



QUEENS COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
125-01 QUEENS BOULEVARD  
KEW GARDENS, NEW YORK 11415-1568



MELINDA KATZ  
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

718.286.6000  
WWW.QUEENSDA.ORG

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**CONTACT: PRESS OFFICE 718 286-6315**  
[QDACommunications@queensda.org](mailto:QDACommunications@queensda.org)

**QUEENS COUPLE INDICTED ON SEX TRAFFICKING AND OTHER CHARGES**  
**FOR TRANSPORTING WOMEN FROM KOREA**  
**AND FORCING THEM INTO PROSTITUTION**

*Defendants Allegedly Arranged Transportation from Korea;  
Victims Threatened if They Did Not Have Sex for Cash;  
The Pair Each Face Up to 25 Years in Prison if Convicted*

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz today announced that Jung Ja Ornstein, 62, and Eric Ornstein, 49, have been indicted by a Queens County grand jury and arraigned in Queens Supreme Court on sex trafficking charges and other crimes for allegedly bringing two female victims from Korea and coercing them to have sex with strangers for cash.

District Attorney Katz said, “I created the Human Trafficking Bureau in the DA’s Office to combat this very problem. These two defendants are accused of purposely bringing two women to Queens from Korea and forcing them into the sex trade industry. The two are in custody and charged accordingly.”

Jung Ja and Eric Ornstein, of Flushing, Queens, were both arraigned before Queens Supreme Court Justice Vallone on an 18-count indictment charging them with sex trafficking, promoting prostitution in the second and third degree and grand larceny in the second, third and fourth degree. Justice Vallone ordered the defendants to return to Court on March 12, 2021. If convicted, they each face up to 25 years in prison.

District Attorney Katz said, according to the charges, in 2015, one of the victims read an advertisement in Korea that stated she could make money in America. The victim called the listed phone number and was told she would be working in a bar/restaurant but must pay back \$10,000 for the transportation and assistance in obtaining a passport. When the woman arrived at JFK International Airport, she was met by defendant Jung Ja Ornstein. This defendant took the victim to an address on Steinway Street in Long Island City and informed her that to pay off her bill she would be engaging in prostitution. Jung Ja Ornstein then allegedly took the woman’s passport and gave it to defendant Eric Ornstein.

According to the charges, at that location, the victim had sex with strangers for money. These customers were arranged by defendant Eric Ornstein. Defendant Jung Ja Ornstein allegedly collected the money from the customers, and defendant Eric Ornstein would come to the location regularly to pick up the money from the female defendant.

In March 2017, the defendants informed the victim that they would be relocating and returned the victim's passport and left her alone.

The investigation revealed that in 2001, another victim responded to a similar advertisement in Korea. This woman met with a man and woman in Korea and they assisted her in obtaining a passport and made travel arrangements for her. The victim was also told that she would have to pay back \$10,000 for her travel, but it would be taken out of her earnings. After arriving in the United States, the victim was taken to a bar in Manhattan where her passport was taken from her and she was forced to work. While working at the bar, the victim was only allowed to keep her tips but she had to pay for her room and board. On tips alone, it was a struggle to also pay the \$10,000 due for her travel. After about a year, this victim's bill was purchased by another female who made the victim work in a massage parlor. Eventually, she was forced to work for the defendants.

The pair took the woman to the Steinway Street location and she, too, was allegedly forced to trade sex for cash. Jung Ja Ornstein again allegedly collected the money from the customers, who were arranged by Eric Ornstein. The victim was only allowed to keep her tips.

There were various times when the woman wanted to leave and each time she was allegedly threatened by the female defendant. Jung Ja Ornstein allegedly told the victim, "You have to work, You owe money. You think I won't find you?" according to the complaint. The victim feared for her safety, as the male would yell and break things when he was angry at the victims for not earning enough money, and was often seen carrying a metal pipe.

Continuing, the DA said, the victim worked for the defendants at several different massage parlors and in 2017, the victim was told that her debt was paid and they returned her passport. Approximately, three years later the defendants found the victim, and informed her that she still had a bill to pay. The victim, who feared for her safety, and that the defendants would reveal that she had been working for the defendants to her family, handed over \$8500 of her savings to the defendants.

The investigations were conducted by Detective Liam O'Hara and Antonio Pagan on the New York City Police Department's Vice Enforcement Human Trafficking Division, under the supervision of Sergeant Pete Buplessis, Lieutenant Amy Capogna, Captain Thomas Milano and under the overall supervision of Inspector Neteis Gilbert. They were assisted by Detective Hee-Jin Park-Dance of the New York City Police Department's DA Squad, under the supervision of Sergeant Stacy Lee and Lieutenant William Negus.

Assistant District Attorney Jason Trager, Supervisor of the District Attorney's Human Trafficking Bureau, is prosecuting the case with the assistance of Paralegals Roxana Comanescu and Marcela Sanchez under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Jessica Melton, Bureau Chief, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Gerard A. Brave.

*Criminal complaints and indictments are accusations. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.*

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