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FORMER BUREAU OF PRISONS EMPLOYEE PLEADS GUILTY TO SEX TRAFFICKING A MINOR

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Charles Carstensen, 54, of Manteca, pleaded guilty today to one count of sex trafficking a minor, United States Attorney Phillip A. Talbert announced.

According to court documents, beginning in April 2014, while employed at the Bureau of Prisons, Carstensen met the 16-year-old victim and engaged in commercial sex acts with her. Between February and March 2015, knowing she was underage, he encouraged her to engage in prostitution, renting hotel rooms for her in the Sacramento area and helping her to post ads online. He also encouraged her to engage in prostitution with at least one other female that he knew. On May 11, 2015, Carstensen was arrested and he has been in custody as a flight risk and a danger to the community since that time.

This case is the product of an investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Sacramento Child Exploitation Task Force of which the Sacramento Police Department is a member, the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of the Inspector General, and the Roseville Police Department. Assistant United States Attorney Michele Beckwith is prosecuting the case.

Carstensen is scheduled to be sentenced by Judge Garland E. Burrell Jr. on April 6, 2018. He faces a minimum term of 10 years in prison, and a maximum penalty of up to life in prison and a \$250,000 fine. Any sentence, however, will be determined at the discretion of the court after consideration of any applicable statutory factors and the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, which take into account a number of variables.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse. Led by the United States Attorneys' Offices and the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state, and local resources to locate, apprehend, and prosecute those who sexually exploit children, and to identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.usdoj.gov/psc. Click on the "resources" tab for information about Internet safety education.

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