

AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF COMPLAINT

I, Abby Mathieu, having been duly sworn, hereby depose and state:

AGENT BACKGROUND

1. I am a Special Agent with Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) and have been so employed since 2019. I am currently assigned to the Office of the Resident Agent in Charge (RAC), Bangor, Maine. I am a graduate of the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center's Criminal Investigator Training Program and Homeland Security Investigations Special Agent Training. I have received training with regard to conducting investigations involving violations of federal law. I have received training in the area of human trafficking at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Glynco, Georgia and have, as part of my daily duties as an HSI agent, investigated violations relating to human trafficking, including violations pertaining to the trafficking with respect to peonage, slavery, involuntary servitude, or forced labor pursuant to 18 U.S.C § 1590, and the sex trafficking of children or by force, fraud, or coercion pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 1591. I have gained experience in the investigation of crimes involving human trafficking through training in seminars, classes, and on-the-job experience.

2. From my training and experience, I know that individuals are trafficked for several purposes. Some forms of human trafficking involve involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage and slavery. Victims are often trafficked by force, fraud, and/or coercion. I am familiar with the federal laws regarding human trafficking, including 18 U.S.C. §§ 1591 and 1594 (Sex Trafficking).

3. This affidavit is submitted in support of a criminal complaint charging Joseph AUGER with Attempted Sex Trafficking of a Child, in violation of 18 U.S.C. §§ 1591(a)(1), b(2) and 1594(a).

4. As described below, there is probable cause to believe that, on April 24, 2025, in and around South Portland, in the District of Maine, Joseph AUGER did knowingly attempt to, in and affecting interstate and foreign commerce, entice, obtain, solicit, and patronize by any means a person, knowing and in reckless disregard of the fact that the person had not attained the age of 18 years and would be caused to engage in a commercial sex act.

5. This affidavit is based on my personal investigation and investigation by others, including federal and state law enforcement officials. The facts contained herein have been obtained by interviewing witnesses and examining data obtained in the course of the investigation as well as through other means.

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

6. Beginning on or about April 24, 2025, law enforcement agents posted an advertisement (the "Advertisement") on a website commonly used to advertise commercial sex acts.¹ The Advertisement contained images of what appeared to be two young females and the following language:

"Sweet & tight! Ready 2 have some fun! In town 4 a limited time only"
"Cute & very petite girl that is tight from head to toe! Cum out to play w/ me!"
"Text for donations. IN CALL ONLY! – Safe & discrete location."

7. The Advertisement indicated that the person who would perform commercial sex acts was 99 years old.² The Advertisement also contained a contact

¹ Based on my training and experience, I know that the Internet is global network of computers, which is a means and facility of interstate commerce. I also know that the website on which the Advertisement was posted is viewable outside of Maine.

² The law enforcement agents used a website that is known for containing prostitution advertisements but requires users to be at least 18 years old. Based on my training and experience, I know that this website and others like it have been used by traffickers to advertise the commercial sex acts of children under the age of 18.

phone number (the “Advertisement Number”). Law enforcement agents monitored this line, and an undercover agent (“UC1”) used it to communicate with potential sex buyers, including Joseph AUGER.

8. On or about April 24, 2025, the Advertisement Number received a text message from a phone number ending in 4939 (hereinafter “4939”) in response to the Advertisement. Thereafter, a text conversation between UC1 and the user of the 4939 number ensued. The user of 4939 said he was interested in the ad. The UC1 stated that she had a minor girl—age 14 years old- available to perform sex acts in exchange for money.

4939 That’s kinda messed up, what about you?

UC1 nah sorry I make more \$ off her. She likes it but its not for everyone hun

4939 I just don’t get it, why would I talk to someone else to meet with someone and then come to find out it’s her sister using her to make money? I’d come to see you, how old are you?

UC1 Im not using her hun she likes it and makes \$ to. Im not available jus her

UC1 shes 14 so I handle things for her

4939 I’m not going to meet up with a 14 yr old. That’s kinda messed up 18 cool but that’s young and more illegal already.

Approximately seven minutes later, the Advertisement Number received a text message from a phone number ending in 1164 (hereinafter “1164”) in response to the Advertisement.

1164 Good afternoon! How much to come see one of you? And where are you?

UC1 hey hun. U can see my sis emma shes 14. 300 hour. 150 hh or 100 for qv

1164 Ahh, probably shouldn't lead with that may want to wait until in person

UC1 not lookin to screw anyone over hun

1164 kinda seems like that though

1164 If you don't say an age it's less of a problem

UC1 ok its not for everyone so if ur not interested that's fine

1164 whats the qv get?

UC1 u can get whatever you want. Bj full sex or anal

1164 All bare?

UC1 bare is extra 50

1164 where ya at?

1164 Hello?

UC1 South Portland

1164 Ok when are you available until and I kinda need to know where to go haha

UC1 what time is good for u

1164 I'd say 5:30 -6

UC1 Tonight or tmr?

1164 Today

UC1 Aight where u cominnfrom

1164 But I'm about an hour away so I'd like to know where to go to make sure I make it on time or can give you good notice. Coming from up near augusta.

UC1 were at a hotel in south Portland. I can give u the address when ur closer

1164 Ok

UC1 Txt me when u get in the area so I can have her ready

1164 So you gonna be in the room while it happens or what?

UC1 Na unless u want that .. what r u lookin. For

1164 How old are you?

UC1 This isn't for me its for my sis shes 14

1164 Well you asked what I was looking for, and I was gonna say I wouldn't mind seeing you naked playing with yourself, and I don't know how old either of you are truly this could be you trying to screw me over or just get some people more interested in it...

UC1 Im not lookin for trouble. Just tryna make some Money.

UC1 My sis will do whatever u want

A photo of the UC1 is attempted to be sent and 1164 says he is going to be the area earlier than expected.

UC1 I feel like ur messin w me on times u said at 130 u were n hr away lol now u want 530/6

1164 I was an hr away and my work plans changed so I'm available earlier than 5:30-6

1164 So it will be better than later so it won't change your plans tonight

UC1 So what does that mean for time

1164 Well where are you staying so I can tell you how long it will take me to get there

UC1 At the Best Western

1164 700 main st south Portland?

UC1 yeah

1164 Does 5 work?

UC1 Ya that works txt me when u get here

1164 Here

UC1 Come round back park by grey Nissan by room 102

1164 What room are you?

UC1 101

9. UC1 then provided the defendant the address of a hotel in South Portland, Maine (the "Hotel"). Shortly thereafter, the defendant arrived at the Hotel in a Toyota Tundra, NH registration MONKEE. At the Hotel, there was another undercover agent, UC2, who was posing as the person who posted the Advertisement and the user of the Advertisement Number. The defendant parked his vehicle at the front of the hotel, walked around the backside of the Hotel and approached UC2 who was standing in front of the hotel room. The defendant confirmed he was there for the minor female. He said he had the money and pulled money from his front pocket and gave it to UC2. The defendant was provided a hotel key to the hotel room.

10. Law enforcement then arrested the defendant and took him into custody. The defendant's phone was located in the vehicle.

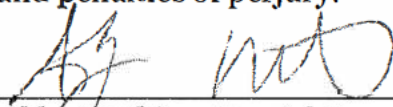
11. The defendant was escorted to a conference room in the hotel where he was read his Miranda Rights and signed a form agreeing to waive his rights and speak with law enforcement. The defendant provided the following information:

- a. He has communicated with advertisements on this website prior to today.
- b. The defendant initially stated he was going to save the 14-year-old, but later stated that he wanted to have sex with the 14 year old girl and brought the \$150 as payment for a quick visit. He stated this is the first time he has tried to have sex with a minor female.

12. **CONCLUSION**

13. Based on the foregoing, I respectfully submit that there is probable cause to support a criminal complaint charging Joseph AUGER with attempted sex trafficking of a minor, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 1591(a)(1), b(2) and 1594(a) (attempted sex trafficking of a minor).

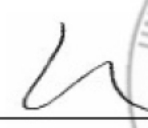
I, Abby Mathieu, hereby swear under oath that the information set forth in this affidavit is true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief, and that I make this oath under pains and penalties of perjury.


Abby Mathieu, Special Agent HSI

Sworn to telephonically and signed
electronically in accordance with the
requirements of Rule 4.1 of the Federal Rules
of Criminal Procedures

Date: Apr 25 2025

City and state: Portland, Maine



Judge's signature
Karen Frink Wolf, U.S. Magistrate Judge
Printed name and title