary servitude of a minor and trafficking for labor/benefits. Officers responded to an advertisement of a 17-year-old on Backpage.com that offered sex in exchanged for money.
<http://elmwoodpark.suntimes.com/news/19446537-418/two-arrested-in-river-grove-accused-of-human-trafficking.html>

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2. September 17, 2012 – Reginald Williams of St. Louis faces a charge of interstate transportation of a minor with intent to engage in prostitution after police caught him in a sting. An undercover St. Louis County police detective set up a “date” with Williams at a local hotel where he found a 16-year-old and a 17-year-old girl whom Williams was advertising for prostitution on Backpage.com. http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/crime-and-courts/illinois-man-faces-teen-prostitution-charge/article_bf8b38ae-0107-11e2-ba61-001a4bcf6878.html
 3. September 11, 2012 – Malik McKee and Shuntina McKee of Iowa City and Willie Woods of Toledo, OH all face charges of conspiracy to transport minors across state lines to engage in prostitution. According to a criminal complaint, the three used coercion, force, and the threat of force to make one 14-year-old and two 16-year-old victims to engage in commercial sex acts in both Iowa City and Chicago. Pictures of the girls in lingerie and high heels were posted on Backpage.com to solicit prostitution. <http://www.kcrg.com/news/local/Iowa-City-Man-and-Woman-Acussed-of-Trafficking-Teens-to-Chicago--169376436.html>
 4. September 10, 2012 – James Gaston, 23, of Ford Heights, is charged with two counts of human trafficking, one count of involuntary servitude and one count of involuntary servitude of a minor. He placed ads for two female girls, one 19-years-old and one only 16-years-old, on Backpage.com. Police found Gaston, the two girls, and Jordan Johnson, 26, of Chicago, in a Lansing hotel room. Johnson had rented the room and is charged with keeping a place of prostitution. http://www.nwitimes.com/news/local/illinois/lansing-police-arrest-in-child-prostitution-investigation/article_2db091e3-ee33-5053-83ee-ff9ec82309ab.html
 5. September 5, 2012 -- Richard Anderson, a 23-year-old man from Cahokia, has pled guilty to enticing a minor girl into prostitution. He admitted to marketing the girl on the escort section of Backpage.com and keeping the earnings. The girl was advertised as a 19-year-old but was actually 17 years of age. Anderson faces sentencing in November. <http://www.wgem.com/story/19460741/man-pleads-guilty-in-prostitution-case>
- UPDATE:** November 28, 2012 – Richard Anderson, 23, was sentenced to five years and five months in prison for enticement to engage in prostitution. Anderson was discovered by an undercover prostitution sting operation conducted by the St. Louis County Police Department. An office responded to an ad found on backpage.com of the minor. The victim was confirmed to be a 17-year-old girl. <http://www.bnd.com/2012/11/27/2408660/cahokia-man-sentenced-on-child.html>
6. September 2, 2012--
 7. April 4, 2012 – FBI agents are searching for Marquist Bradford who has been charged with sex trafficking of children by force, fraud, or coercion. The FBI began to look into Bradford after a 15-year-old victim came to them. Bradford had a long history of pimping minors and has continued to work in Chicago, Virginia, and New York when he’s not in California. He frequently uses sites like Backpage.com to pimp out his girls. <http://www.thesmokinggun.com/documents/fbi-hunts-twitter-pimp-king-kutta-896523>

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8. August 25, 2011- Eight men and one woman were charged with involuntary sexual servitude of a minor and human trafficking following an 18-month undercover investigation. The woman arranged exchanges for the young women on websites like Backpage.com.
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/08/25/9-arrested-in-chicago-sex_n_936295.html
9. February 9, 2011 – Twin brothers from Dolton have pleaded guilty today to forcing minor girls to have sex with strangers. Myrelle Lockett and Tyrelle Lockett, both 18, were sentenced to four years in prison, the *Chicago Tribune* reports. Sheriff's detectives began looking into the case when they responded to an ad on the classified website Backpage.com that offered sex for cash. The page also had a picture a girl later identified as one of the Lockett's victims.
<http://www.nbcchicago.com/news/local/Brothers-Plead-Guilty-to-Sex-Trafficking-115655209.html#ixzz1oudKqdwj>

Indiana

1. May 22, 2013 – Markeace Arque Canty, 32, has been charged with sex trafficking of a child and receiving child pornography. St. Louis County Attorney Mark Rubin said Canty conspired with Tabbatha L. Olson, 22, of Duluth, IN to engage several girls from Duluth in sex trafficking and used online ads to attract customers. Olson has been charged by the state with aiding and abetting sex trafficking. From July 2012 until January, Canty bought “escort” ads on Backpage.com and offered a girl for erotic encounters. The ads sometimes included photos of a girl who was no older than 17. Canty is charged with selling a girl for sex in Minnesota and Valparaiso, Indiana.
<http://www.startribune.com/local/208306161.html>
2. March 31, 2012 – An undercover sting at a Fort Wayne motel this week snared a Milwaukee woman who allegedly brought two teens to Indiana and prostituted them. A 16-year-old victim told police Michelle A. Mullins, 29, posted her first ads on Backpage.com and instructed her on how much to charge clients.
<http://www.journalgazette.net/article/20120331/LOCAL07/303319975/1002/LOCAL>
3. March 16, 2012 – Jacqueline Clark was charged with promoting juvenile prostitution when investigators found that she had created an ad on Backpage.com advertising a 17-year-old girl for prostitution services.
http://www.nwitimes.com/news/local/illinois/lansing/woman-charged-with-promoting-juvenile-prostitution-in-lansing/article_666dbd4e-9138-586d-8141-6a00e5737a5b.html
4. June 14, 2011 – Maurice Donae Alexander, 24, and Latoshia Norris, 25, pleaded guilty to enticement to engage in prostitution of a minor. They met the 16-year-old minor in Minneapolis and placed ads on Backpage.com. The minor is a runaway from South Dakota. Alexander and Norris traveled to Des Moines, Kansas City, St. Louis and Indianapolis to meet customers.
http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/metro/article_47b686c2-96b8-11e0-9e1c-0019bb30f31a.html

Iowa

1. March 11, 2013 - Demarquez X. Austin of Seattle is accused of pimping two homeless girls and is now facing child prostitution charges. He advertised the young girls, 14- and 16-years-old, on Backpage.com. Austin was arrest in Des Moines, IA on February 27 and has been charged with two counts of promoting the sexual abuse of a minor. He pleaded not guilty and remains on \$250,000 bail.
<http://villagevoicepimp.com/case-226-227-prosecutors-seattle-man-started-pimping-girl-age-11>

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2. September 11, 2012 -- Malik McKee and Shuntina McKee of Iowa City and Willie Woods of Toledo, OH all face charges of conspiracy to transport minors across state lines to engage in prostitution. According to a criminal complaint, the three used coercion, force, and the threat of force to make one 14-year-old and two 16-year-old victims to engage in commercial sex acts in both Iowa City and Chicago. Pictures of the girls in lingerie and high heels were posted on Backpage.com to solicit prostitution.
<http://www.kcrg.com/news/local/Iowa-City-Man-and-Woman-Acussed-of-Trafficking-Teens-to-Chicago--169376436.html>
3. July 18, 2012 – Atlantis Carter, 22, and Erika Hart, 23, were arrested being involved in the prostitution of a 16-year-old runaway from Portland, Oregon. The teen had been missing since June 21. The teen was charged with prostitution and marijuana possession and is being held in custody due to her missing person status.
<http://www.kcci.com/news/central-iowa/Police-monitor-adult-entertainment-site/-/9357080/15571850/-/item/0/-/xbhm97z/-/index.html>
4. May 25, 2012 – Nation-wide trafficking ring led by Johnelle L. Bell, 27, used Backpage.com to research, recruit and sell 17- to 21-year-old minors and women to act as his sex workers between November 2009 and June 2011. Women and girls were recruited and sold in Arkansas, Iowa, Nebraska as well as a dozen states in one two-month span last year. The ring said they headquartered their sex trafficking operation out of Little Rock, Arkansas. He and his counter-part Brittany Lawson, 21, are being charged in Des Moines, Iowa because the ring did business there on at least four occasions.
<http://www.businessweek.com/ap/2012-05/D9UVNGT00.htm>
5. January 25, 2012 – A 17-year-old girl with Asperger syndrome ran away from her home in Des Moines, Iowa to meet a man she met on a social networking site. Tyree Erik Jones and Bionca Mixon met the young girl in St. Paul, MN, held her against her will, raped her, and forced her into prostitution using posting advertisements for sex with the minor on Backpage.com.
<http://www.scribd.com/doc/100455693/Jones-Tyree-2-2-12>
6. June 14, 2011 – Maurice Donae Alexander, 24, and Latoshia Norris, 25, pleaded guilty to enticement to engage in prostitution of a minor. They met the 16-year-old minor in Minneapolis and placed ads on Backpage.com. The minor is a runaway from South Dakota. Alexander and Norris traveled to Des Moines, Kansas City, St. Louis and Indianapolis to meet customers.
http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/metro/article_47b686c2-96b8-11e0-9e1c-0019bb30f31a.html

Kansas

1. June 9, 2011 –During a police sting in Wichita, officials apprehended a 15-year-old girl and Mike Neloms, 25, who is charged with aggravated trafficking. The minor was advertised on backpage.com as a 19-year-old escort. The buyer, Michael Gress, 54, is charged with engaging in sexual intercourse and sodomy with the minor and patronizing a prostitute.
<http://www.kansas.com/2011/06/09/1884401/pair-charged-in-sex-trafficking.html>
2. October 13, 2010 – Two men charged in a sex sting on Backpage.com. The men thought they were coming to a location to buy sex from a 14-year-old girl.
<http://www.nbcactionnews.com/dpp/news/crime/2-men-charged-in-sex-sting-connected-to-adult-services-section-of-backpage.com>

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Kentucky

1. April 30, 2013 - Jessica Loren Posey, 25, of Atlanta was sentenced to seven years in federal prison for prostituting a 16-year-old girl in several states. Posey used a computer to create advertisements for the girl on Backpage.com. The girl, and others, were taken to Tennessee, Ohio, and Kentucky to be sold for sex. As well as her sentence, Posey will pay restitution of \$1,200 to the victim, perform 100 hours of community service, and register as a sex offender.
<http://www.examiner.com/article/atlanta-woman-sentenced-for-trafficking-teenage-girl-for-sex-several-states>
2. March 13, 2013 – Elizabeth Cook, 26, of Hopkinsville was arrested for the alleged sex trafficking of a juvenile, a 17-year-old relative, on Backpage.com in Clarksville, TN. She was charged with one count of human trafficking by promoting the prostitution of a minor.
<http://www.newschannel5.com/story/21632313/ky-woman-charged-with-sex-trafficking-of-juvenile>

Louisiana

1. April 19, 2013 – The arrest of 17-year-old prostitute, Kayla Francis, has led to the capture of her 27-year-old pimp, Lydell Hinton. Police officials found an advertisement offering sex in exchange for cash on Backpage.com. After arresting Francis for prostitution, she cooperated with police and they were able to arrest Hinton for pandering.
<http://villagevoicepimp.com/case-246-teen-prostitute-backpage-bust-leads-pimp-pot>
2. February 7, 2013 – Benson December “Haiti” Coriolant, 30, of Orlando, FL was sentenced to 40 years in prison after a unanimous jury convicted him last September for counts on sex trafficking of children after enticing a 14-year-old girl into advertising for sex on Backpage.com. The federal case stemmed from the arrest of the girl in April of 2010. Coriolant was arrested in November of 2011.
http://www.nola.com/crime/index.ssf/2013/02/federal_judge_hands_down_40-ye.html
3. March 15, 2010 – Dmarcus Antwain Ward, 25, of Louisiana was charged with two counts of sex trafficking of minors and two counts of transportation for prostitution. Authorities allege Ward brought two girls from Atlanta to Birmingham and back on separate occasions from late September 2009 through Nov. 7, 2009. The minors are ages 16 and 17.
http://blog.al.com/spotnews/2010/03/post_511.html

Maryland

1. March 18, 2013 – Joshua Dumas, 21, of Atlanta pleaded guilty to running a commercial sex business that prostituted multiple juvenile girls in Herndon, VA, and other locations throughout Virginia, Maryland, North and South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. He faces a mandatory minimum of 20 years and a maximum of life in prison. The leader of the venture, Edwin Barcus pleaded guilty to founding and leading a child exploitation service.
<http://www.fbi.gov/washingtondc/press-releases/2013/atlanta-man-admits-his-role-in-operating-an-interstate-juvenile-sex-trafficking-enterprise>

Minor Sex Trafficking via Backpage.com Cases

2. February 18, 2013 – Baltimore City firefighter Jamar Simmons, 30, and Franklin Coit, 34, were indicted on charges of conspiracy, interstate transportation for prostitution, coercion, sex trafficking conspiracy, and sex trafficking of a minor. The indictment said that they men ran websites called Backpage.com and BigCityDates that advertised positions online for exotic dancing and escort services to recruit women, but the sites were really meant to find jobs for prostitutes. The court documents also alleged that Simmons and Coit arranged for transportation to bring prostitutes to Maryland from several states such as Texas and South Dakota.
<http://www.wbalvtv.com/news/maryland/baltimore-city/Firefighter-2nd-man-indicted-in-interstate-sex-trafficking-ring/-/10131532/18564818/-/item/0/-/y192hg/-/index.html>
3. November 12, 2012 – D.C. resident Melvin Douglas (32) and Capitol Heights resident Dennis Smith (31) both pleaded guilty to transporting a minor across state lines to engage in prostitution. Smith also pleaded guilty to a separate case to sex trafficking of a minor. Douglas recruited and prostituted a 15-year-old runaway advertising her on Backpage.com for sexual services. Authorities set a meeting with the girl and confronted Douglas in his SUV. Smith met a 16-year-old girl on Tagged.com and recruited her to come on a trip to Richmond. Additionally Smith also picked up the 16-year-old girl and a 15-year-old girl and advertised them online. Authorities set up a meeting and found Smith with the 15-year-old girl and a 17-year-old girl. If Douglas accepts his plea deal he will receive 10 years in prison and Smith faces a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years in prison.
<http://washingtonexaminer.com/two-men-plead-guilty-to-pimping-teenage-girls/article/2513030#.UKDn9YZiO9p>
4. April 26, 2012 – Dwane Washington, 32, of Memphis, Tennessee was arrested on accusations of assisting a 14-year-old runaway from Baltimore, Maryland to engage in prostitution in multiple states. Washington allegedly assisted the girl for prostitution in Alabama, Tennessee and Virginia. Washington met the minor through an advertisement she allegedly put on Backpage.com
<http://www.justice.gov/usao/vac/news/2012/04/20120426washingtonnr.html>
5. March 29, 2012 – Justin Strom and four other members of the Underground Gangster Crips have been charged with sex trafficking. The gang used social media, bus stops and even meetings in schools to recruit minors into prostitution. The teens were then advertised on websites like Backpage.com. Some of the girls were lured from Maryland to be sold in Virginia.
http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/crime/fairfax-based-crips-members-charged-with-recruiting-girls-for-prostitution/2012/03/29/gIQAJRx6iS_story.html?sub=AR
UPDATE: September 14, 2012—Justin Strom, leader of the Underground Gangster Crips gang based in Fairfax, VA, has been sentenced by U.S. District Judge James Cacheris to 40 years in prison for being the leader of a prostitution ring. This gang-controlled ring actively recruited and trafficked minor girls in high school throughout northern Virginia, Maryland and District of Columbia.
<http://www.fbi.gov/washingtondc/press-releases/2012/virginia-gang-leader-sentenced-to-40-years-for-leading-juvenile-sex-trafficking-ring>
6. March 28, 2012 – A federal grand jury indicted Melvin Douglas/Melvin Longwood for transporting a minor across state lines to engage in prostitution. The police found Douglas/Longwood and his 15-year-old victim through an advertisement for the missing girl on Backpage.com that offered her sexual services.
<http://www.wusa9.com/news/article/199211/158/Man-Indicted-For-Transporting-15-Year-Old-Female-For-Prostitution-Charges>

Minor Sex Trafficking via Backpage.com Cases

7. June 12, 2011 – Mall security guard Cooper Kweme of Arlington, VA was charged with transportation of a minor for prostitution. Kweme admitted to walk around the mall looking for girls to recruit for prostitution. A 16-year-old girl reported him to the police. Kweme had posted photos of minors on Backpage.com and drove girls to clients. Kweme told minors that he was an undercover police officer. Kweme admitted he drove girls to clients in Maryland, Virginia, and D.C. <http://washingtosexaminer.com/article/114986>
8. March 2, 2011 – James M. Davis was charged with conspiracy to commit sex trafficking, sex trafficking, use of interstate facilities to transmit information about a minor and transporting a minor to engage in prostitution. His accomplices Duane Mason and Mera Fraley also face minor sex trafficking charges. Police responded to a Backpage.com advertisement for a 15-year-old who was reported missing by her family and someone saw her in the ad. <http://washingtosexaminer.com/article/111197>
9. November 12, 2009 – Byron Thompson, 25, and Lea Bell, 29, were each sentenced to 10 years in prison for conspiracy to commit sex trafficking of a minor and three counts of sex trafficking of a minor. Thompson was the “pimp” and recruiter, and Bell, a “bottom,” collected proceeds, trained the sex workers. Two of their victims were 15, the other was 17-years-old. Thompson and Bell posted advertisements for the minors on Backpage.com. http://www.justice.gov/usao/md/Public-Affairs/press_releases/press08/TwoSentencedto10YearsEachinSexTraffickingConspiracyInvolvingThreeMinorGirls.html

Massachusetts

1. April 9, 2013 – David Minasian, 24, and Madonna Say, 23, of Lynn were charged via federal complaint with sex trafficking of a child and sex trafficking by force, fraud, and coercion. Minasian allegedly transported a 15-year-old girl to Florida and forced her to engage in prostitution. Minasian and Say also transported the victim to motels inside Massachusetts where they paid for rooms for purpose of prostituting her. Photos of the girl were posted to Backpage.com. <http://www.wickedlocal.com/malden/topstories/x848266591/Malden-man-charged-with-child-trafficking#axzz2Q4LqEe6w>
2. December 30, 2011 – In May, a Massachusetts man was charged with forcing a 15-year-old girl into a motel to have sex with men for \$100 to \$150 an hour. To find customers, the man posted a photo of the girl on Backpage.com. <http://www.wtsp.com/news/article/228915/81/Escort-ads-raking-in-millions-for-websites>
3. February 8, 2012 – Boston police arrested 15 would-be johns through ads on Backpage.com, including two men who believed they would be engaging in sexual acts with a 15-year-old girl. http://bostonherald.com/news/regional/view/20220208bpds_web_hooker_sting_nets_15_would-be_johns
4. May 18, 2012 – Michael Gemma, 29, was arraigned in Boston federal court on charges of sex trafficking of a minor. Gemma had photographed the girl wearing lingerie and posing in provocative positions and posted the photos on Backpage.com. He would then take her to New York and New Jersey to sell her to men for sex. http://bostonherald.com/news/regional/view/20220518feds_mattapan_pimp_sold_teen_to_johns_in_3_states

Minor Sex Trafficking via Backpage.com Cases

Michigan

1. August 23, 2013 - Royal Oak attorney Donald Guest began soliciting a 14-year old girl in 2010 after meeting her through Backpage.com. According to the complaint, he gave her \$100 for each sexual encounter, paid to have her hair styled and, on her birthday, took her shopping at the mall. When the girl was arrested in Georgia, the feds say Guest offered to help her. He later represented T.P. in her own prostitution case. At a hearing on August 11, Judge David Grand ordered Guest into federal custody pending his trial, saying the Royal Oak lawyer was a danger to the public at large.
http://www.wxyz.com/dpp/news/local_news/investigations/royal-oak-attorney-charged-with-having-sex-with-underage-prostitute#ixzz2e3YVh4uO
2. May 30, 2013 – 20-year-old Desiree Poole posted ads for “dates” for herself and a 14-year-old girl on Backpage.com, who authorities say was lured into the sex trade after getting expelled from school and running away from home. The Southeast Michigan Crimes Against Children (SEMCCAC) Task Force and the Bay City Child Exploitation Task Force arrested Poole on a federal warrant. She is charged with engaging in the sex trafficking of minors.
<http://www.freep.com/article/20130530/NEWS05/305300128/Backpage-com-girl-14-prostitution>
3. June 25, 2012 – During Operation Cross Country, 79 children were rescued, 22 customers were and 5 pimps were arrested. In Metro Detroit 6 children were rescued as a part of the operation. The children were advertised on Backpage.com.
<http://www.detroitnews.com/article/20120625/METRO/206250405/1409/METRO/Federal-agents-rescue-6-children-from-prostitution-Metro-Detroit>
4. March 16, 2012 – Jacqueline Clark was charged with promoting juvenile prostitution when investigators found that she had created an ad on Backpage.com advertising a 17-year-old girl for prostitution services.
http://www.nwitimes.com/news/local/illinois/lansing/woman-charged-with-promoting-juvenile-prostitution-in-lansing/article_666dbd4e-9138-586d-8141-6a00e5737a5b.html
5. March 8, 2012 – A 16- and 17-year-old were brought from Orlando to Michigan where Marcus Manning sold them to strange men for sex via ads posted on Backpage.com. He was sentenced to 15 to 40 years in prison.
http://www.mlive.com/news/grand-rapids/index.ssf/2012/03/judge_doesnt_buy_that_teen_gir.html

Minnesota

1. July 3, 2013 – Andrew James Hertzog, 29, and Nicole Bramer, of St. Paul, Minnesota, recruited two young women and compelled them to engage in commercial sex acts. Bramer advertised the commercial sex services of one of the victims on Backpage.com. Hertzog pleaded guilty to participating in a sex trafficking conspiracy in United States District Court for the District of Minnesota.
http://7thspace.com/headlines/440487/minnesota_man_pleads_guilty_to_engaging_in_sex_trafficking_conspiracy.html
2. June 4, 2013 – Montia Marie Parker, 18, of Maple Grove, MN allegedly set up a Backpage.com ad for a 16-year-old, driving the other girl to an apartment to have oral sex with a man and taking the \$60

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he paid. She faces felony charges of sex trafficking and promoting prostitution. She is scheduled to appear in court on June 12.¹

<http://www.nydailynews.com/news/national/minn-cheerleader-allegedly-prostituted-teen-article-1.1363384>

3. May 22, 2013 – Markece Arque Canty, 32, has been charged with sex trafficking of a child and receiving child pornography. St. Louis County Attorney Mark Rubin said Canty conspired with Tabbatha L. Olson, 22, of Duluth, to engage several girls from Duluth in sex trafficking and used online ads to attract customers. Olson has been charged by the state with aiding and abetting sex trafficking. From July 2012 until January, Canty bought “escort” ads on Backpage.com and offered a girl for erotic encounters. The ads sometimes included photos of a girl who was no older than 17. Canty is charged with selling a girl for sex in Minnesota and Valparaiso, Indiana.
<http://www.startribune.com/local/208306161.html>
4. April 10, 2013 – Police received an email from a woman who said her 15-year-old granddaughter had been targeted by a group of sex traffickers in St. Paul. Otis Washington, 29, Antonio Washington-Davis, 27, Robert Washington, 56, and Calvin Washington, 49, were charged for sex trafficking after operating a ring that was in operation for nearly two years. The Washington’s had placed hundreds of ads on adult-oriented websites including Backpage.com.
<http://www.kaaltv.com/article/stories/S2993325.shtml?cat=10728>
5. December 24, 2012 – Timothy Denzel Cross, 19, and Fonati McArthur Diggs, 24, of Minnesota face sex trafficking charges after they forced two teenagers from Duluth to engage in prostitution in St. Paul. The complaint alleges that the men used a knife and a gun to threaten a 16-year-old girl and an 18-year-old woman who had arrived in St. Paul on a bus from Duluth last June. In addition to the sex trafficking charges, Cross was also charged with two accounts of second-degree assault and illegal possession of a firearm.
<http://villagevoicepimp.com/charges-duluth-teens-forced-prostitution-0>
UPDATE: August 25, 2013 - Fonati Diggs, 24, of Northfield, and Timothy D. Cross, 20, of St. Paul. The men each faced two counts of aiding and abetting sex trafficking in Ramsey County District Court, and Cross faced two assault charges and a count of possession of a firearm by an ineligible person. Diggs was convicted of both counts against him, while Cross was convicted on four counts and acquitted of a second-degree assault charge on the younger victim.
<http://www.startribune.com/local/south/216980531.html>
6. August 29, 2012 – Jamal Jacob Moore, 29, of St. Paul faces charges of solicitation, inducement, and promotion of prostitution after Sergeant Grant Snyder learned of a 17-year-old female with an ad posted on Backpage.com for the purpose of prostitution. After arranging to meet the girl at a hotel in Bloomington, Sgt. Snyder ran into Moore, the girl’s pimp. Moore admitted to helping the girl post the ad by taking photos of her and getting her a pre-paid credit card to pay for the ad.
<http://www.scribd.com/doc/104236662/Minneapolis-Police-Sergeant-Grant-Snyder-Arrest-of-Backpage-Pimp>

¹ Because trafficking victims in this case were not minors, they are not included in the aggregate count at the beginning of this document.

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7. August 17, 2012 – After encountering an ad for sexual services on Backpage.com that featured a provocatively dressed young woman, police officers called the number on the ad and located the female, a 17-year-old girl, at the Woodbury motel. She told the officers she was involved in sex trafficking and had been prostituted for the past three days. She gave the officers the contact information of a man she had met through Backpage.com; Steven Franklin Minner, 60, of Little Rock, AK now faces a felony charge of engaging in prostitution with a 16- or 17-year-old.
<http://www.woodburybulletin.com/event/article/id/41756/group/homepage/>

8. August 1, 2012 – Meranda Warbourg, 32, has been charged with two felony counts of sex trafficking and two felony counts of solicitation and promotion of prostitution. Police had gotten word that two missing teens, 15- and 17-years-old, were engaged in prostitution in Minneapolis. From there, investigators traced a known cell phone number to numerous advertisements on Backpage.com, which features pictures of the girls wearing lingerie and posed in suggestive positions.
<http://www.kare11.com/news/article/985217/391/Woman-charged-with-sex-trafficking-after-missing-teens-found->

9. June 21, 2012 – Giorgio J. Baymon, 25, and Brandon D. Barnes, 24, were charged with the sex trafficking of minor, ages 16 and 17-years-old. The 16-year-old ran away when she was 15 and was sold on Backpage.com, the 17-year-old was picked up from school by Baymon and Barnes. Mickey A. Cupkie, 36, was charged with four counts of engaging in prostitution with two minors. Cupkie found the minors through commercial sex advertisements on Backpage.com and allegedly met the minors in an Eagan hotel.
<http://www.startribune.com/local/159955355.html>
UPDATE: October 6, 2012 - 25-year-old male, Giorgio Baymon, pleaded guilty to trafficking two minors using Backpage.com. Baymon agreed to testify against a co-defendant and any other uncharged co-defendants as a part of his plea agreement. Baymon will be sentenced Nov. 29. He faces up to 14 years in prison.
<http://kstp.com/article/stories/S2792051.shtml?cat=1>
UPDATE: January 14, 2013 – Brandon Barnes, 24, was charged with allegedly arranging prostitution trysts involving a 16-year-old runaway, her 17-year-old friend, and male customers. He entered an Alford plea of guilt to promoting prostitution in Ramsey County District Court on Monday. Barnes is to be sentenced March 1.
<http://www.startribune.com/local/east/186889892.html?refer=y>
UPDATE: February 28, 2013 – Mickey Albert Cupkie, 37, was sentenced to the three days he served in jail for paying two underage girls for sex. Cupkie has been put on probation for 10 years, which includes registering as a predatory offender and completing 60 hours of community service, and if he follows the terms of his probation, the two felony charges will be reduced to misdemeanors. Two of the four felony counts were dismissed as part of the plea agreement.
http://www.twincities.com/crime/ci_22691201/elko-man-gets-3-days-jail-sex-teens
UPDATE: April 26, 2013 – Ramsey County District Judge Lezlie Ott Marek gave Brandon Barnes, 25, was given a lesser sentence than called for in state guidelines, saying that he was less culpable than his co-defendant. Prosecutors sought a sentence of nearly 14 years, but Barnes was only given 10.
http://www.twincities.com/crime/ci_23114567/st-paul-man-gets-10-years-eagan-hotel?source=rss

10. June 6, 2012 – Samuel Cozart, 39, was sentenced to 21 years in prison for prostituting a 17-year-old female. Cozart used Backpage.com to advertise commercial sex from the underage victim. He was apprehended a hotel room in Roseville, Minnesota. Additionally, Cozart will have to register as a sex offender.

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<http://www.kare11.com/news/article/978530/391/Man-gets-21-year-sentence-for-prostituting-underage-girl>

11. May 30, 2012 – Zaiye Dehkee was charged with promoting the prostitution of a minor, a 16-year-old female of Anoka, Minnesota. The minor victim said she was sold 600 times to men as far as Duluth, MN and Wisconsin. Dehkee posted photos of the minor on Backpage.com to solicit her for commercial sex. He was sentenced to 36 months on a federal child porn charge.
<http://minnesota.publicradio.org/display/web/2012/05/30/underage-sex-trafficking/>
12. May 10, 2012 – Malachai Tramble, 29, will spend close to nine years in prison for prostituting a 17-year-old girl through Backpage.com. He will also have to register as a sex offender for 10 years after he gets out of prison.
<http://minnesota.cbslocal.com/2012/05/10/man-get-9-years-for-prostituting-a-17-year-old-girl-in-st-paul/>
13. February 2, 2012 – Akmal S. Karon, 30, has been charged with prostituting two girls, one since she was 15-year-old in Minneapolis, the St. Cloud area, and Richfield. One of the girls, a runaway who is now 17 was seen in commercial sex ads on Backpage.com
<http://www.startribune.com/local/west/138581134.html>
14. January 25, 2012 – A 17-year-old girl with Asperger syndrome ran away from her home in Des Moines, Iowa to meet a man she met on a social networking site. Tyree Erik Jones and Bionca Mixon met the young girl in St. Paul, MN, held her against her will, raped her, and forced her into prostitution using posting advertisements for sex with the minor on Backpage.com.
<http://www.scribd.com/doc/100455693/Jones-Tyree-2-2-12>
15. January 19, 2012 – A pregnant woman arrested for prostitution at a Burnsville motel says the father of her unborn child, Javed Mookhter Mobin, 19, forced her into the business and has used violence, threats and drugs to control her. The phone number found with the woman's escort ad on Backpage.com was registered to Mobin, police discovered.
<http://www.thisweeklive.com/2012/01/19/woman-says-alleged-pimp-controlled-her-with-violence-threats-drugs/>
16. June 14, 2011 – Maurice Donae Alexander, 24, and Latoshia Norris, 25, pleaded guilty to enticement to engage in prostitution of a minor. They met the 16-year-old minor in Minneapolis and placed ads on Backpage.com. The minor is a runaway from South Dakota. Alexander and Norris traveled to Des Moines, Kansas City, St. Louis and Indianapolis to meet customers.
http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/metro/article_47b686c2-96b8-11e0-9e1c-0019bb30f31a.html
17. March 17, 2011 – Arthur Chappell, 38, was sentenced to 28 years in prison for sex trafficking a minor. Chappell recruited the 16-year-old minor from Richfield. Chappell used Backpage.com to advertise sex from the minor.
<http://www.startribune.com/local/118163089.html>
UPDATE: October 25, 2012 – 40-year-old felon Arthur J. Chappell was found guilty on two counts of sex trafficking a minor, possessing child pornography, conspiracy to produce child pornography and a host of related accounts. The 28 year prison sentence was overturned by the U.S. Court of Appeals because the U.S. District Court's instructed jurors that they find Chappell guilty.
<http://www.startribune.com/local/south/175784711.html?refer=y>

Minor Sex Trafficking via Backpage.com Cases

Missouri

1. January 9, 2013 - The Springfield police had asked local authorities to aid in locating a 14-year-old runaway girl with an adult services ad on Backpage.com. Her pimp and his girlfriend, Louis G. Venning, 32, and Kourtnie M. Eldridge, 22, of Billings, Montana were arrested on felony charges of promoting prostitution. Venning and Eldridge are being prosecuted in Newton County Circuit Court, with their preliminary hearings set for Feb 19.
<http://www.joplinglobe.com/topstories/x1303513976/Online-prostitution-stings-in-Joplin-turning-up-runaways>
2. September 5, 2012 -- Richard Anderson, a 23-year-old man from Cahokia, has pled guilty to enticing a minor girl into prostitution. He admitted to marketing the girl on the escort section of Backpage.com and keeping the earnings. The girl was advertised as a 19-year-old but was actually 17 years of age. Anderson faces sentencing in November.
<http://www.wgem.com/story/19460741/man-pleads-guilty-in-prostitution-case>
UPDATE: November 28, 2012 – Richard Anderson, 23, was sentenced to five years and five months in prison for enticement to engage in prostitution. Anderson was discovered by an undercover prostitution sting operation conducted by the St. Louis County Police Department. An office responded to an ad found on backpage.com of the minor. The victim was confirmed to be a 17-year-old girl.
<http://www.bnd.com/2012/11/27/2408660/cahokia-man-sentenced-on-child.html>
3. September 18, 2012 - Reginald Williams, 28, was arrested for being caught in a sting last week. Collinsville police received a tip that Williams was prostituting a 16 year-old missing girl on Backpage.com. Undercover police man set up a “date” with the young girl who was being advertised as 20. There police arrested Williams and found other girls. The young girl stated she had sex with Williams and was taken to St. Louis and Chicago for sex work. Williams claimed otherwise, that he was working security for the girls and admitted knowing the girl was a minor. He is currently unemployed and without assets.
http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/crime-and-courts/illinois-man-faces-teen-prostitution-charge/article_bf8b38ae-0107-11e2-ba61-001a4bcf6878.html
4. June 25, 2012 – Demond L. Day, 33, was charged with the sexual trafficking of a child and Tiffany L. Piper, 21, charged with being an accessory to sexual trafficking of a child. Day and Piper recruited a 17-year-old girl to engage in sex acts with 10 to 20 people over a period of two weeks at Extended Stay America in St. Peters, MO. Day and Piper had put ads for sex with the minor on backpage.com, instructed the minor how to engage in prostitution and they two kept all the money.
<http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/stcharles/67366bb0-bcf4-11e1-8098-001a4bcf6878.html>
5. June 8, 2012 – Richard Anderson, 22, has been charged with allegedly prostituting a 17-year-old female. Anderson had posted an ad on the “escort” section of Backpage.com for sex with the minor. Anderson and the minor were taken into custody following a police sting in St. Louis, MO. Anderson admitted to posting the ads on Backpage.com and had the minor’s ID on his person.
http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/metro/illinois-man-accused-of-prostituting-teen/article_16d83654-b1b5-11e1-a64b-001a4bcf6878.html

Minor Sex Trafficking via Backpage.com Cases

6. December 30, 2011 – One federal judge in Missouri cited the first amendment in August when he dismissed a teenager's lawsuit against Backpage.com over nude photos a pimp posted of the child on the site. The judge held that while the minor endured "horrific victimization" at the hands of her pimp, Backpage.com was protected by federal law.
<http://www.wtsp.com/news/article/228915/81/Escort-ads-raking-in-millions-for-websites>
7. June 14, 2011 – Maurice Donae Alexander, 24, and Latoshia Norris, 25, pleaded guilty to enticement to engage in prostitution of a minor. They met the 16-year-old minor in Minneapolis and placed ads on Backpage.com. The minor is a runaway from South Dakota. Alexander and Norris traveled to Des Moines, Kansas City, St. Louis and Indianapolis to meet customers.
http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/metro/article_47b686c2-96b8-11e0-9e1c-0019bb30f31a.html
8. December 9, 2010 – Latasha Jewell McFarland sentenced to 5 years in prison for selling a 14-year-old on Backpage.com.
<http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2010/12/09/village-voice-media-sex-slaves-in-the-classified.html>

Montana

1. April 24, 2013 – George McLeod III, “Pimp Stick Quezzy,” was arrested after being caught running an internet prostitution ring and has plead guilty to sex trafficking charges. He posted photos of women, including at least one minor from Montana, to Backpage.com. He would then travel with the women to hotels and strip clubs in South Carolina, Tennessee, and Florida. When sentenced, McLeod could spend up to 12 years in federal prison and have to pay a \$250,000 fine.
<http://www.thestate.com/2013/04/24/2740508/pimp-stick-quezzy-pleads-guilty.html>
2. January 9, 2013 - The Springfield police had asked local authorities to aid in locating a 14-year-old runaway girl with an adult services ad on Backpage.com. Her pimp and his girlfriend, Louis G. Venning, 32, and Kourtnie M. Eldridge, 22, of Billings, Montana were arrested on felony charges of promoting prostitution. Venning and Eldridge are being prosecuted in Newton County Circuit Court, with their preliminary hearings set for Feb 19.
<http://www.joplinglobe.com/topstories/x1303513976/Online-prostitution-stings-in-Joplin-turning-up-runaways>

Nebraska

1. May 25, 2012 – Nation-wide trafficking ring led by Johnelle L. Bell, 27, used Backpage.com to research, recruit and sell 17- to 21-year-old minors and women to act as his sex workers between November 2009 and June 2011. Women and girls were recruited and sold in Arkansas, Iowa, Nebraska as well as a dozen states in one two-month span last year. The ring said they headquartered their sex trafficking operation out of Little Rock, Arkansas. He and his counter-part Brittany Lawson, 21, are being charged in Des Moines, Iowa because the ring did business there on at least four occasions.
<http://www.businessweek.com/ap/2012-05/D9UVNGT00.htm>

Nevada

1. April 24, 2013 – Marquis Maurice Lamount Sweet of Las Vegas and Domaniece Latrice Roy of San Diego, both 24, were charged in federal court with transportation of a minor to engage in sexual activity as well as production of child pornography. They were arrested in Texas after the 16-year-

Minor Sex Trafficking via Backpage.com Cases

old girl they were holding captive escaped. Upon further investigation, officers discovered escort advertisements on Backpage.com with photos of the girl. They could face up to 30 years in federal prison and a \$250,000 fine.

http://www.oaoa.com/news/crime_justice/courts/article_28ce8972-ad30-11e2-997b-001a4bcf6878.html

2. February 28, 2013 – Percival Williams, 35, was arrested in Texas on charges of human trafficking and trying to smuggle stolen diamonds into New Jersey. Williams allegedly found young women around the country and brought them to New Jersey against their will or by promising a relationship or better life. He kept the women at his house or a nearby hotel, and would solicit clients by placing advertisements on Backpage.com. He also allegedly escorted or sent women to various hotels to solicit clients in Atlantic City, Manhattan, and Las Vegas. Williams was charged with human trafficking, promoting prostitution, theft, and conspiracy. The charges carry a sentence of 10-20 years in state prison.
http://www.nj.com/politics/index.ssf/2013/02/edison_man_arrested_on_charges.html
3. June 15, 2012 – Eric Lamar Wells has admitted to his selling minor girls, ages 14 and 17, and interstate transportation of minors for prostitution. He also admitted to using Backpage.com to sell the girls. He was facing life in prison but because of his pre-trial admission he is likely to see his sentence reduced to just 10 years in prison – the judge has the final say and he will be sentenced on October 22, 2012. Wells recruited the minors in Las Vegas and sold them in multiple cities including Anaheim near Disneyland, Phoenix, and Sacramento. Tonisha Alecia Moore was also arrested for helping Wells prostitute the minors and she remains in custody as well.
http://blogs.ocweekly.com/navelgazing/2012/06/eric_lamar_wells_disneyland_pi.php
4. November 16, 2011 – Al O’Neal was arrested on child prostitution charges. Police say he recruited a 14-year-old girl and forced her to turn tricks. O’Neal even had the girl driven to Las Vegas for prostitution calls. Police say there was a second 15-year-old victim rescued. He had posted ads for the girls on Backpage.com.
<http://www.kpho.com/story/16061039/police-pimp-arrested-for-trafficking-14-year-old-girl>
5. January 20, 2011 – A 13-year-old victim who was criminalized pleads with judge to go home after she was arrested in an undercover bust on Backpage.com.
http://articles.cnn.com/2011-01-20/justice/siu.selling.girl.next.door.backpage_1_selena-mother-las-vegas?s=PM:CRIME

New Hampshire

1. April 30, 2012 – Wayne Miller, 21, faces three charges of felony prostitution for allegedly helping his friend Jean Payout, 22, of Hyde Park, Mass., with advertising the girl on Backpage.com and setting up meetings on Oct. 20, 2010, court records say. Nashua police first alerted Portsmouth police about the alleged prostitution once they discovered the girl was being advertised online, according to police and prosecutors. The girl, who was being advertised as a 20-year-old escort, was reported as a 16-year-old runaway three months earlier, police said.
<http://www.newhampshire.com/article/20120430/NEWS03/704309977>

New Jersey

Minor Sex Trafficking via Backpage.com Cases

1. February 28, 2013 – Percival Williams, 35, was arrested in Texas on charges of human trafficking and trying to smuggle stolen diamonds into New Jersey. Williams allegedly found young women around the country and brought them to New Jersey against their will or by promising a relationship or better life. He kept the women at his house or a nearby hotel, and would solicit clients by placing advertisements on Backpage.com. He also allegedly escorted or sent women to various hotels to solicit clients in Atlantic City, Manhattan, and Las Vegas. Williams was charged with human trafficking, promoting prostitution, theft, and conspiracy. The charges carry a sentence of 10-20 years in state prison.
http://www.nj.com/politics/index.ssf/2013/02/edison_man_arrested_on_charges.html
2. May 18, 2012 – Michael Gemma, 29, was arraigned in Boston federal court on charges of sex trafficking of a minor. Gemma had photographed the girl wearing lingerie and posing in provocative positions and posted the photos on Backpage.com. He would then take her to New York and New Jersey to sell her to men for sex.
http://bostonherald.com/news_opinion/local_coverage/2012/05/feds_mattapan_pimp_sold_teen_johns_3_states
3. January 30, 2012 – Theodore Briggs used Backpage.com to place ads for minor girls, ages 14 and 17, on Backpage.com. He was sentenced to 120 months in prison. Briggs admitted that he and others transported the 14-year-old from Connecticut to Atlantic City to engage in prostitution.
<http://wilton.patch.com/articles/norwalk-sex-trafficker-gets-120-years>
UPDATE: February 2, 2012 – Harry Franklin was sentenced to 51 months in prison for his part in the prostitution ring that Theodore Briggs ran last year that included the sex trafficking of two minor victims. Franklin introduced Briggs to one of the women and the 14-year-old who then began to work for the ring. Franklin helped to facilitate the transportation for the girls between Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey. The ring advertised the girls on Backpage.com.
<http://www.thedailynorwalk.com/news/man-sentenced-norwalk-sex-trafficking-case>
UPDATE: April 11, 2012 – Giovanni Vasquez was sentenced to 33 months in prison for his part in the prostitution ring Theodore Briggs ran last year that included the sex trafficking of two minor victims. Vasquez drove the teenage prostitutes back and forth throughout Connecticut, New Jersey, and New York to meet their clients. He pleaded guilty last year. The ring advertised the girls on Backpage.com and one of the victims was just 14-years-old.
<http://www.thehour.com/story/523413/third-man-sentenced-for-role-in-prostitution-ring>

New Mexico

1. October 3, 2011 – Albuquerque man, Kendel Morrel, 22, used Backpage.com to sell a 17-year-old into sexual slavery – selling her for \$150 and allowing her to keep \$50 and tried to sell her for \$3000 to other traffickers.
<http://www.koat.com/news/new-mexico/Police-Man-Tried-To-Sell-Teen-Into-Sex-Slavery/9153762/6120820/-/gtba1i/-/index.html>
2. July 14, 2011 – Dante Mckay, 32, was charged with human trafficking of a 17-year-old female. Mckay was using backpage.com to post prostitution ads for the teen.
<http://www.kasa.com/dpps/news/tip-leads-to-human-trafficking-arrest-3881233>

New York

1. June 24, 2013 – Lynette Tilden, 26; Edward Tilden, 31, and Alexandria Davall, 23 were charged with sex trafficking. They're accused of using Backpage.com to advertise and sell a 16-year-old girl to

Minor Sex Trafficking via Backpage.com Cases

various individuals for the purpose of sexual acts throughout New York and the East Coast region. Four people were initially accused of sexual contact with the minor, but only two have been indicted by a grand jury so far: Brooks and Michael Curcio, 22, of Whitesboro.

<http://www.uticaod.com/news/x1808707307/-I-m-no-sex-offender-man-says-in-Utica-sex-trafficking-case#axzz2XXs3IkDY>

2. June 18, 2013 – Hikeem Green, 39, and his girlfriend Darcell Marshall, 22 have been charged for sex trafficking according to DA Richard Brown. He posed as a john looking for prostitutes in the Bronx and Brooklyn, NY where he met his victims, a 19-year-old teenage runaway from Rockland County and a 20-year-old from New York City. Green held the women against their will in St. Albans between October and December, taking photos of them and posting them on the adult listings section of backpage.com.
http://www.timesledger.com/stories/2013/24/sextraffickingsentence_tl_2013_06_14_q.html²
3. April 4, 2013 – Daniel Tanck, 31, and Robert Palermo, 29, have been charged with sex trafficking of a minor. A 14-year-old girl reported that Tanck and Palermo placed an ad on Backpage.com for her to engage in prostitution. If convicted, Tanck and Palermo face a mandatory 10 year sentence.
<http://www.whec.com/news/stories/S2987523.shtml?cat=566>
4. March 13, 2013 – Kenyan Price, 36, was indicted with two counts of sex trafficking, five counts of promoting prostitution, and one count of endangering the welfare of a child after he pimped three teenage girls, ages 15, 16, and 18, through ads on Backpage.com. If convicted, he could face up to 25 years in prison.
http://www.qgazette.com/news/2013-03-13/Front_Page/Man_Trafficked_Teens_For_Sex_In_Jackson_Heights_DA.html
5. March 3, 2013 – Robert Pannell, 36, a member of the Bloods gang is the first to go on trial since the Brooklyn district attorney formed a special unit to investigate sex trafficking crimes nearly three years ago. After being forced to walk the streets to pick up men for money, the victim, 19, was made to pose for pictures Pannell then posted in advertisements on Backpage.com. He faces life in prison if convicted of kidnapping, rape, and other charges.
<http://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/teen-sex-slave-tells-courtroom-horrific-story-savage-pimp-article-1.1278528#commentpostform>
6. February 28, 2013 – Percival Williams, 35, was arrested in Texas on charges of human trafficking and trying to smuggle stolen diamonds into New Jersey. Williams allegedly found young women around the country and brought them to New Jersey against their will or by promising a relationship or better life. He kept the women at his house or a nearby hotel, and would solicit clients by placing advertisements on Backpage.com. He also allegedly escorted or sent women to various hotels to solicit clients in Atlantic City, Manhattan, and Las Vegas. Williams was charged with human trafficking, promoting prostitution, theft, and conspiracy. The charges carry a sentence of 10-20 years in state prison.
http://www.nj.com/politics/index.ssf/2013/02/edison_man_arrested_on_charges.html

² Because trafficking victims in this case were not minors, they are not included in the aggregate count at the beginning of this document.

Minor Sex Trafficking via Backpage.com Cases

7. December 14, 2012 – Otis Willis, 30, and Tiffany St. Denis, 23, are accused of sex trafficking after an employee at the Red Roof Inn in Rochester recognized a 17-year-old girl in advertisements on Backpage.com; the girl had been seen with the couple. The FBI was alerted in August 2012 of another girl who was only 16-years-old being promoted by the pair. If convicted, they face a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years in jail.
<http://www.wivb.com/dpp/news/crime/alleged-sex-trafficking-at-amherst-inn>
8. December 5, 2012 – Royce Corley is being charged with two counts of promoting prostitution in the third degree. He is expected in court for his alleged prostitution enterprise. Corley was utilizing Con-Ed computers in order to prostitute underage girls and post ads featuring the minors on Backpage.com. He is currently being held on bail for \$25,000.
http://gothamist.com/2012/12/04/ex-con_ed_worker_accused_of_using_c.php
9. November 29, 2012 – Nine people were arrested in connection with sex trafficking involving a minor. Lynette Tilden, 25, and Edward Tilden, 30, used backpage.com to advertise throughout the Northeast for sex with the victim. Both men and Alexandria Davall, 23, have been charged with felony trafficking. Two men from Utica were charged with rape, two others were charged with endangering the welfare of a child and two other men were accused of criminal sex act.
<http://www.seattlepi.com/news/crime/article/Police-Upstate-NY-sex-trafficking-ring-broken-up-4075709.php#ixzz2DclGSwfp>
10. October 17, 2012 – Kendale (Ace) Judge, 21, took a plea deal of six to eighteen years in prison for forcing a 13-year-old runaway into prostitution. He advertised the girl on Backpage.com and threw her down a flight of stairs when the girl tried to escape. Judge apologized for his actions in Brooklyn Supreme Court. Shanique Davis, 21, helped Judge by taking pictures and watching the girl, received a 5-year probation.
<http://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/pimps-prison-time-peddling-runaway-article-1.1184991>
11. October 1, 2012 – A missing 15 year-old girl has been found in Watertown by state police working as a prostitute. Eric Oliver, 29, of Syracuse has been charged with second-degree promoting prostitution and endangering the welfare of a child. The investigation began after the minor's mother saw her daughter's photograph on Backpage.com. Both Oliver and the minor were brought into custody, after a meeting was set up. The minor has returned to Family Court in Onondaga County.
<http://www.wvnytv.com/news/local/Man-Accused-In-Prostitution-Of-Syracuse-Teen-171765291.html>
12. September 1, 2012 – Kenneth Graham, 24, of Amherst, New York, was arrest and charged with sex trafficking of minors after posting advertisements for sexual services featuring minor girls on Backpage.com. According to the complaint, Graham recruited, promoted, and profited from the prostitution of two girls under the age of 18.
<http://www.empirestatenews.net/News/20120901-1.html>
UPDATE: January 17, 2013 - Kenneth Graham, 25, of Amherst was convicted after a jury trial of sex trafficking by force, sex trafficking of a minor by force, and sex trafficking of a minor. Between 2010 and 2012, Graham recruited, promoted (on Backpage.com), and profited from the prostitution activities of two minor girls and a third victim in her 20s. Graham faces a minimum sentence of 15 years in prison and a maximum life when he is sentenced on May 8.
<http://www.bizjournals.com/buffalo/news/2013/01/17/amherst-man-convicted-for-sex.html>

Minor Sex Trafficking via Backpage.com Cases

13. August 6, 2012 - 26-year-old Rochester resident Marques Williams, a teacher's assistant at BOCES 1, has been arrested by the FBI and charged with underage sex trafficking. Williams is accused of trafficking the 15-year-old girl through Backpage.com. He admitted in an FBI interview that he "posted prostitution advertisements" of the minor using his telephone. Williams' father, Michael Todd Williams, was arrested earlier in the year for trafficking a 16-year-old girl on Backpage.com. http://www.democratandchronicle.com/article/20120806/NEWS01/308060034/Marques-Williams-sex-trafficking-boces?odyssey=tab|topnews|text|Local%20News&nclink_check=1
14. August 1, 2012 - Lamont Brunson, 33, will serve three to nine years in prison and will be required to register as a sex offender after he admitted to running a trafficking operation that included coercing a 17-year-old girl into prostitution for four years. Brunson advertised the victim's prostitution services using Backpage.com and branded her body with a tattoo of his street name to demonstrate his ownership. <http://www.metro.us/newyork/local/article/1148980--man-sentenced-for-prostituting-17-year-old-girl>
15. May 25, 2012 – Jerese and Chelsea Blue are charged with trafficking teen girls in prostitution. Police found a 14 and a 17-year-old girl were found and said the Blue sisters were posting ads for the minors on Backpage.com and keeping most of the money the minors received from commercial sex buyers. <http://www.13wham.com/news/local/story/Sex-Trafficking-Rochester-teen-girls/wzGqnAdo5U-I7e243D0tqA.csp>
16. May 18, 2012 – Michael Gemma, 29, was arraigned in Boston federal court on charges of sex trafficking of a minor. Gemma had photographed the girl wearing lingerie and posing in provocative positions and posted the photos on Backpage.com. He would then take her to New York and New Jersey to sell her to men for sex. http://bostonherald.com/news_opinion/local_coverage/2012/05/feds_mattapan_pimp_sold_teen_johns_3_states
17. April 30, 2012 – Michael Todd Williams purchased a short dress, had the teen wear it, and took photographs. The next day the pictures were on Backpage.com, a popular website for escort services and, some activists contend, a leading resource for under-aged trafficking. The couple didn't allow her to leave or go to school, authorities allege. Willenborg allegedly said Williams would beat the minor if she tried to escape, and the teen had witnessed Williams "hit Chelsea hard." <http://www.democratandchronicle.com/article/20120430/NEWS01/304300008/New-York-trafficking-laws>
18. April 24, 2012 – Jessica was a victim of sex trafficking when she was 16-years-old. Her pimp posted an ad for her on Backpage.com when she was a minor and now is in prison for his crime. Jessica now tells others about the severe abuse she faced during that time and the danger Backpage.com poses to many young victims. <http://abcnews.go.com/US/girls-sold-sex-online-backpage-defends-decision-ads/story?id=16193220&page=5#.T5hJaY7pAoY>
19. April 19, 2012 – Christopher Whitfield, 24, and Fernando Del Rio, 41, were charged with sex crimes involving minors, one a 15-year-old girl. Del Rio sold the minor for sex acts in Queens, NY using Backpage.com. http://www.queensda.org/newpressreleases/2012/april/whitfield_del%20rio_05_19_2012_cmp.pdf

Minor Sex Trafficking via Backpage.com Cases

20. April 19, 2012 – Brianna was 12-years-old when she ran away from home only to fall under the control of a pimp. Her pimp posted ads for Brianna on the escort section of Backpage.com.
http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/opinion/2018024765_kristof20.html
21. April 5, 2012 – Three men are now facing charges of solicitation, sex trafficking, and paying to have sex with a minor for the prostitution ring they ran. Nine victims were rescued from this ring and eight of those nine were underage. The men pimped out the girls through Backpage.com.
<http://www.myfoxtwincities.com/story/17377069/police-break-up>
22. April 4, 2012 – FBI agents are searching for Marquist Bradford who has been charged with sex trafficking of children by force, fraud, or coercion. The FBI began to look into Bradford after a 15-year-old victim came to them. Bradford had a long history of pimping minors and has continued to work in Chicago, Virginia, and New York when he's not in California. He frequently uses sites like Backpage.com to pimp out his girls.
<http://www.thesmokinggun.com/documents/fbi-hunts-twitter-pimp-king-kutta-896523>
23. March 28, 2012 – Michael Summerville pleaded guilty to sex trafficking for pimping out an adolescent girl. The victim told police that Summerville pimped her out at the ages of 14 and 15 years. She also supplied police with Summerville's phone number, which Summerville also used in ads placed on Backpage.com.
http://www.timesledger.com/stories/2012/13/ozonparksextraffice_fh_2012_03_29_q.html
24. March 17, 2012 – Alissa was hired out by eight pimps when she was 16 and 17-years-old who used Backpage.com to find johns for her in Midtown Manhattan. She escaped after about 3 years in prostitution and has testified against six of them who are facing up to 25 years in prison.
http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/18/opinion/sunday/kristof-where-pimps-peddle-their-goods.html?_r=3
25. March 15, 2012 – Four men and a woman were indicted on charges that they kidnapped, drugged and raped a 15 year-old girl, then kept her as both a sex slave and a prostitute. That included taking nude photos of the girl, and posting them on Backpage.com as part of an advertisement for prostitution services.
http://www.qchron.com/editions/south/da-teen-drugged-and-raped-in-ozone-park/article_bdc5abb4-c123-5d5f-8407-cfbbb8092aee.html
26. February 29, 2012 – Homeland Security investigators said Thomas Cramer's latest crimes consist of trafficking six female minors in the commercial sex trade. According to court papers, the girls, their ages ranging from 15 to 17, worked for Cramer as prostitutes. Investigators said he advertised on the online classified site known as Backpage.com.
<http://www.brightonpittsfordpost.com/latestnews/x369787415/Brighton-man-Thomas-Cramer-charged-with-sex-trafficking-appears-in-federal-court>
UPDATE: March 27, 2013 - Thomas Cramer, 40, of Brighton pleaded guilty to the sex trafficking of four underage girls on Backpage.com. The minimum sentence for Cramer would be 10 years and maximum would be life. The advisory sentence guidelines used in federal court recommend a sentence of 292 to 365 months. Cramer's sentencing guidelines are stiff because of his past criminal history.
<http://www.whec.com/iteam/stories/S2977803.shtml?cat=572>

Minor Sex Trafficking via Backpage.com Cases

27. January 30, 2012 – Theodore Briggs used Backpage.com to place ads for minor girls, ages 14 and 17, on Backpage.com. He was sentenced to 120 months in prison. Briggs admitted that he and others transported the 14-year-old from Connecticut to New York to engage in prostitution.
<http://wilton.patch.com/articles/norwalk-sex-trafficker-gets-120-years>
UPDATE: February 2, 2012 – Harry Franklin was sentenced to 51 months in prison for his part in the prostitution ring that Theodore Briggs ran last year that included the sex trafficking of two minor victims. Franklin introduced Briggs to one of the women and the 14-year-old who then began to work for the ring. Franklin helped to facilitate the transportation for the girls between Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey. The ring advertised the girls on Backpage.com.
<http://www.thedailynorwalk.com/news/man-sentenced-norwalk-sex-trafficking-case>
UPDATE: April 11, 2012 – Giovanni Vasquez was sentenced to 33 months in prison for his part in the prostitution ring Theodore Briggs ran last year that included the sex trafficking of two minor victims. Vasquez drove the teenage prostitutes back and forth throughout Connecticut, New Jersey, and New York to meet their clients. He pleaded guilty last year. The ring advertised the girls on Backpage.com and one of the victims was just 14-years-old.
<http://www.thehour.com/story/523413/third-man-sentenced-for-role-in-prostitution-ring>
28. March 13, 2011 – 5 women were arrested in a Backpage.com prostitution sting including a 15-year-old girl who was released to her parents. She will be charged in juvenile or family court.
<http://www.zimbio.com/Humaning+Trafficking+Awareness/articles/4R1SwFgroXI/Backpage+com+Prostitution+Arrests+Nets+Five>
29. November 22, 2011 - Melinda Carmichael, 22, Gary Whitfield, 29, Kendale “Ace” Judge, 21, Shanique Davis, 19, have been with the prostitution of minors, ages 12- and 13-years-old. The 13-year-old was a runaway. Davis posted photos of the 13-year-old on Backpage.com to solicit her for sex.
<http://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/brooklyn-prosecutors-nab-4-charged-running-teen-prostitution-ring-article-1.980950?localLinksEnabled=false>
30. June 2, 2010 – Eight “Bloods” gang members have been busted for running multiple prostitution rings recruiting children from schools and trafficking them for sex, including minors as young as 15. The gang used Backpage.com to advertise the minors for sex.
<http://www.nydailynews.com/news/crime/bloods-gang-members-brooklyn-schools-recruit-underage-girls-hookers-prosecutors-article-1.180295>

North Carolina

1. April 26, 2013 – Osbie Antonio Sea is accused of recruiting teenage girls to the sex industry. He helped the feds in their investigation when he began bragging about his illegal activities on social media sites. One of his victims, a 14-year-old girl, was recruited at a K-Mart in Raleigh and was advertised on Backpage.com. He is currently behind bars and, if convicted, faces a minimum of 15 years in prison and could receive up to life.
<http://www.wmctv.com/story/22083442/mid-south-man-called-mr-money-accused-of-sex-trafficking>
2. March 18, 2013 – Joshua Dumas, 21, of Atlanta pleaded guilty to running a commercial sex business that prostituted multiple juvenile girls in Herndon, VA, and other locations throughout Virginia, Maryland, North and South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. He faces a mandatory minimum of 20 years and a maximum of life in prison. The leader of the venture, Edwin Barcus pleaded guilty to founding and leading a child exploitation service.

Minor Sex Trafficking via Backpage.com Cases

<http://www.fbi.gov/washingtondc/press-releases/2013/atlanta-man-admits-his-role-in-operating-an-interstate-juvenile-sex-trafficking-enterprise>

3. July 18, 2012 – Solomon Manasseh Mustafa, 38, of Stole Mountain, Georgia was found guilty on the charges of sex trafficking, kidnapping, and enticement of a minor. Before being indicted by a grand jury in May 2011, Mustafa and 25-year-old Kalandra Annette Wallace used websites like Craigslist.com and Backpage.com to recruit young women and force them into prostitution. Prosecutors say the two operated a sex trafficking ring in Atlanta and sometimes transported young women to North Carolina and Alabama to engage in sex acts.
<http://www.sfgate.com/news/article/Man-convicted-for-operating-sex-trafficking-ring-3717803.php>
4. February 9, 2012 – Leighton Curtis posted sexually explicit photos of a 15-year-old in an escort ad on Backpage.com in order to prostitute her. Curtis has now been sentenced to 30 years in federal prison.
http://articles.sun-sentinel.com/2012-02-09/news/fl-sex-trafficker-gets-30-20120209_1_prostitution-ads-trafficker-federal-prison

North Dakota

1. August 14, 2012 - Three people have been arrested for sex trafficking in Grand Folks, North Dakota. Travis Johnson, Joshua Harry and Amanda Stewart have been charged with prostituting a teenage girl for sex with older men. The trio prostituted the 17-year-old girl under the “escort services” section of Backpage.com. The charges against them carry maximum penalties of life in prison. This is the first case of domestic minor sex trafficking in the community.
<http://www.wdaz.com/event/article/id/14780/>
UPDATE: November 15, 2012 - Amanda Stewart (22), Joshua Henry (27), and Travis Johnson (29), have pleaded not guilty on charges of pimping a 17-year-old girl. If convicted, they could face life in prison without parole. In addition to these charges, Johnson faces charges of felony corruption of a minor for allegedly having sex with the 17-year-old girl. In 2010 Johnson asked the girl to be a prostitute, she declined and later agreed. Harry and Stewart then took her to potential johns. Stewart is free on a \$10,000 bond, Harry and Johnson remain in jail under \$50,000 bonds, and all are scheduled in court January 10.
<http://www.grandforksherald.com/event/article/id/249415/group/homepage/>

Ohio

1. May 10, 2013 – Jeremy Mack, 37, of Elyria, and Ashley Onysko, 23, of Avon Lake, were charged with two counts of sex trafficking in a criminal complaint unsealed Friday in U.S. District Court, said Stephen D. Anthony, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI’s Cleveland office, and Steven M. Dettelbach, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Ohio. The couple is accused of forcing a 16-year old and a 19 year-old woman to have sex for money. Onysko told investigators that she worked for Mack facilitating meetings for sex between girls and men. She posted advertisements on backpage.com and craigslist.com, according to an affidavit filed in the case. The 16-year-old met Mack through Mack’s son in March 2013. She noticed that the other girls were afraid of Mack and didn’t seem allowed to leave the house except to meet clients, according to the affidavit. On March 29, Mack instructed her to get fixed up and instructed other girls to take photos of her for backpage.com. She said she didn’t want to be a prostitute but did so because Mack was “a guy with a gun who knew where I lived,” according to the affidavit.
http://www.nbcnews.com/id/51844624/ns/local_news-cleveland_oh/t/couple-charged-human-trafficking/#.UZOXgKKKJic

Minor Sex Trafficking via Backpage.com Cases

2. April 30, 2013 - Jessica Loren Posey, 25, of Atlanta was sentenced to seven years in federal prison for prostituting a 16-year-old girl in several states. Posey used a computer to create advertisements for the girl on Backpage.com. The girl, and others, were taken to Tennessee, Ohio, and Kentucky to be sold for sex. As well as her sentence, Posey will pay restitution of \$1,200 to the victim, perform 100 hours of community service, and register as a sex offender.
<http://www.examiner.com/article/atlanta-woman-sentenced-for-trafficking-teenage-girl-for-sex-several-states>
3. November 29, 2012 – Chardee Barfield, 22, of Cleveland was sentenced to nearly six years in federal prison for her role in a sex trafficking ring that forced children into prostitution and placed ads for underage girls on Backpage.com. One 15-year-old runaway told police that she was forced to prostitute herself 10 times a day over a month-long period, and another 16-year-old girl was taken by Barfield and co-defendant Ernest McClain from Ohio to Pennsylvania with the intent to sell her into prostitution.
http://www.newsnet5.com/dpp/news/local_news/cleveland_metro/cleveland-woman-sentenced-to-nearly-6-years-in-prison-for-sex-trafficking-of-minor
4. September 11, 2012 -- Malik McKee and Shuntina McKee of Iowa City and Willie Woods of Toledo, OH all face charges of conspiracy to transport minors across state lines to engage in prostitution. According to a criminal complaint, the three used coercion, force, and the threat of force to make one 14-year-old and two 16-year-old victims to engage in commercial sex acts in both Iowa City and Chicago. Pictures of the girls in lingerie and high heels were posted on Backpage.com to solicit prostitution.
<http://www.kcrg.com/news/local/Iowa-City-Man-and-Woman-Acused-of-Trafficking-Teens-to-Chicago--169376436.html>
5. July 27, 2012 – Sonora Armstrong of Cleveland, Ohio was sentenced to 10 years in prison for her role in bringing a 15-year-old Cleveland girl to Henrico County, Virginia for prostitution. A codefendant, Calvin L. Winbush Sr. of Cleveland Heights, Ohio has pleaded guilty to conspiracy and interstate transportation charges. The minor told police that a woman took photos of her which were uploaded to a website to advertise for prostitution. Court records show this website was Backpage.com.
http://www.cleveland.com/metro/index.ssf/2012/07/cleveland_woman_gets_10_years.html
6. June 2, 2012 – Brady D. Jackson, 26, and Jude Simpson, 22, of Toledo were indicted on juvenile sex trafficking. Jackson and Simpson used Backpage.com to solicit customers for the underage prostitution of female minors, ages 15- and 16-years-old. Jackson took pictures of the teenagers and posted them on the adult entertainment page of Backpage.com.
<http://www.toledoblade.com/Courts/2012/06/02/2-Toledoans-accused-of-juvenile-sex-trafficking-1.html>
7. September 27, 2011 – In Cleveland, a 40-year-old woman was charged after she allegedly posted sexual photos of a 16-year-old girl who she forced into prostitution on Backpage.com.
<http://www.daytondailynews.com/news/crime/sex-trade-thrives-by-exploiting-internet-1260014.html>
8. June 3, 2011 – Timothy “John” Davis has been charged with juvenile sex trafficking after using Backpage.com to advertise and sell a 16-year-old girl.

Minor Sex Trafficking via Backpage.com Cases

<http://chronicle.northcoastnow.com/2011/06/03/feds-say-man-was-pimp-to-girl-16/>

Oklahoma

1. May 28, 2013-- A woman remained in the Tulsa Jail on Friday night on a complaint of human trafficking on allegations that she brought a 17-year-old girl with her from Texas to engage in prostitution. Tina Grindle, 42, of Lancaster, Texas, was arrested Wednesday night at the Extended Stay Inn. The document says a TPD officer called a phone number listed on an advertisement in the escort section on backpage.com. During the course of the arrest, police came in contact with a 17-year-old girl who the report alleges had been brought to Tulsa by Grindle. Police allege that Grindle was responsible for the posting of an advertisement pertaining to the girl on the same website.
<http://villagevoicepimp.com/case-248-texas-woman-faces-felony-prostitution-human-trafficking-charges-tulsa>
2. December 12, 2012 – Tarran Arnell Brinson, 23, was arrested by police after meeting with a 15-year-old girl at a Super 8 motel. Police arranged to meet the girl through a Backpage.com ad. Police patrolling, noticed Brinson drive by the room and warn the girl that police were outside. It was confirmed that Brinson rented the room.
http://www.tulsaworld.com/news/article.aspx?subjectid=11&articleid=20121208_11_A22_CUTLI_N82982
UPDATE: January 1, 2013 – Tarran Arnell Brinson, 23, was charged by a federal grand jury Friday with attempted sex trafficking and with using telephone and Internet services to facilitate a prostitution business. Assistant U.S. Attorney Trent Shores said Brinson would face 10 years to life in prison if convicted of the attempted sex-trafficking count in the indictment. Brinson remained in the Tulsa Jail as of Friday evening.
http://www.tulsaworld.com/news/article.aspx?subjectid=11&articleid=20130111_11_0_ATulsa533699

Oregon

1. August 7, 2013 – Ronald Spivey, 47 years old, and Kimberly Haven, 25, have been placed in custody. They were arrested during Tulsa PD's Vice Unit's undercover operation for prostitution. An officer set up an ad on backpage.com for escorting. Spivey and Haven were looking to recruit the undercover officer, who pretended that she was a 17-year-old girl, to work for them in Dallas.
<http://www.ktul.com/story/22976230/tpd-undercover-sting-nets-two-human-trafficking-arrests>
2. March 13, 2013 – Depri M Spenser, 25, of Tacoma was sentenced to 10 years in prison for transporting a minor across state lines for prostitution. Prosecutors say Spenser brought two 15-year-old girls from Tacoma to Portland and advertised them to johns on Backpage.com.
http://www.oregonlive.com/portland/index.ssf/2013/03/portland_judge_sends_tacoma_ma.html
3. July 18, 2012 – Atlantis Carter, 22, and Erika Hart, 23, were arrested being involved in the prostitution of a 16-year-old runaway from Portland, Oregon. The teen had been missing since June 21. The teen was charged with prostitution and marijuana possession and is being held in custody due to her missing person status.
<http://www.kcci.com/news/central-iowa/Police-monitor-adult-entertainment-site/-/9357080/15571850/-/item/0/-/xbhm97z/-/index.html>

Minor Sex Trafficking via Backpage.com Cases

4. April 17, 2012 – Zerick Jamel Dawson, 28, was sentenced to 114 months in federal prison on charges with conspiracy to traffic a minor for commercial sex. Co-defendants Edward Williams and Shawntay Wilson were sentenced to prison terms as well. The minor was 17-years-old and the trio would post photos of the minor on Backpage.com. Williams transported the minor back and forth between Washington and Oregon to hotels and client's homes.
http://www.justice.gov/usao/or/PressReleases/2012/20120417_dawson.html

Pennsylvania

1. July 28, 2013 – Enoch Smith, 35, of Philadelphia, trafficked a minor through Backpage.com advertisements from 2009 to 2011, as well as producing child pornography. He is scheduled to be sentenced on Oct. 31 in federal court in Philadelphia.
http://articles.philly.com/2013-07-28/news/40834336_1_backpage-federal-prosecutors-philadelphia-man
2. May 1, 2013 – Christian Dior Womack and Rashidah Brice were charged by federal authorities with sex trafficking and forcing an underage girl into prostitution. They operated their business from Backpage.com. If convicted of all charges, Womack and Brice each face a minimum of 15 years in prison.
http://articles.philly.com/2013-05-01/news/38960371_1_backpage-com-underage-girl-classified-ad-website
3. December 14, 2012 – Rashaad McIntyre has been indicted on child sex trafficking charges after running a prostitution operation that employed girls under the age of 18. McIntyre would take pictures of the girls and post them on Backpage.com. He faces lengthy mandatory minimum sentences up to a maximum of life in prison.
<http://philadelphia.cbslocal.com/2012/12/14/philadelphia-man-charged-with-promoting-sex-crimes-against-underage-girls/>
4. November 29, 2012 – Chardee Barfield, 22, of Cleveland was sentenced to nearly six years in federal prison for her role in a sex trafficking ring that forced children into prostitution and placed ads for underage girls on Backpage.com. One 15-year-old runaway told police that she was forced to prostitute herself 10 times a day over a month-long period, and another 16-year-old girl was taken by Barfield and co-defendant Ernest McClain from Ohio to Pennsylvania with the intent to sell her into prostitution.
http://www.newsnet5.com/dpp/news/local_news/cleveland_metro/cleveland-woman-sentenced-to-nearly-6-years-in-prison-for-sex-trafficking-of-minor
5. June 27, 2012 – Francisco Torrellas 29, of Allentown, was indicted for pimping a 16-year-old minor in hotels in Elmwood Park, Bergen and Elizabeth. Torrellas used Backpage.com to find clients to sell the minor to for sex.
<http://www.cliffviewpilot.com/hudson/4006-feds-charge-man-with-running-traveling-brothels-using-girl-16-in-bergen-hudson>

Rhode Island

1. August 6, 2013 – Capt. Anthony Sauro said that he also wants a city ordinance requiring the strip clubs to obtain BCI (background) checks of their exotic dancers to verify their age and identity. A missing 15-year-old Boston girl was found dancing at a strip club in Providence on July 29. She had been accompanied by Troy Footman, 51, a convicted sex offender who is now accused of pimping

Minor Sex Trafficking via Backpage.com Cases

her and a 15-year-old Brockton girl found in his motel room in Seekonk. One of the teen girls told police that Footman had forced and intimidated her into prostitution, according to a Providence police report, and that there were photos of her posted on Backpage.com, a website that lists escorts and prostitutes.

<http://www.providencejournal.com/breaking-news/content/20130806-police-want-to-close-providence-strip-club-where-missing-boston-girl-15-was-found.ece>

South Carolina

1. August 15, 2013 – William Jerome Gibson, 21, and Andrea Bostic, 20, are charged with sex trafficking of children by force or coercion. During a hearing Monday (8/5/13), FBI agent Luke Davis testified that Gibson and Bostic allegedly recruited and harbored a 16-year-old girl and kidnapped a 19-year-old girl for prostitution. The 16-year-old, whose picture appeared in an online ad on backpage.com, was reported missing by her grandmother in July. The teen was allegedly used for prostitution on three days in hotels in Columbia and Hilton Head. Bostic and Gibson were two of 150 arrested in the federal "Operation Cross Country VII" sting in late July.
<http://www.wistv.com/story/23048777/two-accused-of-sex-trafficking-children-denied-bond>
2. April 24, 2013 – George McLeod III, “Pimp Stick Quezzy,” was arrested after being caught running an internet prostitution ring and has plead guilty to sex trafficking charges. He posted photos of women, including at least one minor from Montana, to Backpage.com. He would then travel with the women to hotels and strip clubs in South Carolina, Tennessee, and Florida. When sentenced, McLeod could spend up to 12 years in federal prison and have to pay a \$250,000 fine.
<http://www.thestate.com/2013/04/24/2740508/pimp-stick-quezzy-pleads-guilty.html>
3. March 18, 2013 – Joshua Dumas, 21, of Atlanta pleaded guilty to running a commercial sex business that prostituted multiple juvenile girls in Herndon, VA, and other locations throughout Virginia, Maryland, North and South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. He faces a mandatory minimum of 20 years and a maximum of life in prison. The leader of the venture, Edwin Barcus pleaded guilty to founding and leading a child exploitation service.
<http://www.fbi.gov/washingtondc/press-releases/2013/atlanta-man-admits-his-role-in-operating-an-interstate-juvenile-sex-trafficking-enterprise>

South Dakota

Minor Sex Trafficking via Backpage.com Cases

1. April 6, 2013 - Jurors have returned a guilty verdict for Emmanuel Nyuon, 34, of Sioux Falls, who was accused of forcing a 14-year-old girl to work as a prostitute by placing ads on Backpage.com. He was charged with sex trafficking of a minor and conspiracy to commit sex trafficking.
<http://www.argusleader.com/article/20130406/NEWS/304060039/Guilty-verdict-pimp-14-year-old>
2. February 18, 2013 – Baltimore City firefighter Jamar Simmons, 30, and Franklin Coit, 34, were indicted on charges of conspiracy, interstate transportation for prostitution, coercion, sex trafficking conspiracy, and sex trafficking of a minor. The indictment said that they men ran websites called Backpage.com and BigCityDates that advertised positions online for exotic dancing and escort services to recruit women, but the sites were really meant to find jobs for prostitutes. The court documents also alleged that Simmons and Coit arranged for transportation to bring prostitutes to Maryland from several states such as Texas and South Dakota.
<http://www.wbalv.com/news/maryland/baltimore-city/Firefighter-2nd-man-indicted-in-interstate-sex-trafficking-ring/-/10131532/18564818/-/item/0/-/y192hg/-/index.html>
3. January 15, 2012 – The failure of federal South Dakota prosecutors to successfully charge three men accused of trying to buy sex from minors with commercial sex trafficking has set up a court battle.
<http://www.topix.com/forum/city/butler-sd/TURS5KLB4HG8KVJ1S>
4. June 14, 2011 – Maurice Donae Alexander, 24, and Latoshia Norris, 25, pleaded guilty to enticement to engage in prostitution of a minor. They met the 16-year-old minor in Minneapolis and placed ads on Backpage.com. The minor is a runaway from South Dakota. Alexander and Norris traveled to Des Moines, Kansas City, St. Louis and Indianapolis to meet customers.
http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/metro/article_47b686c2-96b8-11e0-9e1c-0019bb30f31a.html
5. December 9, 2010- A South Dakota couple pleaded guilty to pimping underage girls through Backpage.com.
<http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2010/12/09/village-voice-media-sex-slaves-in-the-classified.html>
6. November 25, 2009 – Tea Police first got the call about the alleged sex trafficking of underage girls in July. Brandon Thompson, 28, and Megan Hayes, 30, now face life in prison if they are found guilty of the charges. The couple advertised the services under the heading 'South Dakota Escorts' on Backpage.com.
<http://www.keloland.com/News/NewsDetail6371.cfm?Id=93236>
UPDATE: November 2, 2012 – 18 Sioux Falls area men were charged with sex trafficking or solicitation charges in a joint federal and state investigation. The men were connected to the investigation through their cellphone numbers, recovered from cases of minor victims whose services were advertised on Backpage.com. The majority of men were released on bond and denied asking for sex. Neal Eugene Castle, 33, and Nickolaus McKracken, 33, were charged with fourth-degree rape of a child over 13 and solicitation in relation to the case of Brandon Thompson who was advertising minors for sex on Backpage.com in 2009. The rest of the men were charged for sex in connections with later cases. Many of the charges are class one misdemeanors punishable by up to a year in jail and a \$2,000.
http://www.argusleader.com/article/20121101/NEWS/311010022/18-charged-sex-cases-Sioux-Falls-area?nclick_check=1

Minor Sex Trafficking via Backpage.com Cases

1. July 31, 2013 – Trenton Mitchell, 23; Rodney Armstrong; and Charlisha Wright, 18; have been charged in criminal complaint with “child prostitution.” Caught in Operation Cross Country, led by the FBI, they were found trafficking a child by placing ads on Backpage.com in the Memphis metropolitan area. The operation resulted in the recovery of a 14-year-old runaway.
<http://7thspace.com/headlines/442089/three-arrested-as-part-of-operation-cross-country.html>
2. April 30, 2013 - Jessica Loren Posey, 25, of Atlanta was sentenced to seven years in federal prison for prostituting a 16-year-old girl in several states. Posey used a computer to create advertisements for the girl on Backpage.com. The girl, and others, were taken to Tennessee, Ohio, and Kentucky to be sold for sex. As well as her sentence, Posey will pay restitution of \$1,200 to the victim, perform 100 hours of community service, and register as a sex offender.
<http://www.examiner.com/article/atlanta-woman-sentenced-for-trafficking-teenage-girl-for-sex-several-states>
3. April 24, 2013 – George McLeod III, “Pimp Stick Quezzy,” was arrested after being caught running an internet prostitution ring and has plead guilty to sex trafficking charges. He posted photos of women, including at least one minor from Montana, to Backpage.com. He would then travel with the women to hotels and strip clubs in South Carolina, Tennessee, and Florida. When sentenced, McLeod could spend up to 12 years in federal prison and have to pay a \$250,000 fine.
<http://www.thestate.com/2013/04/24/2740508/pimp-stick-quezzy-pleads-guilty.html>
4. March 29, 2013 – Five more people have been indicted in an alleged sex trafficking conspiracy involving a 14-year-old girl who was forced to perform sex for money after being advertised online on Backpage.com. Orreco Lyons, 32, Keith Gibson, 43, Vivian Briggs, 28, Tamara Ramsey, 37, and Falisha Edwards, 32, have been indicted along with Anthony Grandberry, 32.
<http://www.wrcbtv.com/story/21831885/5-more-arrested-in-alleged-trafficking-of-teen>
5. March 13, 2013 – Elizabeth Cook, 26, of Hopkinsville was arrested for the alleged sex trafficking of a juvenile, a 17-year-old relative, on Backpage.com in Clarksville, TN. She was charged with one count of human trafficking by promoting the prostitution of a minor.
<http://www.newschannel5.com/story/21632313/ky-woman-charged-with-sex-trafficking-of-juvenile>
6. February 13, 2013 – Kareen Wiggins, 21, and Robert Wright, 26, are being held on charges of trafficking for commercial sex act and aggravated sexual exploitation of a minor, among others. Officers found two 16-year-old girls on site after following an ad posted on Backpage.com. The teens have been returned to their parents.
<http://www.wkrn.com/story/21181563/murfreesboro-child-prostitution-ring>
7. August 27, 2012 – 31-year-old Arieke Lester, of Somerville, Tennessee, has been sentenced to 168 months without parole in federal prison for child sex trafficking. He pleaded guilty to conspiracy to engage in child sex trafficking, as he had participated in a scheme to advertise a 15-year-old for prostitution on Backpage.com. He planned to deliver the girl to people who responded to the online ads. His case was investigated by the FBI and was under the realm of Project Safe Childhood, a Department of Justice initiative to stop child sexual exploitation across the country.
<http://www.jacksonsun.com/article/20120827/NEWS01/120827016/Somerville-man-sentenced-14-years-child-sex-trafficking-conspiracy?odyssey=tab|topnews|text|FRONTPAGE&gcheck=1>

Minor Sex Trafficking via Backpage.com Cases

8. August 6, 2012 – LaRon Matlock faces a series of sex slavery charges after investigators say he lured 16-year-old and 19-year-old girls to Memphis and repeatedly forced them to have sex with older men. Authorities say Matlock imprisoned the teens in his South Memphis hole and placed them in ads on Backpage.com.
<http://www.wmctv.com/story/19201311/man-arrested-in-memphis-on-sex-slavery-due-in-court-this-week>
9. April 26, 2012 – Dwane Washington, 32, of Memphis, Tennessee was arrested on accusations of assisting a 14-year-old runaway from Baltimore to engage in prostitution in multiple states. Washington allegedly assisted the girl for prostitution in Alabama, Tennessee and Virginia. Washington met the minor through an advertisement she allegedly put on Backpage.com
<http://www.justice.gov/usao/vae/news/2012/04/20120426washingtonnr.html>
10. April 8, 2012 – Maurice Mabon was convicted of trafficking a 15-year-old girl in Memphis. Mabon gave the victim beer and marijuana before he took more than 60 sexually suggestive photos of her which he uploaded to online escort ads on Backpage.com.
<http://www.commercialappeal.com/news/2012/apr/08/memphis-case-shows-rise-in-sex-trafficking/>
11. January 4, 2012 – The day after a 15 year-old Memphis girl ran away from home, she said she was snatched up by a pimp who used the Internet to search for clients. The teen said, Marvell Antonio Culp, 23, took her to a motel on Lamar Avenue, handed her provocative clothing and took sexually suggestive photos he later posted on Backpage.com in the escort section to find customers, according to the affidavit.
<http://www.commercialappeal.com/news/2012/jan/04/runaway-pimp-had-her-02/>
12. November 1, 2011 – Kala Bray and Vincent Jones were indicted by grand jury on charges of prostitution a 15-year-old and a 16-year-old. Both teens were given drugs before they had sex with clients in Memphis and Texas, who were responding to the ads they had on Backpage.com.
www.commercialappeal.com/news/2011/nov/01/pair-charged-with-prostituting-teenage-girls/
UPDATE: October 12, 2012 - Kala Bray pleaded guilty to sexual trafficking sexually trafficking a 15-year-old and 16-year-old and will spend 14 years in federal prison. Bray faces the possibility of life in prison, but because Bray cooperated with authorities on other cases, she received an eight level reduction.
<http://bartlett.wmctv.com/news/news/85779-19-year-old-pimp-sentenced-federal-court>
13. April 23, 2011- Thomas Hufford, 55, and Micah Toland, 46, were indicted for promoting prostitution and the sexual exploitation of a minor. The minor was advertised on Backpage.com
<http://old.villagevoicepimp.com/2-nashville-men-charged-with-child-prostitution-porn/>

Texas

1. May 17, 2013 - Police have arrested a man who is accused of exploiting a teenage runaway. According to an arrest warrant affidavit, 32-year-old Ysidro Esquivel took pictures of the girl and created an ad on "Backpage.com" under its escort section. He allegedly set up 10 dates with people who wanted to have sex with the girl. Esquivel is now in the Bexar County Jail on human trafficking charges.
<http://villagevoicepimp.com/case-247-local-man-arrested-human-trafficking>

Minor Sex Trafficking via Backpage.com Cases

2. April 24, 2013 – Marquis Maurice Lamount Sweet of Las Vegas and Domaniece Latrice Roy of San Diego, both 24, were charged in federal court with transportation of a minor to engage in sexual activity as well as production of child pornography. They were arrested in Texas after the 16-year-old girl they were holding captive escaped. Upon further investigation, officers discovered escort advertisements on Backpage.com with photos of the girl. They could face up to 30 years in federal prison and a \$250,000 fine.
http://www.oaoa.com/news/crime_justice/courts/article_28ce8972-ad30-11e2-997b-001a4bcf6878.html
3. March 21, 2013 – A prostitution sting led to the arrest of a woman suspected of teaching two teenage girls how to charge money for sex and advertise the service online. Jordann Depascalis, 21, was charged with compelling prostitution. FBI agents responded to an ad on Backpage.com in which a girl, 16, then agreed to sleep with a detective for money. This teen and another, 13, were detained and told officers they were taught how to prostitute by Depascalis.
http://www.mysanantonio.com/news/local_news/article/Cops-Woman-groomed-teens-to-be-hookers-4373403.php
4. March 6, 2013 - Deundra Miller, 27, and Brittanie Brattain, 21, were arrested and charged with sex trafficking of a child in a case involving a 15-year-old girl whom they advertised online on Backpage.com. They remain in federal custody, where the maximum penalty is life in prison and a \$250,000 fine.
<http://www.star-telegram.com/2013/03/06/4663053/2-charged-with-sex-trafficking.html>
5. February 28, 2013 – Percival Williams, 35, was arrested in Texas on charges of human trafficking and trying to smuggle stolen diamonds into New Jersey. Williams allegedly found young women around the country and brought them to New Jersey against their will or by promising a relationship or better life. He kept the women at his house or a nearby hotel, and would solicit clients by placing advertisements on Backpage.com. He also allegedly escorted or sent women to various hotels to solicit clients in Atlantic City, Manhattan, and Las Vegas. Williams was charged with human trafficking, promoting prostitution, theft, and conspiracy. The charges carry a sentence of 10-20 years in state prison.
http://www.nj.com/politics/index.ssf/2013/02/edison_man_arrested_on_charges.html
6. February 18, 2013 – Baltimore City firefighter Jamar Simmons, 30, and Franklin Coit, 34, were indicted on charges of conspiracy, interstate transportation for prostitution, coercion, sex trafficking conspiracy, and sex trafficking of a minor. The indictment said that they men ran websites called Backpage.com and BigCityDates that advertised positions online for exotic dancing and escort services to recruit women, but the sites were really meant to find jobs for prostitutes. The court documents also alleged that Simmons and Coit arranged for transportation to bring prostitutes to Maryland from several states such as Texas and South Dakota.
<http://www.wbaltv.com/news/maryland/baltimore-city/Firefighter-2nd-man-indicted-in-interstate-sex-trafficking-ring/-/10131532/18564818/-/item/0/-/y192hg/-/index.html>
7. February 6, 2013 – Myron Glen Johns was arrested on January 31 after allegedly trying to sell a juvenile girl on Backpage.com for a sex act on com at a South Arlington hotel. Police rescued the girl after setting up a sting operation to attack human trafficking.
<http://www.wfaa.com/news/local/human-trafficking-dallas-fort-worth-arlington-backpage-190071931.html>

Minor Sex Trafficking via Backpage.com Cases

8. August 17, 2012 – Jerome Maurice Cole, 26, of Killeen is facing sex trafficking charges after the mother of a 16-year-old female runaway reported her daughter missing to the Killeen police, who found her in Cole’s mobile home. Investigators tracking the girl’s whereabouts found four images of her in her underwear on Backpage.com escort advertisements; they also found at least one other 16-year-old girl associated with Cole’s Backpage.com account.
<http://www.kxxv.com/story/19308325/local-man-charged-with-sex-trafficking-of-children>
UPDATE: February 28, 2013 - Cole, now 27, has been sentenced to 40 years in prison for sex trafficking that involved children after pleading guilty to operating a prostitution venture that used the website Backpage.com to post ads and recruit underage girls into prostitution.
http://kdhnews.com/news/briefs/killeen-man-gets-years-for-sex-trafficking-children/article_7df9a056-8163-11e2-a319-001a4bcf6878.html
9. June 11, 2012 – Jessica Williams, 24, of Houston is being charged with compelling prostitution of a minor. Williams met a 17-year-old in jail; the teenager was in jail for slapping another girl. While in jail Williams and the 17-year-old exchanged numbers and Williams told the 17-year-old she could make a lot of money “escorting” using the website Backpage.com. The teenage sent Williams pictures of herself which Williams posted on a Backpage.com advertisement in the escort services. On May 8, both women met a customer and charged him \$200 to have sex. The teenager said that she did not receive any of the money. On May 9, they went to meet another customer who was an undercover police officer who arrested them both. The case was investigated by the FBI Houston Innocence Lost Task force.
<http://www.khou.com/news/crime/Woman-accused-of-introducing-teenager-to-prostitution-after-meeting-in-jail-158446725.html>
10. May 10, 2012 – Roberto Reyes was sentenced in Midland’s federal court to three years and a month in federal prison and a \$10,000 fine. In October 2010, Reyes showed up to the Hilton Midland with four prostitutes, one who was a minor, where an undercover authority was investigating. Reyes advertised his prostitution business, Sabrina’s Escort Service, through his cell phone and various websites that included Backpage.com.
<http://www.oaoa.com/news/sentenced-87233-midland-old.html>
11. April 13, 2012 – Brian Phea is in federal custody waiting to be transported to Midland where he will face federal charges. Phea is accused to forcing a 14-year-old girl to become a prostitute. He created an advertisement for her to provide sex for money on Backpage.com. On the site the 14-year-old was advertised as a 17-year-old girl. Phea will be charged with exploitation of a child/prostitution.
<http://www.oaoa.com/news/texas-85747-officer-investigations.html>
12. March 10, 2012 – Robert Parton was arrested Friday on felony warrants for supplying crack cocaine to a 16-year-old girl in exchange for personal sexual favors. The girl also told police Parton also advertised her as a prostitute on the website Backpage.com and kept the money she made.
http://www.mysanantonio.com/news/local_news/article/Man-charged-with-sexual-assault-of-a-child-3397274.php
13. July 6, 2011 – A 25-year-old woman was arrested for posting pictures in an ad of a 16-year-old on Backpage.com. An undercover officer working on a sting in Comfort Inn Hotel arrested a 16-year-old girl who told him the 25-year-old woman posted her pictures on Backpage.com.
<http://www.khou.com/news/local/Houston-woman-accused-of-forcing-teen-into-life-of-prostitution-125110299.html>

Minor Sex Trafficking via Backpage.com Cases

14. November 1, 2011 – Kala Bray and Vincent Jones were indicted by grand jury on charges of prostitution a 15-year-old and a 16-year-old. Both teens were given drugs before they had sex with clients in Memphis and Texas, who were responding to the ads they had on Backpage.com.
<http://www.wreg.com/wreg-sex-trafficking-ring-targeting-midsouth-teens-is-busted-20111101,0,6649983.story>
15. May 6, 2011 – Clint Eugene Wilson plead guilty to one count of sex trafficking of a minor and was sentenced to 240 months in prison. Wilson began trafficking a young girl before she was 16-years-old. Wilson posted prostitution advertisements for the minor on Backpage.com.
<http://www.fbi.gov/dallas/press-releases/2011/sex-trafficker-sentenced-to-20-years-in-federal-prison>
16. April 27, 2010 – Quincy Gholar and Jennifer Russell are charged with compelling prostitution and human trafficking of a 16-year-old minor. The minor was an illegal immigrant from Mexico. The couple advertised the minor for sex on Backpage.com.
<http://www.kvue.com/news/local/Additional-charges-planned-for-couple-in-teen-prostitution-bust-92237439.html>
17. October 26, 2010 – Jay Lavone Lloyd and Taquolia Tameek Thomas were arrested in Midland on felony charges of human trafficking and compelling prostitution. They had posted an ad on Backpage.com offering sex with a 17-year-old the two were forcing to prostitute herself.
<http://lubbockonline.com/local-news/2010-10-26/two-lubbock-residents-arrested-midland-forcing-minor-prostitution-human#.T5BmPo7pAoa>
18. October 20, 2010 – Fernando Gonzales, 33, and Celeste De La Rosa, 26, are accused of luring a 16-year-old into prostitution by posting pictures of her on Backpage.com.
http://www.mysanantonio.com/news/local_news/article/Couple-accused-of-luring-teen-into-prostitution-714392.php
UPDATE: December 10, 2012 – Fernando Gonzalez agreed to a plea agreement in which he received two concurrent 20-year sentences in exchange for no contest pleas to sexual performance of a child and human trafficking. Celeste De La Rosa, Gonzales' live-in girlfriend whom he also pimped, had previously agreed to a five-year sentence for testifying against him.
http://www.mysanantonio.com/news/local_news/article/Pimp-agrees-to-20-year-sentence-for-prostituting-4106280.php

Utah

1. March 30, 2009 – DeWayne Eugene Hopkins, 27, and Julie Young, 19, are charged with conspiracy to commit sex trafficking of children, including children ages 15 and 17. Hopkins and Young put advertisements for the children on Backpage.com
http://www.sltrib.com/news/ci_12030761

Virginia

1. August 3, 2013 - Robert Kropp, 26, was sentenced Friday, August 2nd, for coercion and enticement of a minor under the age of 15 and receipt of child pornography. He was sentenced to 120 months in prison on each of the two counts, to run concurrently, followed by 20 years of supervised release on each count. In addition, Kropp was assessed a fine of \$15,000. He pleaded guilty to the charges on May 7. In March 2013, Kropp began sending sexually explicit messages to who he thought was a 13-year-old girl, an identity that had been assumed by federal investigators. Authorities first became

Minor Sex Trafficking via Backpage.com Cases

interested in Kropp on March 1 after a confidential source who advertised as a 19-year-old prostitute on www.backpage.com allowed Henrico County police officers to access her electronic devices, according to an FBI affidavit. These devices showed messages in which Kropp asked if the source had a younger friend, court records show.

<http://progress-index.com/news/colonial-heights-man-sentenced-on-sex-charges-1.1530776>

2. January 11, 2013 - Edwin Barcus and Joshua Dumas, members of the street gang the Bloods have been charged with prostitution-related offenses following the bust of a prostitution ring in Fairfax County after an undercover police officer responded to an ad from Backpage.com. The two were selling four 17-year-old girls for sex in a hotel in Herndon (two having been brought from Georgia). Dumas is charged with sex trafficking of a child, aiding prostitution or illicit sexual intercourse, residing in or frequenting a rowdy place, and contributing to the delinquency of a minor. Two of the girls are also charged with prostitution. Dumas is now in federal custody; his next court date is Jan. 15.

<http://www.wjla.com/articles/2013/01/police-bust-prostitution-ring-in-herndon--83981.html>

UPDATE: March 18, 2013 – Joshua Dumas, 21, of Atlanta pleaded guilty to running a commercial sex business that prostituted multiple juvenile girls in Herndon, VA, and other locations throughout Virginia, Maryland, North and South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. He faces a mandatory minimum of 20 years and a maximum of life in prison. The leader of the venture, Edwin Barcus pleaded guilty to founding and leading a child exploitation service.

<http://www.fbi.gov/washingtondc/press-releases/2013/atlanta-man-admits-his-role-in-operating-an-interstate-juvenile-sex-trafficking-enterprise>

3. July 27, 2012 – Sonora Armstrong of Cleveland, Ohio was sentenced to 10 years in prison for her role in bringing a 15-year-old Cleveland girl to Henrico County, Virginia for prostitution. A codefendant, Calvin L. Winbush Sr. of Cleveland Heights, Ohio has pleaded guilty to conspiracy and interstate transportation charges. The minor told police that a woman took photos of her which were uploaded to a website to advertise for prostitution. Court records show this website was Backpage.com.

http://www.cleveland.com/metro/index.ssf/2012/07/cleveland_woman_gets_10_years.html

4. April 26, 2012 – Dwane Washington, 32, of Memphis, Tennessee was arrested on accusations of assisting a 14-year-old runaway from Baltimore to engage in prostitution in multiple states. Washington allegedly assisted the girl for prostitution in Alabama, Tennessee and Virginia. Washington met the minor through an advertisement she allegedly put on Backpage.com

<http://www.justice.gov/usao/vae/news/2012/04/20120426washingtonnr.html>

5. April 13, 2012 – Michael Jefferies and Christopher Sylvia are some of the five members of the Underground Gangster Crips that have been charged with sex trafficking in March. Jefferies and Sylvia pleaded guilty to their roles in the ring. They will be sentenced in July and the rest of the members will be tried later this month. The gang used social media, bus stops and even meetings in the metro stations to recruit minors into prostitution. The teens were then advertised on websites like Backpage.com.

<http://www2.insidenova.com/news/2012/apr/13/two-plead-guilty-sex-trafficking-teen-girls-ar-1837900/>

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6. April 4, 2012 – FBI agents are searching for Marquist Bradford who has been charged with sex trafficking of children by force, fraud, or coercion. The FBI began to look into Bradford after a 15-year-old victim came to them. Bradford had a long history of pimping minors and has continued to work in Chicago, Virginia, and New York when he's not in California. He frequently uses sites like Backpage.com to pimp out his girls.
<http://www.thesmokinggun.com/documents/fbi-hunts-twitter-pimp-king-kutta-896523>

7. March 29, 2012 – Justin Strom and four other members of the Underground Gangster Crips have been charged with sex trafficking. The gang used social media, bus stops and even meetings in schools to recruit minors into prostitution. The teens were then advertised on websites like Backpage.com. Some of the girls were lured from West Virginia to be sold in Virginia.
http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/crime/fairfax-based-crips-members-charged-with-recruiting-girls-for-prostitution/2012/03/29/gIQAJRx6iS_story.html?sub=AR
UPDATE: September 14, 2012 –Justin Strom, leader of the Underground Gangster Crips gang based in Fairfax, VA, has been sentenced by U.S. District Judge James Cacheris to 40 years in prison for being the leader of a prostitution ring. This gang-controlled ring actively recruited and trafficked minor girls in high school throughout northern Virginia, Maryland and District of Columbia.
<http://www.fbi.gov/washingtondc/press-releases/2012/virginia-gang-leader-sentenced-to-40-years-for-leading-juvenile-sex-trafficking-ring>

8. March 28, 2012 – A federal grand jury indicted Melvin Douglas for transporting a minor across state lines to engage in prostitution. The police found Douglas and his 15-year-old victim through an advertisement for the missing girl on Backpage.com that offered her sexual services. The girl had gone missing from Prince William County, Virginia.
<http://www.wusa9.com/news/article/199211/158/Man-Indicted-For-Transporting-15-Year-Old-Female-For-Prostitution-Charges>
UPDATE: November 12, 2012 – D. C. resident Melvin Douglas, 32, and Capitol Heights resident Dennis Smith, 31, both pleaded guilty to transporting a minor across state lines to engage in prostitution. Smith also pleaded guilty to a separate case to sex trafficking of a minor. Douglas recruited and prostituted a 15-year-old runaway advertising her on Backpage.com for sexual services. Authorities set a meeting with the girl and confronted Douglas in his SUV. Smith met a 16-year-old girl on Tagged.com and recruited her to come on a trip to Richmond. Additionally Smith also picked up the 16-year-old girl and a 15-year-old girl and advertised them online. Authorities set up a meeting and found Smith with the 15-year-old girl and a 17-year-old girl. If Douglas accepts his plea deal, he will receive 10 years in prison, and Smith faces a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years in prison.
<http://washingtonexaminer.com/two-men-plead-guilty-to-pimping-teenage-girls/article/2513030#.UKDn9YZiO9p>

9. June 12, 2011 – Mall security guard Cooper Kweme of Arlington, VA was charged with transportation of a minor for prostitution. Kweme admitted to walk around the mall looking for girls to recruit for prostitution. A 16-year-old girl reported him to the police. Kweme had posted photos of minors on Backpage.com and drove girls to clients. Kweme told minors that he was an undercover police officer. Kweme admitted he drove girls to clients in Maryland, Virginia, and D.C.
<http://washingtonexaminer.com/article/114986>

10. August 31, 2010 – In an undercover sting, police arrest Tyree Walker, 36, and charge him with trafficking for sexual servitude and marijuana possession. Police also arrested two 17-year-old girls, who were charged with prostitution. During the arrest they found hotel room receipt and photos of a Backpage.com ad. One of the teens is from Macon, GA, and the other teen from Norfolk, VA.

Minor Sex Trafficking via Backpage.com Cases

<http://nashvillecitypaper.com/content/city-news/metro-police-nab-georgia-man-sex-trafficking-case>

Washington

1. July 12, 2013 – Raymier Elbert Jones, 28-year-old Seattle resident, was charged with promoting the commercial sex abuse of a minor for sex trafficking two girls, 15 and 16-year-olds, via ads on Backpage.com at an Aurora Avenue motel. He was booked into King County Jail on \$250,000 bail. <http://www.seattlepi.com/local/article/Seattle-man-accused-of-pimping-girls-online-out-4660780.php>
2. July 2, 2013 – Jamaal Bomber was charged by King County Superior Court with one count of promoting the commercial sex abuse of a minor for allegedly pimping out a 16-year-old Tukwila girl, according to prosecutors. Detectives found evidence that links him to a number of prostitution ads on Backpage.com. <http://www.yakimaherald.com/news/latestnews/1287143-8/cops-flush-out-alleged-pimp-with-party-for>
3. June 11, 2013 – Joshua Jones, 23, and Samuel Miles-Johnson, 25, of Pierce County, WA, are charged for pimping a 15-year-old girl after friends and family found her picture on Backpage.com's escort section. Another 15-year-old girl seen at the motel was also in the ad. Pierce County Prosecutor Mark Lindquist says a family friend posed as a potential customer, arranged to meet the girl at a Motel 6 in Fife on Monday, June 10. Jones and Miles-Johnson were charged with Promoting Commercial Sex Abuse of a Minor and were arraigned Tuesday in Pierce County Superior Court. They pleaded not guilty and bail was set at \$500,000 for each defendant. <http://mynorthwest.com/11/2293623/Two-men-charged-for-pimping-teens-on-Backpagecom>
4. April 9, 2013 – Since December of 2012, detectives have been working a rape and human trafficking investigation involving two juvenile victims, ages 16 and 17, and one adult victim that were advertised on Backpage.com. Among the arrested are Allixzander Park, 23, Andre Herron, 25, Victoria Pangelinan, 22, Trista Chisholm, 28, and Demario Jones, 23. Also charged for commercial sexual abuse of a minor for buying the minors is Stephen Wilson, 64, and Scott Surma, 45. <http://www.bremertonpatriot.com/news/202023911.html>
5. April 5, 2013 – Scott Surma, 46, of Yelm is charged with a single count of commercial sexual abuse of a minor after the police identified him as a customer of a 17-year-old prostituted girl. This is part of a human trafficking investigation that has identified two underage female victims who were enlisted to act as prostitutes advertised on Backpage.com. Four individuals believed to be the traffickers have been arrested as a result of the investigation. <http://www.thenewstribune.com/2013/04/05/2543942/yelm-man-among-johns-busted-for.html>
6. March 28, 2013 – Jordan Church Lind, 49, of Mercer Island was charged with rape and sexual exploitation of a child after paying a 15-year-old girl to have sex with him. During an interview she told police she had a female pimp who posted ads on Backpage.com and that Lind knew her age the first time she saw him. He remains in jail with a \$200,000 bail. <http://www.kirklandreporter.com/news/200502551.html>
7. March 13, 2013 – Depri M Spenser, 25, of Tacoma was sentenced to 10 years in prison for transporting a minor across state lines for prostitution. Prosecutors say Spenser brought two 15-year-old girls from Tacoma to Portland and advertised them to johns on Backpage.com. http://www.oregonlive.com/portland/index.ssf/2013/03/portland_judge_sends_tacoma_ma.html

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8. March 11, 2013 - Demarquez X. Austin of Seattle is accused of pimping two homeless girls and is now facing child prostitution charges. He advertised the young girls, 14- and 16-years-old, on Backpage.com. Austin was arrested in Des Moines, IA on February 27 and has been charged with two counts of promoting the sexual abuse of a minor. He pleaded not guilty and remains on \$250,000 bail.
<http://villagevoicepimp.com/case-226-227-prosecutors-seattle-man-started-pimping-girl-age-11>
9. March 8, 2013 – Tyler Elkins, 20, was charged with promoting sexual abuse of a minor and child rape for having sex with, then prostituting a 15-year-old girl. In November, the victim was kidnapped by an acquaintance, “Hollywood,” an unknown man in California. She was then advertised for sex on Backpage.com. She was eventually transported to Tacoma, Washington where she was forced to have sex with several men. The victim called the police at a fast food joint, and Elkins was arrested.
<http://villagevoicepimp.com/case-225-man-charged-prostituting-and-rape-minor>
10. February 1, 2013 – A 21-year-old woman was arrested on suspicion of promoting the commercial sexual abuse of a minor. Two teenage girls, one a reported runaway, were held in a motel by the woman, who advertised the girls on Backpage.com.
<http://blog.thenewtribune.com/crime/2013/02/01/tacoma-woman-arrested-for-prostituting-teen-runaway-on-backpage-com/>
11. January 25, 2013 - Alfred Anthony Clark, 29, of Pierce County was charged with two accounts of commercial sex abuse of a minor after placing escort ads on Backpage.com for two underage girls. Clark was arraigned Thursday and is being held at Pierce County Jail on \$100,000 bail.
<http://www.komonews.com/news/local/Pierce-Co-prosecutors-man-pimped-out-two-teenage-girls-188439991.html>
12. December 3, 2012 – 27-year-old Alexander Walls was convicted in federal court for conspiracy to transport a juvenile for prostitution, interstate transportation of a child for prostitution, witness tampering, conspiracy to engage in sex trafficking by force, fraud or coercion and three counts of sex trafficking by force, fraud or coercion. He controlled 4 women, three who were juveniles, and advertised them on Backpage.com, Craigslist.com and TNABoard.com. Walls faces up to life in prison when sentenced on March 1. Co-defendant Reginald Irving pleaded guilty and the prosecution and defense will recommend a sentence of 15 years in prison when sentenced on January 18.
<http://q13fox.com/2012/11/30/convicted-tacoma-man-faces-up-to-life-in-prison-for-sex-trafficking/>
13. November 13, 2012 – A warrant for 20-year-old Jevante Taymar McCray for second-degree human trafficking and four counts of promoting commercial sexual abuse of a minor. The investigation against McCray began after a 16-year-old runaway that he convinced to run away and work for him called 911 to report she had been beaten for refusing to work. The following month the FBI found ads on Backpage.com about a 14-year-old girl, arrangements were made by an undercover officer to meet the girl. McCray was found asleep in his car and denied involvement in the business. McCray is currently not in custody.
<http://blog.thenewtribune.com/crime/2012/11/12/warrant-issued-for-pierce-county-man-charged-with-prostituting-teenage-girls/>

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UPDATE: August 11, 2013 - Jevante McCray and Isiah Martin faced decades behind bars if they had been convicted of the original charges filed against them, including multiple counts of promoting commercial sexual abuse of a minor and human trafficking. However, witnesses declined to cooperate with investigators. McCray, 20, and Martin, 19, last month both pleaded guilty to first-degree promoting prostitution, a significantly reduced charge. McCray was sentenced last week to about 2 1/2 years in prison. His partner, who had prior criminal history, was sentenced to nearly 3 1/2 years behind bars.

<http://www.heraldnet.com/article/20130811/NEWS01/708119929>

14. October 12, 2012 - Claude Hutchinson, 25, and Eugene Young, 27, plead guilty to promoting commercial sex abuse of a minor and second-degree rape for allegedly pimping out a 16 year-old girl and beating and raping a woman who refused to work as a prostitute for them. The minor agreed to help Hutchinson and Young cash a check, later the men took her to a motel, took photographs and advertised her on Backpage.com. The minor also witnessed the rape and beating of Young's ex-girlfriend by both men for refusing to prostitute for them.

http://seattletimes.com/html/localnews/2019387044_pimparrests10m.html

15. September 18, 2012 – David J. Anderson, 29, of Yakima has been charged with promoting the commercial sexual abuse of a minor and third-degree rape of a child after standing accused of pimping a 14-year-old runaway out of a Shoreline motel. Anderson posted provocative photos of the minor on Backpage.com along with his cell phone number. A Google search of Anderson's phone number returned multiple prostitution advertisements on Backpage.com featuring the girl.

<http://www.seattlepi.com/local/article/Charge-Online-pimp-rented-out-raped-runaway-girl-3875494.php>

16. July 30, 2012 - Three Washington teenagers have filed a personal injury lawsuit against the classified ad website Backpage.com, alleging that the site allowed them to be forced into prostitution for the company's own financial gain. The three unnamed girls, now aged 15 through 17, filed the suit in Pierce County Superior Court in Tacoma, Washington. In the suit they allege that through the adult listings in Backpage.com the company allowed them to be raped -- and that it profited as a result, making millions of dollars each month. Images of the underage girls were posted to Backpage.com. The ads were posted by three men who pimped the girls out and kept all of the profits for themselves, the lawsuit claims. Baruti Hopson, 33, was the pimp who exploited the three girls via Backpage.com, the girls' lawyer told ABC News.

<http://abcnews.go.com/US/washington-teens-sue-backpage-sex-trafficking/story?id=16888671#.UZOtAaKKJid>

17. July 25, 2012 – Altesa B. Turner and Bernard D. Watkins have been charged with the commercial sexual exploitation of a child. The two took explicit photos of at least two minors, some only 15-years-old, and put advertisements for sex on Backpage.com. Turner and Watkins took half of the proceeds earned while the minors were being prostituted.

<http://www.seattlepi.com/local/article/Charge-Kent-woman-boyfriend-pimped-girls-online-3735370.php>

UPDATE: December 7, 2012 – Altesa Turner, 44, pleaded guilty to helping facilitate prostitutions by posting photos and advertisements of juveniles for sexual services on Backpage.com. Turner was sentenced to 22 months in prison. Her boyfriend Bernard D. Watkins, 32, was convicted of three counts for promoting commercial sex abuse of minors and a single count of unlawfully possessing a firearm, and he is currently awaiting sentencing. He faces 20 to 26 years in prison, and because the convictions are related to sex trafficking, Watkins will have to serve at least 90% of his assigned time.

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<http://www.kentreporter.com/news/182575641.html>

18. May 12, 2012 – A Benton County judge sentenced a Richland mortgage banker linked to a prostitution ring. Chad Andrew Crithfield, 41, admitted he paid to have sex in 2010 with three minors, whom he found on Backpage.com. He will serve 37 days in jail, which can be done on work release.
<http://www.tri-cityherald.com/2012/05/12/1937662/richland-man-sentenced-for-prostitution.html>
19. April 17, 2012 – Zerick Jamel Dawson, 28, was sentenced to 114 months in federal prison on charges with conspiracy to traffic a minor for commercial sex. Co-defendants Edward Williams and Shawntay Wilson were sentenced to prison terms as well. The minor was 17-years-old and the trio would post photos of the minor on Backpage.com. Williams transported the minor back and forth between Washington and Oregon to hotels and client's homes.
http://www.justice.gov/usao/or/PressReleases/2012/20120417_dawson.html
20. March 28, 2012 – Jonelle LaJohn Braun was sentenced to 10 years for sex trafficking. He forced a 16-year-old girl into prostitution in November 2010 and used Backpage.com to list her for sex.
<http://mynorthwest.com/11/652371/Tacoma-man-gets-10-years-for-sex-trafficking>
21. March 25, 2012 – Tony Marquette Monroe has been charged with pimping after a young woman reported him to the FBI. Monroe was prostituting several girls including two juveniles. He would have them photograph themselves on his phone, place their ads on Backpage.com, drive them to their meetings, and order them to meet their quota of \$500 a day.
<http://www.seattlepi.com/local/article/Prosecutors-Bellevue-man-pimped-woman-girls-3425272.php>
22. March 16, 2012 – Ronnie Leon Tramble was sentenced to 15 years in prison and 15 years supervised release for sex trafficking. Tramble will also have to pay restitution to his five victims, some of who are under 18-years-old. One of Tramble's victims told police how Tramble advertised her on Backpage.com.
http://7thspace.com/headlines/408273/seatac_man_sentenced_to_15_years_in_prison_for_sex_trafficking.html
23. March 14, 2012 – Jacqueline Nicole Carr was charged with two counts of promoting the commercial sexual abuse of a minor. She allowed two 15-year-olds to bring the men who answered their ad on Backpage.com back to her house where they provided sexual services.
<http://www.thenewtribune.com/2012/03/14/2067089/bail-50k-for-tacoma-woman-who.html>
24. February 24, 2012 – Darius Yancey pleaded guilty to taking a 15-year-old girl from Vancouver and selling her on Backpage.com in Bellevue.
<http://www.katu.com/news/local/Website-accused-of-allowing-pimps-to-sell-kids-into-prostitution-140273343.html>
25. December 30, 2011 – In Washington, prosecutors are handling a case in which teen girls say they were coerced, threatened and extorted by two adults who marketed them on Backpage.com.
<http://www.wtsp.com/news/article/228915/81/Escort-ads-raking-in-millions-for-websites>

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26. October 31, 2011 – A 16-year-old writes to KOMO news describing her experience on how she was sold on Backpage.com within 24 hours. She fears talking, showing her pictures or even showing using her real name.
<http://www.komonews.com/news/problemsolvers/132893483.html>
27. October 20, 2011 – A 23-year-old man, Damenique Lajaun Beasley, pleaded guilty to one count of promoting prostitution, and one count of attempted promoting prostitution after having another prostitute befriend and bring a 17-year-old girl to Seattle where he put her to work as a prostitute, posting ads for the girl on Backpage.com.
<http://publicola.com/2011/10/20/a-pot-grow-burns-backpage-pimp-pleads-guilty-robberies-and-westlake-arrests/>
28. September 29, 2011 – Police Captain Annette Louie confirmed this morning that SeaTac Sgt. Rich McMartin and his team participated in the joint police raid over the weekend that rescued three 15-year-old girls sold on Backpage.com for sex in SeaTac.
<http://www.seatablog.com/2011/09/29/innocence-lost-sex-trafficking-task-force-rescues-3-girls-in-seatac/>
29. September 7, 2011 – Shacon Fontane Barbee is charged with promoting commercial sexual abuse of a minor. A minor began working for Barbee when she was 13-years-old. Barbee used Backpage.com to sell the girls in his human trafficking ring for sex.
<http://www.kentreporter.com/news/129167248.html>
30. September 6, 2011 – A 17-year-old was advertised on Backpage.com and Snohomish County prosecutors are going after the 29-year-old woman who drove the girl to the apartment. Detectives suspect the woman to be a middle-manager in a sex-trafficking ring ran by someone else.
<http://www.heraldnet.com/article/20110906/NEWS01/709069891>
31. August 15, 2011 – A minor was lured by a pimp and within 48 hours, was posted on Backpage.com by her pimp. Mother blames Backpage.com for not protecting her daughter.
http://www.q13fox.com/news/kcpq-mom-of-teen-sold-into-sex-trade-says-escort-website-is-to-blame-20110815_0_4578759.story
32. June 21, 2011 – Micayla Michelle Fourhorns, 19, already convicted of prostitution as a minor, helped a 17-year-old post advertisements for sex on Backpage.com. Fourhorns is charged with promoting the commercial sexual abuse of a minor.
<http://www.seattlepi.com/local/article/Charge-19-year-old-Seattle-woman-pimped-girl-1434212.php>
33. May 24, 2011 - Armand Vasquez, 67, Francisco Meza III, 31, and Stanley Lynn Salsbury, 20, are charged with promoting commercial sexual abuse of a minor, a felony. Underage girls were recruited and sold on Backpage.com for sex.
http://www.tri-cityherald.com/2011/05/24/1501645_alleged-prostitution-ring-uncovered.html
34. March 29, 2011 – Baruti Hopson was sentenced to 26.5 years in prison for two counts of promoting the commercial sex abuse of a minor, three counts of third-degree child rape and one count of degree assault: all involving the same girl. The victim was 15 when she met Hopson, and had run away from her home in Auburn less than 36 hours earlier. The minor was advertised for sex on Backpage.com

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http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2014630224_runawaypimp30m.html

35. March 28, 2011 – Anthony Terry is charged with two counts of promoting the sexual abuse of a minor, a 17-year-old female. Terry advertised the minor on Backpage.com
http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2014624244_pimprial29m.html

West Virginia

1. March 29, 2012 – Justin Strom and four other members of the Underground Gangster Crips have been charged with sex trafficking. The gang used social media, bus stops and even meetings in schools to recruit minors into prostitution. The teens were then advertised on websites like Backpage.com. Some of the girls were lured from West Virginia to be sold in Virginia.
http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/crime/fairfax-based-crips-members-charged-with-recruiting-girls-for-prostitution/2012/03/29/gIQAJRx6iS_story.html?sub=AR
UPDATE: September 14, 2012—Justin Strom, leader of the Underground Gangster Crips gang based in Fairfax, VA, has been sentenced by U.S. District Judge James Cacheris to 40 years in prison for being the leader of a prostitution ring. This gang-controlled ring actively recruited and trafficked minor girls in high school throughout northern Virginia, Maryland and District of Columbia.
<http://www.fbi.gov/washingtondc/press-releases/2012/virginia-gang-leader-sentenced-to-40-years-for-leading-juvenile-sex-trafficking-ring>

Wisconsin

1. April 12, 2013 – Elizabeth Roeder, 33, of Milwaukee and Shannon Hathaway, 41, of Stoughton, Wisconsin were arrested and charged with one count of involuntary servitude of a minor and trafficking for labor/benefits. Officers responded to an advertisement of a 17-year-old on Backpage.com that offered sex in exchanged for money.
<http://elmwoodpark.suntimes.com/news/19446537-418/two-arrested-in-river-grove-accused-of-human-trafficking.html>
2. August 1, 2012 – Meranda Warbourg, 32, has been charged with two felony counts of sex trafficking and two felony counts of solicitation and promotion of prostitution. Police had gotten word that two missing teens, 15- and 17-years-old, were engaged in prostitution in Minneapolis. From there, investigators traced a known cell phone number to numerous advertisements on Backpage.com, which features pictures of the girls wearing lingerie and posed in suggestive positions.
<http://www.kare11.com/news/article/985217/391/Woman-charged-with-sex-trafficking-after-missing-teens-found->
3. May 30, 2012 – Zaiye Dehkee was charged with promoting the prostitution of a minor, a 16-year-old female of Anoka, Minnesota. The minor victim said she was sold 600 times to men as far as Duluth, MN and Wisconsin. Dehkee posted photos of the minor on Backpage.com to solicit her for commercial sex. He was sentenced to 36 months on a federal child porn charge.
<http://minnesota.publicradio.org/display/web/2012/05/30/underage-sex-trafficking/>
4. March 31, 2012 – An undercover sting at a Fort Wayne motel this week snared a Milwaukee woman who allegedly brought two teens to Indiana and prostituted them. A 16-year-old victim told police Mullins posted her first ads on backpage.com and instructed her on how much to charge clients.
<http://www.journalgazette.net/article/20120331/LOCAL07/303319975/1002/LOCAL>

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5. January 22, 2011 – 35-year-old man received a 14-year prison sentence for selling a 14-year-old. According to a police affidavit, Booker advertised the child, complete with naked pictures, on a social website, Backpage.com.
<http://www.wisconsinindiscriminationlawyer.com/consequences/another-wisconsin-man-locked-up-for-child-sex-trafficking/322/>

6. September 12, 2011 – In July, Darrell Vaughn, 19, pleaded not guilty to child enticement and soliciting a child for prostitution. Nicole Riehle, 18, and Barbi Metzger, 27, face the same charges. According to police, the three listed sexual services of three 17-year-old girls on the website Backpage.com. A tipster recognized one of the girls as being a minor and contacted Wausau Police leading to the arrests. All three teens will face prostitution charges.
http://www.wsaw.com/sunrise7/headlines/Man_Facing_Six_Counts_of_Child_Solicitation_Due_in_Court_129640343.html



THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF MAYORS

1620 EYE STREET, NORTHWEST
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20006
TELEPHONE (202) 293-7330
FAX (202) 293-2352
TDD (202) 293-9445
URL: www.usmayors.org/uscm

May 7, 2012

Jim Larkin
CEO, Village Voice Media
36 Cooper Square
New York, NY 10003

Dear Mr. Larkin:

We the undersigned mayors, write to urge you to take steps to prevent the use of Backpage.com for underage sex trafficking by requiring in-person verification of any prospective escort advertiser's ID, as well as proof of identity and age for anyone pictured in an escort ad. There is an urgent need to act quickly, as cities continue to find advertisements on your site that reflect underage sex trafficking.

The US Conference of Mayors has identified stopping human trafficking as one of its priorities and mayors across the country are greatly concerned about the ongoing impacts trafficking has on their communities. We are making every effort to stop the ongoing trafficking of underage individuals, but these efforts are made more difficult by the inadequate safeguards of your website, Backpage.com, to prevent underage sex trafficking.

To place an ad on Backpage.com, all one has to do is check a box saying that the person featured in the ad is over age 18. Other similar advertising services require a photo ID to be brought to an office, in person, to verify age. We believe this practice is substantially more effective at rooting out underage sex trafficking.

We urge you to take quick action and help us address underage sex trafficking by requiring a photo ID for prospective advertisers. We believe this is the only way to provide safeguards against individuals who may be placing advertisements on under aged individuals. We stand ready to discuss this issue with you and hope to hear from you soon that Backpage.com will require a photo ID for prospective advertisers.

Sincerely,

Annise D. Parker
Mayor of Houston, TX
Chair, Committee on Criminal
and Social Justice

Mike McGinn
Mayor of Seattle, WA

Antonio R. Villaraigosa
Mayor of Los Angeles
President

Michael A. Nutter
Mayor of Philadelphia
Vice President

Tom Cochran
CEO and Executive Director

May 7, 2012

Page 2

Scott Smith
Mayor of Mesa, AZ
Second Vice President

Donald L. Plusquellic
Mayor of Akron, OH
Past President

Michael R. Bloomberg
Mayor of New York, NY

Bill Finch
Mayor of Bridgeport, CT

Pat Moeller
Mayor of Hamilton, OH

Daniel J. McLaughlin
Mayor of Orland Park, IL

Gerald D. Jennings
Mayor of Albany, NY

Sal Panto
Mayor of Easton, PA

André Pierre
Mayor of North Miami, FL

Lori Moseley
Mayor of Miramar, FL

Vincent C. Gray
Mayor of the District of Columbia

Peter Carlisle
Mayor of Honolulu, HI

Linda Jackson
Village President of Glendale Heights, IL

Irvana K. Wilks,
Mayor of Mount Prospect, IL

Angel Taveras
Mayor of Providence, RI

Elizabeth Kautz
Mayor of Burnsville, MN
Past President

Thomas M. Menino
Mayor of Boston, MA
Past President

Jerry Sanders
Mayor of San Diego, CA

Ralph Becker
Mayor of Salt Lake City, UT

Pete Lewis
Mayor of Auburn, WA

Kitty Piercy
Mayor of Eugene, OR

Timothy D. Leavitt
Mayor of Vancouver, WA

Susan M. Kay
Mayor of Weymouth, MA

Tom Barrett
Mayor of Milwaukee, WI

Raul G. Salinas
Mayor of Laredo, TX

Daniel Paletko
Mayor of Dearborn Heights, MI

James Cason
Mayor of Coral Gables, FL

Pedro E. Segarra
Mayor of Hartford, CT

Greg Stanton
Mayor of Phoenix, AZ

R.T. Rybak
Mayor of Minneapolis, MN

May 7, 2012

Page 3

Steve Hogan
Mayor of Aurora, CO

Richard Moccia
Mayor of Norwalk, CT

Kevin Johnson
Mayor of Sacramento, CA

James M. Baker
Mayor of Wilmington, DE

Stephen H. Buxbaum
Mayor of Olympia, WA

Marilyn Strickland
Mayor of Tacoma, WA

Paul Soglin
Mayor of Madison, WI

Francis Slay
Mayor of St. Louis, MO

Kelvyn Cullimore Jr.
Mayor of Cottonwood Heights, UT

Sam Adams
Mayor of Portland, OR

Robert Cashell
Reno, NV

Susie A. Galea
Mayor of Alamogordo, NM

Antonia Ricigliano
Edison Township, NJ

Jonathan Hornik
Mayor of Marlboro Township, NJ

112TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 439

Expressing the sense of the Senate that Village Voice Media Holdings, LLC should eliminate the “adult entertainment” section of the classified advertising website Backpage.com.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 25, 2012

Mr. BLUMENTHAL (for himself, Mr. KIRK, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. RUBIO, and Mrs. GILLIBRAND) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Senate that Village Voice Media Holdings, LLC should eliminate the “adult entertainment” section of the classified advertising website Backpage.com.

Whereas, according to the Department of Justice, there was a 59 percent increase in identified victims of human trafficking worldwide between 2009 and 2010;

Whereas, according to the Department of Health and Human Services, human trafficking is the fastest-growing criminal enterprise in the world;

Whereas experts estimate that up to 300,000 children are at risk of sexual exploitation each year in the United States;

Whereas experts estimate that the average female victim of sex trafficking is forced into prostitution for the first time between the ages of 12 and 14, and the average male victim of sex trafficking is forced into prostitution for the first time between the ages of 11 and 13;

Whereas the Bureau of Justice Statistics found that 40 percent of incidents investigated by federally funded task forces on human trafficking between 2008 and 2010 involved prostitution of a child or the sexual exploitation of a child;

Whereas, according to the classified advertising consultant Advanced Interactive Media Group (referred to in this preamble as “AIM Group”), Backpage.com is the leading United States website for prostitution advertising;

Whereas Backpage.com is owned by Village Voice Media Holdings, LLC (referred to in this preamble as “Village Voice Media”);

Whereas the National Association of Attorneys General tracked more than 50 cases in which charges were filed against persons who were trafficking or attempting to traffic minors on Backpage.com;

Whereas Myrelle and Tyrelle Locket—

(1) in February 2011 were each sentenced to 4 years in prison on charges of trafficking of persons for forced labor or services for operating an Illinois sex trafficking ring that included minors; and

(2) used Backpage.com to facilitate the prostitution;

Whereas Arthur James Chappell—

(1) in March 2011 was sentenced to 28 years in prison on charges of sex trafficking of a minor for run-

ning a prostitution ring with at least 1 juvenile victim in Minnesota; and

(2) used Backpage.com to facilitate the prostitution;

Whereas Brandon Quincy Thompson—

(1) in April 2011 was sentenced to life imprisonment on charges of sex trafficking a child by force for running a South Dakota prostitution ring that involved multiple underage girls; and

(2) used Backpage.com to facilitate the prostitution;

Whereas Clint Eugene Wilson—

(1) in May 2011 was sentenced to 20 years in prison on charges of sex trafficking of a minor by force, fraud, or coercion for forcing a 16-year-old Dallas girl into prostitution, threatening to assault her, and forcing her to get a tattoo that branded her as his property; and

(2) used Backpage.com to facilitate the prostitution;

Whereas Demetrius Darnell Homer—

(1) in August 2011 was sentenced to 20 years in prison on charges of sex trafficking of a minor for violently forcing a 14-year-old Atlanta girl into prostitution, controlling her through beatings, threatening her with a knife, shocking her with a taser in front of another underage girl whom he had placed in prostitution, and forcing her to engage in prostitution while she was pregnant with his child; and

(2) used Backpage.com to facilitate the prostitution;

Whereas Leighton Martin Curtis—

(1) in February 2012 was sentenced to 30 years in prison on charges of sex trafficking of a minor and production of child pornography for pimping a 15-year-old girl throughout Florida, Georgia, and North Carolina to

approximately 20 to 35 customers each week for more than a year; and

(2) used Backpage.com to facilitate the prostitution;

Whereas Ronnie Leon Tramble—

(1) in March 2012 was sentenced to 15 years in prison on charges of sex trafficking through force, fraud, and coercion for forcing more than 5 young women and minors into prostitution over a period of at least 5 years throughout the State of Washington, during which time period he constantly subjected the victims to brutal physical and emotional abuse; and

(2) used Backpage.com to facilitate the prostitution;

Whereas, according to AIM Group, 80 percent of online prostitution advertising revenue for the month of February 2012 was attributed to Backpage.com;

Whereas, according to AIM Group, the number of Backpage.com advertisements for “escorts” and “body rubs”, a thinly veiled code for prostitution, increased by nearly 5 percent between February 2011 and February 2012;

Whereas, according to AIM Group, Backpage.com earned an estimated \$26,000,000 from prostitution advertisements between February 2011 and February 2012;

Whereas Backpage.com vice president Carl Ferrer acknowledged to the National Association of Attorneys General that the company identifies more than 400 “adult entertainment” posts that may involve minors each month;

Whereas the actual number of “adult entertainment” posts on Backpage.com each month that involve minors may be far greater than 400;

Whereas, according to the National Association of Attorneys General, Missouri investigators found that the review procedures of Backpage.com are ineffective in policing illegal activity;

Whereas, in September 2010, Craigslist.com removed the “adult services” section of its website following calls for removal from law enforcement and advocacy organizations;

Whereas, by September 16, 2011, 51 attorneys general of States and territories of the United States had called on Backpage.com to shut down the “adult entertainment” section of its website;

Whereas, on September 16, 2011, the Tri-City Herald of the State of Washington published an editorial entitled “Attorneys general target sexual exploitation of kids”, writing, “. . . we’d also encourage the owners of Backpage.com to give the attorneys general what they are asking for”;

Whereas, on October 25, 2011, 36 clergy members from across the United States published an open letter to Village Voice Media in the New York Times, calling on the company to shut down the “adult entertainment” section of Backpage.com;

Whereas, on December 2, 2011, 55 anti-trafficking organizations called on Village Voice Media to shut down the “adult entertainment” section of Backpage.com;

Whereas, on December 29, 2011, the Seattle Times published an editorial entitled “Murders strengthen case against Backpage.com”, writing, “Backpage.com cannot continue to dismiss the women and children exploited through the website, nor the 3 women in Detroit who are dead pos-

sibly because they were trafficked on the site. Revenue from the exploitation and physical harm of women and minors is despicable. Village Voice Media, which owns Backpage.com, must shut this site down. Until then, all the pressure that can be brought to bear must continue.”;

Whereas, on March 18, 2012, Nicholas Kristof of the New York Times wrote in an opinion piece entitled “Where Pimps Peddle Their Goods” that “[t]here are no simple solutions to end sex trafficking, but it would help to have public pressure on Village Voice Media to stop carrying prostitution advertising.”;

Whereas, on March 29, 2012, Change.org delivered a petition signed by more than 240,000 individuals to Village Voice Media, calling on the company to shut down the “adult entertainment” section of Backpage.com;

Whereas, on January 12, 2012, John Buffalo Mailer, son of Village Voice co-founder Norman Mailer, joined the Change.org petition to shut down the “adult entertainment” section of Backpage.com, stating, “For the sake of the Village Voice brand and for the sake of the legacy of a great publication, take down the adult section of Backpage.com, before the Village Voice must answer for yet another child who is abused and exploited because you did not do enough to prevent it.”;

Whereas, on March 30, 2012, a private equity firm owned by Goldman Sachs Group, Inc. completed a deal to sell its 16 percent ownership stake in Village Voice Media back to management;

Whereas, in *M.A. ex rel. P.K. v. Village Voice Media Holdings, LLC* (809 F. Supp. 2d 1041 (E.D. Mo. 2011)), the

United States District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri held that section 230 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 230) (as added by section 509 of the Communications Decency Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–104; 110 Stat. 137)) protects Backpage.com from civil liability for the “horrific victimization” the teenage plaintiff suffered at the hands of the criminal who posted on the website to perpetrate her vicious crimes; and

Whereas the Communications Decency Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–104; 110 Stat. 56) and the amendments made by that Act do not preclude a service provider from voluntarily removing a portion of a website known to facilitate the sexual exploitation of minors in order to protect children in the United States: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) supports the efforts of law enforcement
3 agencies to provide training to law enforcement
4 agents on how to identify victims of sex trafficking,
5 investigate cases of sex trafficking, prosecute sex
6 trafficking offenses, and rescue victims of sex traf-
7 ficking;

8 (2) supports services for trafficking victims pro-
9 vided by the Federal Government, State and local
10 governments, and non-profit and faith-based organi-
11 zations, including medical, legal, mental health,
12 housing, and other social services; and

13 (3) calls on Village Voice Media Holdings, LLC
14 to act as a responsible global citizen and imme-

1 diately eliminate the “adult entertainment” section
2 of the classified advertising website Backpage.com to
3 terminate the website’s rampant facilitation of online
4 sex trafficking.

○

112TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 646

Expressing the sense of the House that Village Voice Media Holdings, LLC should eliminate the “adult entertainment” section of the classified advertising website Backpage.com.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 7, 2012

Mr. TURNER of New York submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the House that Village Voice Media Holdings, LLC should eliminate the “adult entertainment” section of the classified advertising website Backpage.com.

Whereas according to the Department of Justice, there was a 59 percent increase in identified victims of human trafficking worldwide between 2009 and 2010;

Whereas according to the Department of Health and Human Services, human trafficking is the fastest-growing criminal enterprise in the world;

Whereas experts estimate that up to 300,000 children are at risk of sexual exploitation each year in the United States;

Whereas experts estimate that the average female victim of sex trafficking is forced into prostitution for the first

time between the ages of 12 and 14, and the average male victim of sex trafficking is forced into prostitution for the first time between the ages of 11 and 13;

Whereas the Bureau of Justice Statistics found that 40 percent of incidents investigated by federally funded task forces on human trafficking between 2008 and 2010 involved prostitution of a child or the sexual exploitation of a child;

Whereas according to the classified advertising consultant Advanced Interactive Media Group (referred to in this preamble as “AIM Group”), Backpage.com is the leading United States website for prostitution advertising;

Whereas Backpage.com is owned by Village Voice Media Holdings, LLC (referred to in this preamble as “Village Voice Media”);

Whereas the National Association of Attorneys General tracked more than 50 cases in which charges were filed against persons who were trafficking or attempting to traffic minors on Backpage.com;

Whereas Myrelle and Tyrelle Locket—

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(2) used Backpage.com to facilitate the prostitution;

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(1) in March 2011 was sentenced to 28 years in prison on charges of sex trafficking of a minor for running a prostitution ring with at least 1 juvenile victim in Minnesota; and

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Whereas Brandon Quincy Thompson—

(1) in April 2011 was sentenced to life imprisonment on charges of sex trafficking a child by force for running a South Dakota prostitution ring that involved multiple underage girls; and

(2) used Backpage.com to facilitate the prostitution;

Whereas Clint Eugene Wilson—

(1) in May 2011 was sentenced to 20 years in prison on charges of sex trafficking of a minor by force, fraud, or coercion for forcing a 16-year-old Dallas girl into prostitution, threatening to assault her, and forcing her to get a tattoo that branded her as his property; and

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Whereas, on September 16, 2011, the Tri-City Herald of the State of Washington published an editorial entitled “Attorneys general target sexual exploitation of kids”, writing, “. . . we’d also encourage the owners of Backpage.com to give the attorneys general what they are asking for”;

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Whereas, on December 2, 2011, 55 anti-trafficking organizations called on Village Voice Media to shut down the “adult entertainment” section of Backpage.com;

Whereas, on December 29, 2011, the Seattle Times published an editorial entitled “Murders strengthen case against Backpage.com”, writing, “Backpage.com cannot continue to dismiss the women and children exploited through the website, nor the 3 women in Detroit who are dead possibly because they were trafficked on the site. Revenue from the exploitation and physical harm of women and minors is despicable. Village Voice Media, which owns Backpage.com, must shut this site down. Until then, all

the pressure that can be brought to bear must continue.”;

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Whereas, on January 12, 2012, John Buffalo Mailer, son of Village Voice co-founder Norman Mailer, joined the Change.org petition to shut down the “adult entertainment” section of Backpage.com, stating, “For the sake of the Village Voice brand and for the sake of the legacy of a great publication, take down the adult section of Backpage.com, before the Village Voice must answer for yet another child who is abused and exploited because you did not do enough to prevent it.”;

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Whereas in *M.A. ex rel. P.K. v. Village Voice Media Holdings, LLC* (809 F. Supp. 2d 1041 (E.D. Mo. 2011)), the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri held that section 230 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 230) (as added by section 509 of the Communications Decency Act of 1996 (Public Law

104–104; 110 Stat. 137)) protects Backpage.com from civil liability for the “horrible victimization” the teenage plaintiff suffered at the hands of the criminal who posted on the website to perpetrate her vicious crimes; and

Whereas the Communications Decency Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–104; 110 Stat. 56) and the amendments made by that Act do not preclude a service provider from voluntarily removing a portion of a website known to facilitate the sexual exploitation of minors in order to protect children in the United States: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) supports the efforts of law enforcement
3 agencies to provide training to law enforcement
4 agents on how to identify victims of sex trafficking,
5 investigate cases of sex trafficking, prosecute sex
6 trafficking offenses, and rescue victims of sex traf-
7 ficking;

8 (2) supports services for trafficking victims pro-
9 vided by the Federal Government, State and local
10 governments, and nonprofit and faith-based organi-
11 zations, including medical, legal, mental health,
12 housing, and other social services; and

13 (3) calls on Village Voice Media Holdings, LLC
14 to act as a responsible global citizen and imme-
15 diately eliminate the “adult entertainment” section
16 of the classified advertising website Backpage.com to

- 1 terminate the website's rampant facilitation of online
- 2 sex trafficking.

○

FRANK R. WOLF
10TH DISTRICT, VIRGINIA



241 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4610
(202) 225-5136

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

SUBCOMMITTEES:

CHAIRMAN—COMMERCE-JUSTICE-SCIENCE

TRANSPORTATION-HUD

STATE AND FOREIGN OPERATIONS

CO-CHAIR—TOM LANTOS
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

March 27, 2013

13873 PARK CENTER ROAD
SUITE 130
HERNDON, VA 20171
(703) 709-5800
(800) 945-9653 (IN STATE)

110 NORTH CAMERON STREET
WINCHESTER, VA 22801
(540) 667-0990
(800) 850-3463 (IN STATE)

wolf.house.gov

The Honorable Eric H. Holder, Jr.
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Ave NW Rm 5111
Washington DC 20530

Dear Attorney General:

HE Attorney General

As you know I have long been outraged that Web sites like Backpage.com, which in case after case have been found to be a conduit for the buying and selling of human beings, including children, to the tune of millions of dollars in profits a year, appear to do so with impunity from federal prosecutors.

Just recently, Joshua Jacquis Dumas, plead guilty to “running a commercial sex business that prostituted multiple juvenile girls in Herndon, Virginia, and other locations throughout Virginia, Maryland, North and South Carolina, Georgia and Florida.” To his great credit, the office of U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, Neil MacBride, brought the case against Dumas. The “statement of facts” that Dumas agreed to before entering his guilty plea is a grotesque account of abuse, manipulation and exploitation and much of it took place in and around my congressional district. These crimes were made possible with Backpage.com. The FBI press release announcing the guilty plea specifically mentioned the website: “Daily, the enterprise posted multiple advertisements on Backpage.com, and sometimes within minutes customers would call.”

I have repeatedly requested that the Department of Justice provide an analysis of whether there are sufficient laws on the books to prosecute the type of activity that Backpage.com engages in, and, if not, that the department provide a broader legal analysis and recommendations to Congress of legislative initiatives that may be undertaken to fully equip law enforcement to tackle this problem. To date this request has gone unanswered. Meanwhile, as the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) pointed out in a recent letter to me, “children are still being sold for sex on this site [Backpage].”

I recognize that complex legal questions are involved in this discussion, but surely the safety and security of America’s most vulnerable, our children, warrants such a discussion. I have enclosed the letter I received from NCMEC as I believe it provides invaluable information about critical next steps that the department could take to challenge Backpage.com.

Specifically NCMEC provides four recommendations for practices that Backpage.com and similar Web sites used for trafficking could immediately and voluntarily adopt to reduce the sexual exploitation of children online, including:

- “Prohibiting payment sources that mask the customer’s identity—such as gift cards, prepaid credit cards and using another’s credit card. These payment sources hamper law enforcement’s ability to investigate these ads.
- “Verifying and knowing its customers. Verifying the identity and age of the person submitting the ad as well as the person depicted in any images in the ad. These are ways to verify this information either in person or online when the ad is purchased. Other classified ad sites have implemented verification processes including database checks and review of government issued identification.
- “Consistently blocking or removing postings believed to involve minors being sold for sex.
- “Preventing ads with previously flagged images from being posted and refusing to post ads from customers who are believed to have posted suspicious ads in the past.”

I urge you, as the nation’s chief law enforcement authority, to press Backpage.com to immediately adopt these recommendations. **And if they fail to voluntarily adopt these recommendations, I implore you to take legal action against Backpage.com.**

Despite mounting public pressure, Backpage.com seems impervious to criticism and even shame. I am increasingly convinced that they will only respond to the very real prospect of criminal or civil liability. Sites like Backpage.com have historically hid behind the Communications Decency Act (CDA) which, as NCMEC points out, “Provides immunity to Internet communication service providers, such as website operators, for publishing content by third parties.” But importantly, the CDA does not prevent federal prosecutions of sexual crimes against children.

On January 10, the *Kansas City Star* reported that the Eighth Circuit Court of appeals “decided for the first time that a federal anti-slavery law applies to both the consumers as well as the sellers of sex with children.” Specifically the court found, “The unambiguous text...makes no distinction between suppliers and purchasers of commercial sex acts with children, and the defendants have failed to persuade us Congress intended a supplier-only limitation or a purchaser exception.”

The anti-trafficking movement has recognized this as a landmark ruling which closes an important loophole in the fight against trafficking through criminal deterrence, and raises the priority of prosecution of demand. However, this victory will be short-lived if Backpage.com and related online classified sites operate without fear of repercussion, fostering an atmosphere of demand which results in the continued trafficking of women and children for sex.

This is a grave injustice—a blot on our collective national conscience which demands action. Will you allow this exploitation to continue on your watch?

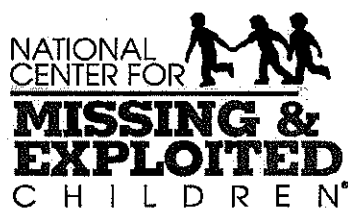
Sincerely,

Frank R. Wolf
Member of Congress

FRW:ea

I hope you will act on this. If you do not, you will regret it every time you see a story about someone being exploited like this. Please act. To whom much is given, much is required. You have been given the ability to help, please do so.

Thank you —



Charles B. Wang International
Children's Building
699 Prince Street
Alexandria, VA 22314-3175
U.S.A.

Telephone 703.224.2150

Facsimile 703.224.2122

www.missingkids.com

www.cybertipline.com

Other Offices
California
Florida
New York
Texas

From the desk of
John Ryan
Chief Executive Officer

January 28, 2013

The Honorable Frank R. Wolf
U.S. House of Representatives
241 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Wolf:

Thank you again for taking the time to meet with me recently. The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) shares your concern about effective ways to combat child sex trafficking in the U.S. and to provide services to the survivors.

The scope of the problem of child sex trafficking is difficult to quantify with accuracy. The failure of victims to self-identify and the challenges in law enforcement investigations make it impossible to gauge the incidence of this type of crime. There have been studies estimating the number of children with characteristics that *may* put them *at risk* for commercial sexual exploitation, including being a runaway or affiliated with a gang.¹ More than 6,600 of the missing children reported to NCMEC have suspected or confirmed involvement in the commercial sex industry. However, this doesn't come close to the actual number of child sex trafficking victims.

The Internet has added a new aspect to the child sex trafficking business model. The advertising of children for commercial sex acts via online classified ad sites is a serious and growing problem. These sites include MyRedbook.com, Craigslist.com, MyProviderGuide.com and Eros-Guide.com. The most well-known of these sites is Backpage.com.

As the operator of the CyberTipline, the congressionally-authorized reporting mechanism for online crimes against children,² NCMEC believes that Backpage provides an infrastructure for illegal activity and thereby supports a criminal prostitution enterprise that includes child victims. After NCMEC communicated its concerns to officials of Backpage, it implemented a monitor/review policy and has made thousands of reports of suspicious ads to NCMEC's CyberTipline which were referred to law enforcement for investigation.

¹ Estes, Richard J. and Weiner, Neil Alan, *The Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children In the U.S., Canada and Mexico, Executive Summary of the U.S. National Study*, University of Pennsylvania, 2001, pp. 11-12. Characteristics also included foster care and drug use, among others.

² 42 U.S.C. § 5773(b)(1)(P).

Some of these reports have led to arrests of suspects for child sex trafficking and the rescue of child victims. Despite these efforts, it is clear that these measures alone simply aren't enough to address the problem. Children are still being sold for sex on this site.

There are additional practices and techniques that may help Backpage and other online classified ad websites reduce the online sexual exploitation of children on their sites. Examples of these include:

- Prohibiting payment sources that mask the customer's identity – such as gift cards, prepaid credit cards and using another's credit card. These payment sources hamper law enforcement's ability to investigate these ads.
- Verifying and knowing its customers. Verifying the identity and age of the person submitting the ad as well as the person depicted in any images in the ad. There are ways to verify this information either in person or online when the ad is purchased. Other classified ad sites have implemented verification processes including database checks and review of government issued identification.
- Consistently blocking or removing postings believed to involve minors being sold for sex.
- Preventing ads with previously-flagged images from being posted and refusing to post ads from customers who are believed to have posted suspicious ads in the past.

A responsible company would take all available measures to address the sexual exploitation of children – mere reporting is grossly insufficient. We are disturbed that Backpage has not taken a single one of these additional steps and continues to operate under a business model that facilitates the sexual exploitation of children.

This business model has not gone unnoticed by state attorneys general, many of whom have been dedicated to fighting child sex trafficking. In September 2010, 21 attorneys general sent a letter to Backpage asking the company to take down its adult services section. In August 2011, the National Association of Attorneys General submitted a lengthy inquiry letter to Backpage. Forty-six attorneys general signed the letter that asked Backpage to provide, among other things, information about their policies to prevent illegal activity from occurring on the site. Yet Backpage continues to post these ads.

The legal landscape surrounding this issue is complicated with regard to criminal and civil liability of classified ad websites. I have included a brief summary of some of the challenges.

Liability of Internet sites for content is controlled by Section 230(c) of the Communications Decency Act (CDA):

No provider or user of an interactive computer service shall be treated as the publisher or speaker of any information provided by another information content provider. 47 U.S.C. § 230(c)(1).

The CDA provides immunity to Internet communication service providers, such as website operators, for publishing content by third parties. Courts look to whether a website had a role in creating the

content on the site, which would defeat immunity.³ Congress' intent in passing this provision was to provide an incentive for websites to remove objectionable content without fear of liability for failure to remove all such content.⁴

There have been several attempts to hold online classified sites civilly liable for content that they place on their sites. In 2010, a victim of child sex trafficking sought civil remedies in federal court in Missouri, alleging that Backpage (Village Voice Media Holdings at the time) aided and abetted the crimes committed against her by a pimp.⁵ The court dismissed the complaint on the basis of the CDA's immunity provision. In July 2012, three victims filed a civil complaint in state court in Washington.⁶ That suit is pending.

Criminal liability of online classified sites is also impacted by the CDA's immunity provision. It is well-established by several courts (in civil cases) that a website operator's general knowledge that its site is used to advertise illegal activity is not sufficient evidence of intent to aid or abet a crime.⁷ Some courts have stated that the CDA's section 230 immunity applies to state criminal laws.⁸

At least two states have attempted to criminalize these sites' specific conduct by enacting legislation. However, these new laws were not enforced because of the preemption language of the CDA:

Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent any State from enforcing any State law that is consistent with this section. No cause of action may be brought and no liability may be imposed under any State or local law that is inconsistent with this section. 47 U.S.C. § 230(e)(3).

Washington's Senate Bill 6251 would have made it a felony to knowingly publish, disseminate, or display, or cause directly or indirectly, to be published, disseminated or displayed, any advertisement for a commercial sex act in Washington that includes the depiction of a minor. Before it could take effect in 2012, it was challenged by Backpage and other plaintiffs. The U.S. District Court granted the plaintiffs' motion for a preliminary injunction, finding that the law is likely preempted by Section 230 of the CDA as well as unconstitutional on a number of grounds.⁹ In December 2012, the Washington Attorney General's office ended its defense of the law, in light of its flaws.

³ *Zeran v. America Online, Inc.*, 129 F.3d 327 (4th Cir. 1997); *Fair Housing Council of San Fernando Valley v. Roommates.com, L.L.C.*, 521 F.3d 1157 (9th Cir. 2008).

⁴ P.L. 104-104, *Telecommunications Act of 1996*.

⁵ *M.A. v. Village Voice Media Holdings, L.L.C.*, 2011 WL 3607660 (E.D. Mo.).

⁶ *J.S., S.L. and L.C. v. Village Voice Media Holdings, L.L.C., Backpage.com, LLC, and Baruti Hopson*, filed July 27, 2012.

⁷ *M.A. v. Village Voice Media Holdings, L.L.C.*, 2011 WL 3607660 (E.D. Mo.); *Chicago Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under the Law, Inc. v. Craigslist, Inc.*, 519 F.3d 666, 668 (7th Cir. 2008).

⁸ *Voicenet v. Communications, Inc. v. Corbett*, No. 04-1318, 2006 WL 2506318 (E.D. Pa. Aug. 20, 2006); *People v. Gorlay*, No. 278214, 2009 WL 529216 (Mich. Ct. App. Mar. 3, 2009).

⁹ *Backpage.com, LLC and Internet Archive v. McKenna et al.*, No. C12-954-RSM (Order Granting Plaintiffs' Motions for Preliminary Injunction, U.S. Dist. Ct. W.D. Wash. July 27, 2012).

Tennessee's Senate Bill 2371, also enacted in 2012, was similar to the Washington law. Once again, Backpage challenged its constitutionality based on the CDA. In January 2013, the U.S. District Court issued a temporary restraining order, finding that the law is likely preempted by the CDA, and that it is unconstitutionally overbroad, among other findings.¹⁰

The CDA does not prevent federal prosecutions of sexual crimes against children:

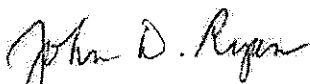
Nothing in this section shall be construed to impair the enforcement of section 223 or 231 of this Act [47 USCS § 223 or 231], chapter 71 (relating to obscenity) or 110 (relating to sexual exploitation of children) of title 18, United States Code [18 USCS §§ 1460 et seq. or §§ 2251 et seq.], or any other Federal criminal statute. 47 U.S.C. § 230(e)(1).

To date there have been no attempts to bring criminal charges against a classified ad website for facilitating child sex trafficking. A charge of aiding and abetting requires the willful causation of a criminal act, rather than the passive role of an online publisher. At the time the CDA was written, publisher liability, both criminal and civil, was based on the then-traditional role of publishers such as newspapers, who generally knew what they were publishing. In the Internet age, however, websites' knowledge of the content they make available is limited at best. And, again, Congress' intent was to incentivize website operators to remove some objectionable content without fear of failing to remove all objectionable content.

When the CDA was drafted it was hardly conceivable that the Internet would be used to facilitate the sexual exploitation of children. As long as the CDA stands in the way of holding these classified ad websites legally accountable, they will continue to be an integral part of the child sex trafficking industry in the U.S.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide the information you requested at our meeting. Please let me know if you need additional information about NCMEC's efforts to combat child sex trafficking as it relates to missing and exploited children.

Sincerely,


John D. Ryan
Chief Executive Officer

¹⁰ *Backpage.com, L.L.C. v. Robert E. Cooper, Jr.*, No. 3:12-cv-00654 (Order Granting Plaintiff's Motion for Temporary Restraining Order, U.S. Dist. Ct., M.D. Tenn. Jan. 3, 2013).

December 2, 2011

Jim Larkin, CEO and Chair
Members of the Board of Directors
Village Voice Media

Dear Mr. Larkin and Village Voice Media Board of Directors:

We are experts in the anti-human trafficking field who for years have been on the front lines working directly with victims, providing clinical and social services, studying and researching trafficking, and developing and advocating for prevention policies. We stand together asking you to protect women and girls from others' commercial sexual exploitation and sex trafficking of them by immediately and permanently shutting down the entire Adult section of your subsidiary's website, Backpage.com.

We stand with Groundswell, Auburn Theological Seminary, and the 36 moral and religious leaders of many creeds and backgrounds who have asked you to commit to running your business without compromising the lives of our nation's young girls and boys,¹ and adult women.

We stand with the 21 states' Attorneys General,² including then-Attorney General Richard Blumenthal who in September 2010 urged you to immediately close your Adult section, noting that "Adult services sections are little more than online brothels, enabling human trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and children."³

We stand with the 51 Attorneys General from throughout the United States who in August 2011 wrote in a letter to Backpage.com – "We are increasingly concerned about human trafficking, especially the trafficking of minors. Backpage.com is a hub for such activity." – and have demanded that you eliminate all of your Adult ads.⁴

We also stand with those law enforcement officials who disagree with your approach of preventing others' use of your website to traffic women and minors, making such statements as: "Rescuing children from being sexually exploited is a top priority for our police department, but we can never

¹ "An Open Letter to Village Voice Media." Advertisement. *The New York Times*. 25 Oct. 2011. Print. <<http://www.groundswell-movement.org/nyt-ad/>>.

² States' Attorneys General. "Re: Backpage.com." Letter to Samuel Fifer. 21 Sept. 2010. Connecticut Office of the Attorney General. <<http://www.ct.gov/ag/lib/ag/other/backpageletter.pdf>>

³ "Attorney General Leads 21 States In Calling On Backpage To Close Adult Services Section." Press Release. 21 Sept. 2010. Connecticut Office of the Attorney General. <<http://www.ct.gov/ag/cwp/view.asp?Q=466074&A=3869>>.

⁴ National Association of Attorneys General (NAAG). "Re: Backpage.com's ongoing failure to effectively limit prostitution and sexual trafficking activity on its website." Letter to Samuel Fifer. 31 Aug. 2011. <<http://www.naag.org/assets/files/pdf/signons/Backpage%20WG%20Letter%20Aug%202011Final.pdf>>.

get ahead of this crime while a company like Backpage.com profits from the sexual exploitation of children and uses their newsrooms to minimize the extent of the issue.”⁵

Backpage.com officials have readily acknowledged that sex ads of minors placed by adults can appear on your website. According to the Attorneys General’s letter, “In a meeting with the Washington State Attorney General’s Office, Backpage.com vice president Carl Ferrer acknowledged that the company identifies more than 400 ‘adult services’ posts every month that may involve minors.”⁶ Furthermore, during the first eight months of 2011, Backpage.com reported to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) 1,595 cases of suspected use of juveniles in sex ads, as NCMEC has publicly stated. Additionally, the Attorneys General independently have tracked “more than 50 instances, in 22 states over three years of charges filed against those trafficking or attempting to traffic minors on Backpage.com.”⁷ The National Human Trafficking Resource Center also has received 147 calls (both tip and crisis calls) about Backpage.com in three years and reports of 92 potential trafficking cases on Backpage.com, 23 of which referenced minors.⁸ Furthermore, just last week, the Brooklyn District Attorney indicted two individuals on charges of beating and forcing into prostitution a 13-year-old girl and of advertising her services with photographs on Backpage.com.⁹ And in September, Memphis’ *The Commercial Appeal* reported that a federal grand jury indicted two individuals for prostituting two teenage girls – ages 15 and 16 – who were solicited through advertisements on Backpage.com.¹⁰

Backpage.com lists countless advertisements of adult “services” in every one of its markets. These ads demonstrate that others could be using the website to traffic adult women, in addition to girls. The National Human Trafficking Resource Center has received reports of approximately 1,433 possible cases of sex trafficking involving adult females, about 54 of which potentially involve the sex trafficking of women by others on Backpage.com.¹¹

When Village Voice Media and Backpage.com officials were presented with this data, they decided to introduce several safety and security enhancements “to better protect our community.”¹² These new

⁵ Gutierrez, Scott. “McGinn: Police rescue 3 children advertised in backpage.com sex ads.” Weblog entry. *Strange bedfellows. Seattle Post-Intelligencer*. 28 Sept. 2011. <<http://blog.seattlepi.com/seattlepolitics/2011/09/28/mcginn-police-rescue-3-children-advertised-in-backpage-com-sex-ads/>>

⁶ NAAG. Letter to Samuel Fifer.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ National Human Trafficking Resource Center. Polaris Project. Case data provided covers the period from 8/23/2008 to 9/15/2011. Please note that these statistics may be subject to change.

⁹ “Kings County District Attorney Charles J. Hynes announces four indictments in two sex trafficking cases involving 12-and-13-year old victims.” Press Release. 21 Nov. 2011. Kings County District Attorney’s Office. <[http://www.brooklynda.org/press_releases/2011/Press Releases 11-11.htm](http://www.brooklynda.org/press_releases/2011/Press_Releases_11-11.htm)>

¹⁰ Warren, Beth. “Pair charged with prostituting two teenage girls.” *The Commercial Appeal*. 1 Nov. 2011. <<http://www.commercialappeal.com/news/2011/nov/01/pair-charged-with-prostituting-teenage-girls/>>

¹¹ National Human Trafficking Resource Center. Polaris Project. Case data provided covers the period from 12/7/2007 to 10/15/2011. Please note that these statistics may be subject to change.

¹² “Safety and Security Enhancements.” Weblog entry. The Backpage.com Blog. 11 July 2011. <<http://blog.backpage.com/>>

policies included, but were not limited to, no nudity, key word searches to identify misuse, increased staff to monitor illegal ads, and reporting of ads featuring possible minors to NCMEC.¹³ Nonetheless, the Attorneys General have stated publicly that they do not believe the steps Backpage.com has taken are a genuine effort to improve safety and security. They wrote, “We believe Backpage.com sets a minimal bar for content review in an effort to temper public condemnation, while ensuring that the spigot provided by prostitution advertising remains intact.”¹⁴

While we applaud your implementation of safeguards and your cooperation with law enforcement officials, we agree with the Attorneys General that your efforts fall far short of what is needed to eliminate the use of your website by others to exploit women and minors. The bottom line is that Backpage.com simply has no way of guaranteeing that it can stop this exploitation if it continues to accept and place Adult ads.

Backpage.com has stated that you have invested heavily in implementing safety measures on your website, however the reality, as demonstrated by the recent indictments in Brooklyn and Memphis, is that adults are still able to traffic women and girls on the website. Backpage.com has also stated that the level of resources you have dedicated to implementing safety measures “compares favorably with any other web or social media site,”¹⁵ we, however, feel this is the wrong metric for evaluating whether the problem of trafficking is being fully addressed.

We recognize that Backpage.com may lose the considerable revenue it generates by the Adult ads. However, a recent article suggests that Backpage.com would still be a successful business if it did not operate the Adult section of its website.¹⁶ We also believe that a strong case cannot be made for a business to continue that cannot completely prevent others’ prostitution and victimization of women and minors – despite significant efforts otherwise.

The Attorneys General and clerical leaders in this country were adamant in their letters. We are adamant too. We believe that the sexual exploitation of women and minors is a form of violence against them and a violation of their basic human rights.

We call on you to immediately and permanently shut down the Adult section of your website to ensure that women and girls can no longer be abused, bought, and sold by others using advertisements they placed on Backpage.com.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ NAAG. Letter to Samuel Fifer.

¹⁵ Fifer, Samuel. “Re: Response of Backpage.com to NAAG letter of August 31, 2011.” Letter to Hedda Litwin. 23 Sept. 2011.

<http://www.atg.wa.gov/uploadedFiles/Another/News/BACKPAGE_com%20RESPONSE%20TO%20NAAG.PDF>

¹⁶ Rainey, James. “Village Voice Media defends its Backpage.com ad policy.” *The Los Angeles Times*, 28 Nov. 2011. <<http://articles.latimes.com/2011/nov/28/entertainment/la-et-village-voice-media-20111129/2>>

SIGNED:

Andrea Powell
Co-Founder & Executive Director
FAIR Girls

Kaffie McCullough
Campaign Director
A Future. Not A Past

Amb. Mark P. Lagon
Georgetown University School of
Foreign Service
Former U.S. Ambassador to Combat
Human Trafficking

Tania DoCarmo
Founder & Chair
Chab Dai USA

Amy Hartman
National Director
Cherish Our Children, Minneapolis

Rachel Durchslag
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Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation
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Citizens Against Trafficking

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Coalition Against Trafficking in Women
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Courtney's House

Dr. Daniel Bercu
President & Founder
Doctors At War, Inc.

Carol Arthur
Executive Director
Domestic Abuse Project

Carol Smolenski
Executive Director
ECPAT-USA

Yasmeen Hassan
Global Director
Equality Now

Kristyn Komarnicki
Editor
PRISM Magazine
Evangelicals for Social Action

Benjamin Nolot
President & Founder
Exodus Cry

Robert J. Benz
Founder & Executive Vice President
Frederick Douglass Family Foundation

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Georgia Women for a Change, Inc.

Rachel Lloyd
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Monica R. Garcia
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Anti-Human Trafficking Program
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Sharon Simpson Joseph
Executive Director
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Rob Morris
President & Co-Founder
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Rus Funk
Executive Director
MensWork

Stephanie Holt
Executive Director
Mission 21

Kristin Rowe-Finkbeiner
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Philip J. Cenedella
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National Children's Advocacy Center

Sonia Ossorio
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Norma Ryan
Administrator
Not By Chance

Kathryn Xian
Executive Director
Pacific Alliance to Stop Slavery

Dianne Post
International Human Rights Attorney
Phoenix Women Take Back the Night

Bradley Myles
Executive Director
Polaris Project

Michelle Miller
Executive Director
Resist Exploitation, Embrace Dignity (REED)

Kathie Logan
Program Manager
Sexual Assault Center of NWGA

Cassandra Johnson Blackbird
Executive Director
Sexual Assault Program of Beltrami, Cass &
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Linda Smith (U.S. Congress, 1994-98)
Founder & President
Shared Hope International

Rigmor Schneider
Interim Executive Director
Somaly Mam Foundation

Gordon Heller
Chair
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Southeast Dayton Weed and Seed

Cheryl A. Thomas
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The Advocates for Human Rights

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Frank M.
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Jeni Gamble, MSSW, PhD
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Washington Empowered Against Violence
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Mary Frances Bowley
President & Executive Director
Wellspring Living

Becky McDonald
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Women At Risk International

Lee Roper-Batker
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Women's Foundation of Minnesota

Laura Penny
Executive Director
Women's Foundation of Southern Arizona



PRESIDENT
J.B. Van Hollen
Wisconsin Attorney General

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VICE PRESIDENT
Marty Jackley
South Dakota Attorney General

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT
Douglas Gansler
Maryland Attorney General

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
James McPherson

July 23, 2013

The Honorable John Rockefeller IV
Chairman
Committee on Commerce, Science,
and Transportation
United States Senate

The Honorable Frederick Upton
Chairman
Committee on Energy and Commerce
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable John Thune
Ranking Member
Committee on Commerce, Science,
and Transportation
United States Senate

The Honorable Henry Waxman
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Commerce
United States House of Representatives

Dear Senator Rockefeller, Senator Thune, Representative Upton, and
Representative Waxman:

Every day, children in the United States are sold for sex. In instance after instance, State and local authorities discover that the vehicles for advertising the victims of the child sex trade to the world are online classified ad services, such as Backpage.com. The involvement of these advertising companies is not incidental—these companies have constructed their business models around income gained from participants in the sex trade. But, as it has most recently been interpreted, the Communications Decency Act of 1996 (“CDA”) prevents State and local law enforcement agencies from prosecuting these companies. This must change. The undersigned Attorneys General respectfully request that the U.S. Congress amend the CDA so that it restores to State and local authorities their traditional jurisdiction to investigate and prosecute those who promote prostitution and endanger our children.

It is ironic that the CDA, which was intended to protect children from indecent material on the internet,¹ is now used as a shield by those who intentionally profit from prostitution and crimes against children. Federal courts have broadly interpreted the immunity provided by the CDA,² and recently the United States District Court for the Western District of

¹ 104 CONG. REC. S2308-01 (daily ed. June 14, 1995) (statement of Sen. Coats, "Mr. President, all you have to do is pick up the telephone and call the FBI, ask their child exploitation task force about the volume of over-the-Internet attempts to seduce, abuse, and lure children into pornography and sexual exploitation."); 104 CONG. REC. H8470 (daily ed. Aug. 4, 1995) (statement of Rep. Cox, "We want to encourage people like Prodigy, like CompuServe, like America Online, like the new Microsoft network, to do everything possible for us, the customer, to help us control, at the portals of our computer, at the front door of our house, what comes in and what our children see.").

² See *M.A. v. Village Voice Media Holdings, LLC*, 809 F.Supp. 2d 1041; *Dart v. Craigslist*, 665 F.Supp.2d 961 (N.D. Ill. 2009); *Doe v Bates*, 2006 WL 3813758 *1 (E.D. Tex. Dec. 27, 2006).

Washington held that the CDA preempts state criminal law.³ As online advertising of child prostitution goes unchecked, sex traffickers are able to expand their businesses, magnifying the scope of the problem. In the last few months alone, law enforcement agencies throughout the nation have linked sex-trafficking operations to internet advertisers. For example, on March 28, Miami police arrested a man for advertising the sex services of a 13-year-old girl on Backpage.com. The perpetrator had tattooed his name across the girl's eyelids, marking her as his property.⁴ Two months earlier, two men were arrested in Fairfax County, Virginia for prostituting four minors on Backpage.com.⁵ And on April 10, four males and one female were arrested in St. Paul, Minnesota for running a prostitution ring of eight girls and women ages 15 to 40. The girls and women were advertised on Backpage.com.⁶ These examples offer just a small sampling of the countless instances of child sex trafficking that occurs every day in the United States.

In order to better combat such crimes, we recommend that 47 U.S.C. § 230(e)(1) be amended to the following (added language in bold):

Nothing in this section shall be construed to impair the enforcement of section 223 or 231 of this title, chapter 71 (relating to obscenity) or 110 (relating to sexual exploitation of children) of Title 18, or any other Federal **or State** criminal statute.

Federal enforcement alone has proven insufficient to stem the growth of internet-facilitated child sex trafficking. Those on the front lines of the battle against the sexual exploitation of children—State and local law enforcement—must be granted the authority to investigate and prosecute those who facilitate these horrible crimes.

Respectfully,



Chris Koster
Missouri Attorney General



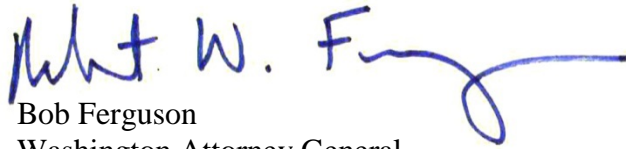
Marty Jackley
South Dakota Attorney General

³ Backpage.com, LLC v. McKenna, 881 F.Supp.2d 1262 (W.D. Wash., July 27, 2012).

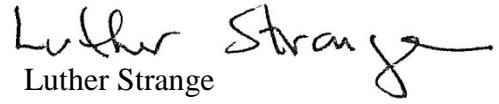
⁴ David Ovalle, *Police: Miami Pimp Forced Teen to Tattoo His Name on Her Eyelids*, THE MIAMI HERALD, March 28, 2013, available at <http://www.miamiherald.com/2013/03/28/3312163/police-miami-pimp-forced-teen.html>. (Last visited, April 12, 2013).

⁵ Pamela Brown, *Police Bust Prostitution Ring in Herndon*, ABC 7, January 11, 2013, available at <http://www.wjla.com/articles/2013/01/police-bust-prostitution-ring-in-herndon--83981.html>. (Last visited, April 12, 2013).

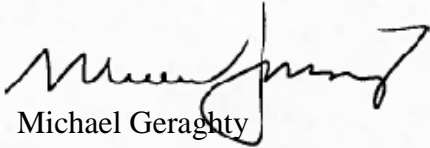
⁶ Emily Gurnon, *St. Paul Prostitution Ring Busted; Young, Vulnerable Girls Trafficked, Charges Say*, ST. PAUL PIONEER PRESS, April 10, 2013, available at http://www.twincities.com/ci_22994804/st-paul-sex-ring-preyed-vulnerable-young-women. (Last visited, April 12, 2013).



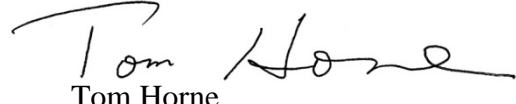
Bob Ferguson
Washington Attorney General



Luther Strange
Alabama Attorney General



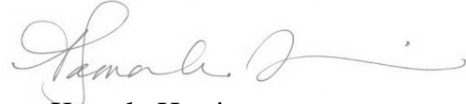
Michael Geraghty
Alaska Attorney General



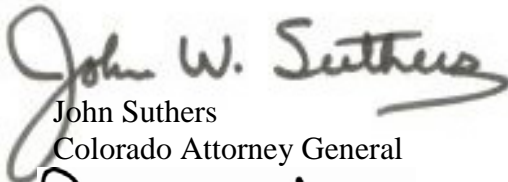
Tom Horne
Arizona Attorney General



Dustin McDaniel
Arkansas Attorney General



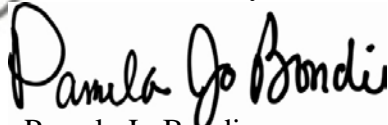
Kamala Harris
California Attorney General




John Suthers
Colorado Attorney General



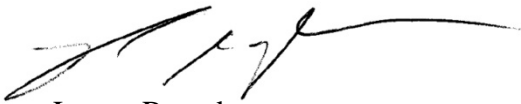
Joseph R. "Beau" Biden III
Delaware Attorney General



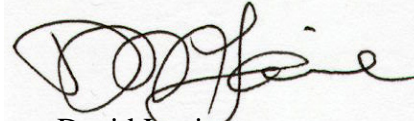
Pamela Jo Bondi
Florida Attorney General



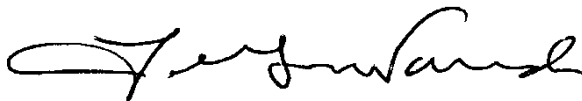
Samuel S. Olens
Georgia Attorney General



Lenny Rapadas
Guam Attorney General



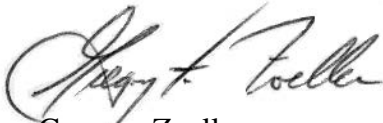
David Louie
Hawaii Attorney General



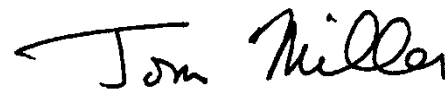
Lawrence Wasden
Idaho Attorney General



Lisa Madigan
Illinois Attorney General



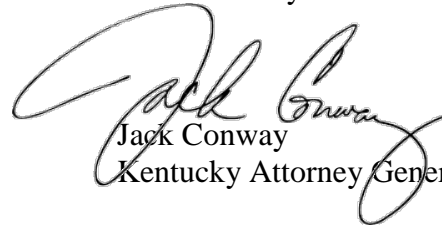
Gregory Zoeller
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Tom Miller
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Derek Schmidt
Kansas Attorney General



Jack Conway
Kentucky Attorney General

James "Buddy" Caldwell
Louisiana Attorney General

Douglas F. Gansler
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Bill Schuette
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Jim Hood
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Jon Bruning
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Gary King
New Mexico Attorney General

Roy Cooper
North Carolina Attorney General

Mike DeWine
Ohio Attorney General

Janet Mills
Maine Attorney General

Martha Coakley
Massachusetts Attorney General

Lori Swanson
Minnesota Attorney General

Tim Fox
Montana Attorney General

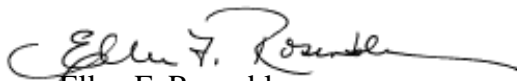
Catherine Cortez Masto
Nevada Attorney General

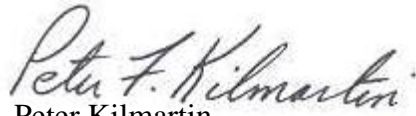
John J. Hoffman
Acting New Jersey Attorney General

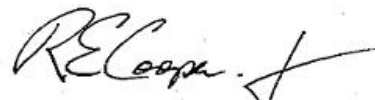
Eric T. Schneiderman
New York Attorney General

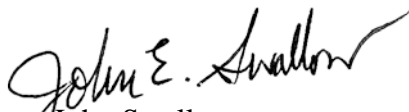
Wayne Stenehjem
North Dakota Attorney General

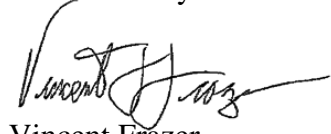
Scott Pruitt
Oklahoma Attorney General



Ellen F. Rosenblum
Oregon Attorney General



Peter Kilmartin
Rhode Island Attorney General



Robert E. Cooper, Jr.
Tennessee Attorney General



John Swallow
Utah Attorney General

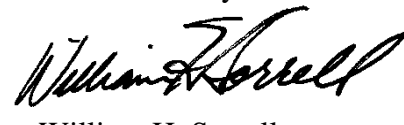

Vincent Frazer
Virgin Islands Attorney General


Peter K. Michael
Acting Wyoming Attorney General


Kathleen Kane
Pennsylvania Attorney General


Alan Wilson
South Carolina Attorney General


Greg Abbott
Texas Attorney General


William H. Sorrell
Vermont Attorney General


Patrick Morrissey
West Virginia Attorney General