



# NEWS RELEASE

## HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF POLICE OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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### **Police charge two with human trafficking in Jessup**

Howard County police have charged a man and woman from New York with human trafficking of two women at a Jessup motel.

Zhongmei Zhang, a 35-year-old male, and Li Yu, a 41-year-old female, both of Flushing, N.Y., were each charged with two counts of human trafficking and two counts of prostitution. They are both being held without bond at the Howard County Detention Center.

Police received a tip on July 17 of possible prostitution activity at the Red Roof Inn in the 8000 block of Washington Boulevard in Jessup. Through investigation, detectives determined that prostitution was occurring in one of the motel rooms.

Police served a search warrant for the room and located Yu and an adult female victim inside. Zhang and another adult female victim were located outside of the motel. Police believe Zhang and Yu posted online ads, arranged prostitution appointments for the women, and kept all of the money.

The victims were referred to appropriate services for assistance.

Howard County has an ongoing effort to combat prostitution, human trafficking, and related offenses. Investigators are focused on arresting traffickers and offering assistance to victims through housing, treatment, transportation, and other services.

Detectives regularly monitor websites for prostitution ads and place their own ads from the police department with warnings not to engage in prostitution or human trafficking in Howard County.

Investigators are asking anyone who may have information about suspected human trafficking or prostitution to contact police at 410-313-STOP or HCPDcrimetips@howardcountymd.gov.

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