



News Release

OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL ALAN WILSON
STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

For Immediate Release
Nov. 2, 2016

Contact: Hayley Thrift Bledsoe
(803) 734-3670
hthrift@scag.gov

Columbia Man Pleads Guilty in Human Trafficking Case

(COLUMBIA, S.C.) Attorney General Alan Wilson announced that Trevonta Matthews (DOB: 1992) pleaded guilty to multiple charges in a human trafficking case.

Matthews of Columbia pleaded guilty on Nov. 1, 2016 to one count of conspiracy to commit human trafficking, four counts human trafficking and four counts of contributing to the delinquency of a minor.

The Honorable DeAndrea Benjamin sentenced Matthews to 17 years in prison. Once released, Matthews must register as a sex offender.

Matthews was indicted by the State Grand Jury on Dec. 9, 2015.

On Sept. 10, 2014, a 15-year-old runaway reported to police that she had been sexually assaulted. Officers responded to a Columbia motel and noticed that the juvenile seemed upset and distraught. The juvenile stated that she was being forced to have sex with men for money and was told that if she did not comply, she would be reported to the Department of Juvenile Justice. At the time, she did not know the real name of the man forcing her to do this. She would later identify him as Matthews in a lineup.

In July 2015, officers responded to another juvenile runaway situation. The juvenile's parents lured her out of a hotel room, where they were met by the police. The juvenile stated that she had been having sex with men for money and had been giving the money to a man she identified as Matthews.

Throughout the investigation, four other juvenile victims were identified.

While incarcerated, Matthews continued to force the victims to have sex for money so that he could post his bond.

The case was prosecuted by Senior Assistant Deputy Attorney General Heather Weiss and Assistant Attorney General Kinli Abee.

Attorney General Wilson stressed that human trafficking is a national epidemic and urged South Carolinians to report anything suspicious to local law enforcement, and the National Human Trafficking Resource Center at 1-866-347-7888.

###