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Akron Woman Sentenced to 6 Years in Prison

Admitted to Role in Human Trafficking Scheme

AKRON, Ohio (Tuesday, October 30, 2018) – Summit County Prosecutor Sherri Bevan Walsh announced today that Summit County Common Pleas Court Judge Amy Corrigan Jones sentenced Pearl Coffey, 35, of 1275 Herman Avenue in Akron, to six years in prison. Coffey and Darren Townsend pled guilty to several charges, including Trafficking in Persons. This was the first time in Summit County that the charge of Trafficking in Persons was filed.

On January 18, 2018, Coffey pled guilty to the following charges:

- Attempted Trafficking in Persons – a felony of the 2nd degree
- Compelling Prostitution – a felony of the 3rd degree
- Corrupting Another with Drugs – a felony of the 4th degree

Judge Jones designated Coffey as a Tier II sex offender, meaning once released from prison she will have to register with the local sheriff every 180 days for 25 years.

Coffey admitted to preying on young girls and women, providing them with shelter, drugs and other items in exchange for them prostituting themselves. Coffey and her boyfriend, Darren Townsend, were both charged in the case.

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On October 3, 2018, Townsend, 38, of Nome Road in Akron pled guilty just as closing arguments in his trial were to begin. Townsend pled guilty to the following charges:

- 2 Counts of Trafficking in Persons – felonies of the 1st degree
- 1 Count of Compelling Prostitution – a felony of the 2nd degree
- 2 Counts of Compelling Prostitution – felonies of the 3rd degree
- 3 Counts of Compelling Prostitution – felonies of the 3rd degree
- 3 Counts of Promoting Prostitution – felonies of the 4th degree
- Corrupting Another with Drugs – a felony of the 2nd degree

Immediately following his guilty plea, Judge Jones sentenced Townsend to 14 years in prison. Judge Jones also designated Townsend as a Tier II sex offender. Once released from prison, Townsend must register as a sex offender every 180 days for 25 years.

The Summit County Prosecutor's Office worked with the Independence Police Department as well as other detectives with the Cuyahoga County Regional Human Trafficking Task Force, which is part of the Ohio Attorney General Organized Crime Investigations Commission.