

FILED
CHARLOTTE, NC

OCT 5 2017

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the
Western District of North CarolinaUS District Court
Western District of NC

United States of America

v.

Thomas Stinnette

Defendant(s)

Case No. 3:17MJ340

CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

On or about the date(s) of October 1 and 2, 2017, in the county of Mecklenburg in the
Western District of North Carolina, the defendant(s) violated:

Code Section

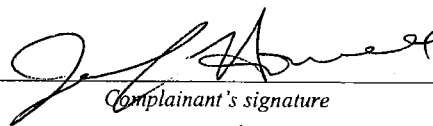
18 U.S.C. 2421

Offense Description

Transportation of an individual in interstate commerce with intent to engage
in prostitution

This criminal complaint is based on these facts:

See attached Affidavit.

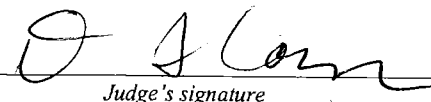
☒ Continued on the attached sheet.

Complainant's signature

Jennifer Howell, Special Agent

Printed name and title

Sworn to before me and signed in my presence.

Date: 10/05/2017

Judge's signature

City and state: Charlotte, NC

David S. Cayer, U.S. Magistrate Judge

Printed name and title

AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF
AN APPLICATION FOR A COMPLAINT

I, Jennifer Howell, being duly sworn, hereby depose and state as follows:

INTRODUCTION AND AGENT BACKGROUND

1. I make this affidavit in support of an application for a complaint against THOMAS STINETTE, date of birth July 23rd, 1982. The information set forth herein is for the sole purpose of establishing probable cause in support of a criminal complaint against THOMAS STINETTE for violation of 18 U.S.C. 2421.
2. I am a Special Agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and have been since February 2005. I am currently assigned to the Child Exploitation/Human Trafficking Task Force at the Charlotte Division of the FBI. In my current capacity, I am assigned to investigate federal crimes against children to include international parental kidnapping, child abductions, sexual exploitation of children, domestic trafficking of children and adults/prostitution, child sex tourism, and national sex offender registry violations. Your affiant has received extensive training in investigations as a New Agent Trainee at the FBI Academy in Quantico, Virginia. My training has continued through in-service training seminars during my assignment as an FBI Special Agent.
3. The facts in this affidavit come from my personal observations, my training and experience, and information obtained from other agents and witnesses. This affidavit is intended to show merely that there is sufficient probable cause for the requested complaint and does not set forth all of my knowledge about this matter.
4. Based upon the following information, I believe there is probable cause to believe THOMAS STINETTE transported an individual in interstate commerce, with intent that such individual engage in prostitution, or in any sexual activity for which any person can be charged with a criminal offense, or attempted to do so, in violation of Title 18 U.S.C. 2421.

STATUTORY VIOLATIONS AND DEFINITIONS

5. Title 18, United States Code, Section 2421 makes it a crime for someone to knowingly transport any individual in interstate or foreign commerce with intent that such individual engage in prostitution or to attempt to do so.
6. Based on my training and experience and the facts, as set forth in this affidavit, there is probable cause to believe that THOMAS STINETTE has violated Title 18, United States Code, Section 2421.

PROBABLE CAUSE

7. On October 4, 2017, the Pineville Police Department received a phone call from Georgia resident K.W., who said that her daughter, E.R., was being held against her will at the Comfort Suites located at 10415 Centrum Parkway, Pineville, NC. K.W. said that E.R.'s sisters were driving from Georgia to North Carolina to pick up E.R. at the above-mentioned hotel.

8. In response to the phone call, officers with the Pineville Police Department went to the Comfort Suites and located E.R. in a hotel room with THOMAS STINETTE, who also goes by the nickname FAME. The officers separated the two and began to interview them. The officers also called the FBI for assistance. Soon thereafter, FBI SA Shawnda Drummond and I responded to the hotel and interviewed STINETTE and E.R.

9. During her interview, E.R. said that her friend Chastity picked her up in Georgia on Thursday, September 28, 2017. STINETTE, who E.R. had not met before, was with Chastity. STINETTE drove both Chastity and E.R. to various cities in Florida to include Fort Lauderdale, Orlando, and Miami, where they partied and went to bars. When E.R. woke up Sunday morning on October 1, 2017, Chastity was gone and would not return E.R.'s phone calls or texts. E.R. did not have a car or any money and was alone with STINETTE. She told STINETTE she wanted to go home but he said he wanted to go to Jacksonville, FL. He told her she had a pretty face and he could make her rich. He said he knew a girl at a photo shoot who could take photos of her. E.R. fell asleep in STINETTE'S car and when she woke up Monday, October 2, 2017, she was in Charlotte, NC.

10. E.R. said that STINETTE gave her prepaid cards so that she could pay for a room at the Comfort Suites in Pineville, NC, and then told E.R. how she was going to make money prostituting. Because she needed money, E.R. agreed to do it. STINETTE posted prostitution ads on Backpage for her and bought her a phone to call and text potential clients. When the clients arrived at the hotel, STINETTE would leave the room and wait outside in his car until the dates were over. STINETTE instructed E.R. to put the money from the dates in a drawer, and he would then collect all the money. E.R. was able to contact her mom on Monday, October 2, 2017, on a cell phone that STINETTE did not know she owned. She told her Mom where she was and that she wanted to go home, but her mom and sisters did not have the money to get her until Wednesday, October 4. E.R. did not leave the hotel room from Monday until Wednesday afternoon, when she went to a nearby mall after STINETTE gave her money to buy items at Victoria's Secret.

11. SA Drummond and I interviewed STINETTE, who stated that he brought E.R. from Florida, to Charlotte and knew that she was going to be prostituting. He said he bought food for her, provided condoms for her, and got her a hotel room. He said that on October 4, E.R. made \$300 prostituting, and that he gave her \$200 additional so that she could pay her car payment and that the day before, E.R. made \$150 prostituting, which they used to pay for the hotel room. He also stated he was there to make sure E.R. was safe.

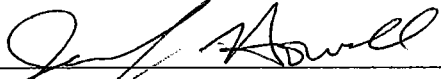
CONCLUSION

12. Based on the forgoing, I request that the Court issue the proposed criminal complaint.

13. This Court has jurisdiction to issue the requested criminal complaint because it is "a court of competent jurisdiction" as defined by 18 U.S.C. 2711. 18 U.S.C. 2703(a),(b)(1)(A) & (c)(1)(A). Specifically, the Court is "a district court of the United States....that-has jurisdiction over the offense being investigated." 18 U.S.C. 2711(3)(A)(i).

14. I further request that the Court order that this complaint and the affidavit be sealed until further order of the Court. These documents discuss an ongoing criminal investigation that it neither public nor known to all of the targets of the investigation. Accordingly, there is good cause to seal the documents because their premature disclosure may seriously jeopardize that investigation.

Respectively submitted,



Jennifer Howell
Special Agent
Federal Bureau of Investigation

Subscribed and sworn to me on October 5, 2017



UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE
David S. Cayre