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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Anthony Gehon Convicted of Operating Sadistic Prostitution Ring

PHOENIX – After a lengthy trial involving testimony from over fifty witnesses and seven victims, a jury today returned multiple guilty verdicts against Anthony Greg Gehon (11/26/1954) in connection with an extensive prostitution enterprise he operated that involved his ex-wife as well as his stepdaughter and niece, both of whom were minors at the time of the offenses. He is scheduled to be sentenced on October 23, 2015 and faces the prospect of spending the rest of his life in prison.

“This defendant represents the archetype of the sadistic male chauvinist catering to the basest of physical desires and is a perfect example of what law enforcement is trying to root out of the systemic exploitation of women and young girls,” said Maricopa County Attorney Bill Montgomery. “Illustrating the failure to appreciate the proper role of being a man in our society, the defendant’s actions call for the severest punishment Arizona law can provide.”

On July 9, 2010, Phoenix Police received a call from a woman in Snowflake requesting officers to check the welfare of her 16-year-old sister who had told her that their uncle was having sex with her and making her work as an escort with other men. Officers responded to a residence in the 2600 block of East Willetta Street where the sister lived with her uncle, Anthony Gehon. When interviewed she confirmed that her uncle had been having unprotected sex with her and prostituting her out to unknown males for more than a year. She stated that Gehon “trained” her to work as a prostitute by performing various sex acts with her and making her watch pornographic movies. She also related that Gehon advertised her availability on websites offering escort services and that he made her get a tattoo and wear a ring intended to signify his “ownership” or her.

Gehon was arrested and charged with 24 felony counts including sexual conduct with a minor, furnishing obscene items to minors and child prostitution. Additional investigation identified six other female victims, including another minor, who had been similarly compelled to engage in prostitution by Gehon as part of an elaborate, cult-like enterprise that operated at six different locations. Prosecutors expanded the original indictment to 130 counts connected to Gehon’s extensive illegal operation in which women were required to engage in brutal and sadistic sexual practices including getting chained and being gang raped.

Jury selection for Gehon's trial began in October, 2014 with testimony beginning in early December. The State presented evidence showing that Gehon modeled his prostitution operation on the pornographic movie "Story of O" and adopted "Rules of the House" which, as depicted in the movie, forbade women from wearing underwear and required them to serve as sexual objects for men. As in the movie, failure to adhere to the rules resulted in the women being gagged and beaten.

Victims testified that Gehon used a surveillance system to watch them having sex with customers and to create material that could be used to blackmail his customers. Several counts related to Gehon hiring a professional videographer to produce pornographic movies involving his niece. The State also presented expert testimony to show Gehon's aberrant sexual propensity for underage girls, noting instances in which he targeted and attempted to recruit teenage relatives to work as prostitutes for him.

Over the course of the 99-day trial, some 1,200 exhibits were presented and jurors asked more than 1,500 questions. Prosecutors ended up dismissing 25 of the original 130 counts due to evidentiary or jurisdictional issues. After 5 days of deliberations, the jury found Gehon guilty of all but four of the remaining 105 felony counts.

Based on the mandatory consecutive sentencing terms of multiple counts in the indictment, Gehon now faces a possible prison term of well over 100 years.

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