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January 29, 2021
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Approved by JAK
Press Release 21-04

Jury Trial Human Trafficking Conviction: Rayshoun Miller BF 177511A

District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer announced a jury trial conviction in a Human Trafficking case today. On Friday, January 29, a Kern County Jury found defendant Rayshoun Miller guilty as charged on all three felony charges, including felony charges of Human Trafficking, Pimping, and Pandering.

The case began in Fresno, on February 24, 2019, where the victim was contacted by Marshai Roberson and Rayshoun Miller. Miller and Roberson induced the victim to become a prostitute at the Desert Star motel, in Bakersfield. Miller promised to take care of the victim's three-month old child if the victim went to Bakersfield to earn money for the defendant through prostitution. The victim was required to give all of the proceeds from the prostitution to Miller and Roberson. Upon returning to Fresno, Miller beat the victim and refused to return the victim's three-month old child. The victim returned to the Desert Star motel, and soon after decided to stop engaging in prostitution and leave the control of the defendant. When the victim attempted to leave, Roberson withheld the victim's property and told the victim that the only way to leave was to earn back the money that had been spent on her. The victim contacted a friend who notified Homeland Security. BPD and Homeland Security responded to the Desert Star motel, located the victim in one of the rooms, and began an investigation.

Roberson was found in a separate room of the Desert Star motel. Roberson was arrested and previously has entered a plea to PC 236.1(b), a felony Human Trafficking violation.

The trial was presented by DDA Esther Schlaerth over the course of two weeks. Miller was found guilty of all three charged counts. Miller is also alleged to have a prior 'strike' felony conviction from 2010 for shooting case out of Fresno. A bench trial will be held on Tuesday, February 2 in Department 16, to determine whether the alleged prior conviction is true. A sentencing date will likely be set at the conclusion of the bench trial on the prior allegations.

Advised of the conviction, District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer commented, "The sexual exploitation of young women in Kern County is a horrific and pervasive crime. Those who prey on the vulnerabilities of young, disadvantaged women, will be prosecuted. Human trafficking carries some of the highest penalties

under the law, and the District Attorney's Office will vigorously pursue those who seek to profit off of the exploitation of others."

Miller faces a total potential sentence of up to 40 years and lifetime sex offender registration as a result of the conviction. Judge David Zulfa presided over the trial.