



COOK COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Thomas J. Dart, Sheriff

- MEDIA ADVISORY - MEDIA ADVISORY - MEDIA ADVISORY – MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 1, 2018

Federal Judge Dismisses Backpage Lawsuit against Sheriff

U.S. District Court Judge John J. Tharp Jr. ended three years of litigation by Backpage.com against the Cook County Sheriff's Office after granting a motion to dismiss the case late Thursday.

The dismissal comes after Backpage.com was seized by federal authorities and its CEO pleaded guilty to money laundering and conspiracy to facilitate prostitution.

Backpage.com filed the suit after Sheriff Thomas J. Dart asked credit card companies to stop doing business with the website's illegal sections, which were widely known as a hub for human trafficking. But even as Backpage.com attacked the Sheriff's Office in court, federal authorities have alleged in a 93-count indictment that the company's principals were knowingly working to facilitate prostitution through their website. And, locally, a 16-year-old girl being sold on Backpage.com in 2016 was killed in Markham.

Sheriff Dart also filed a motion against Backpage and its attorneys seeking sanctions against them for all fees and costs associated with the lawsuit. That motion remains pending.

For more than a decade, Sheriff Dart has been pushing for fellow law enforcement officers, lawmakers and the federal government to take seriously the sex trafficking occurring on sites like Backpage.com.

Sheriff Dart will be available for comment today. Please see details below.

When: 11 a.m. - Noon, Friday, June 1

Where: Sheriff's Police Headquarters: 1401 Maybrook Dr. Maywood, IL 60153

Who: Sheriff Dart

###