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**Second District Court of Appeals Affirms Former Phillipsburg Officer's
Convictions and Sentence**

State v. Justin Sanderson, 2017-CR-2588, CA 28149

DAYTON, OH (9/6/2019) – Prosecuting Attorney Mat Heck, Jr. announced today that the Second District Court of Appeals has affirmed the conviction and sentence of **JUSTIN W. SANDERSON**, 34, a former Phillipsburg Police Officer, who was prosecuted for sex offenses.

On June 28, 2017, the defendant, dressed in his police uniform and driving a Phillipsburg Police cruiser, went to a Vandalia motel in order to meet with two women. They had met through an ad on backpage.com and had agreed to meet for sex. The defendant informed the desk clerk he was conducting an investigation and needed the room key where the women were located. The defendant used the key to gain entrance and informed the women that he was conducting an investigation into human trafficking and prostitution and was going to give them a warning. He left the motel room, only to return minutes later, and engaged in sexual activity with them. On July 3, 2017, the women reported the incident to Vandalia Police, stating that they did not feel free to resist the defendant's actions because he was a law enforcement officer.

On July 6, 2017, a Vandalia Police officer on routine patrol spotted a Phillipsburg Police cruiser in the parking lot of the same motel. The officer met with the defendant in the parking lot and took him into custody. When news of the defendant's arrest became public, two more victims came forward and reported additional separate incidents to the Vandalia Police.

On August 29, 2018, the defendant was found guilty as charged on three counts of Rape, two counts of Kidnapping for Sexual Activity with Sexual Motivation Specifications, one count of Aggravated Burglary, seven counts of Sexual Battery while in the custody of law enforcement, two counts of Gross Sexual Imposition, and four counts of Interfering with Civil Rights. On September 12, 2018, the defendant was sentenced to a total of 43 years in prison and was designated a Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III sex offender.

On October 2, 2018, the defendant filed an appeal of his convictions and sentences in the Second District Court of Appeals. Today, the Court affirmed the defendant's convictions and sentence.

Prosecutor Heck continued, "I am pleased with today's decision of the Court of Appeals. This defendant abused his authority as a police officer by forcing four victims into sexual activity. I want to commend the Vandalia Police for their dedication and hard work in investigating this case. Thankfully, this defendant will never again be a police officer and he will be unable to victimize anyone else."

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