

Press Releases

Backpage.com, VVMH Helped FBI Catch Child Predator

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On Friday, an attorney attempted to milk a tragedy by suing Village Voice Media Holdings, LLC and its related entity Backpage.com in a child predator case in which Backpage.com's records helped convict Latasha Jewell McFarland of pimping out a minor.

The lawsuit is riddled with errors. The claim that we knowingly assisted McFarland in committing criminal acts is a lie fabricated by a trial lawyer looking for a payday. The attorney seeks to redirect blame from a convicted predator to Backpage.com, which helped prosecute the criminal.

Without our knowledge, the predator violated our terms of use. Backpage.com has stringent safeguards in place to ensure that only adults use the site. We provided the FBI with the perpetrator's I.P. address and credit-card information.

Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act of 1996 recognized that the very nature of the Internet meant that vast traffic depended on the ability of citizens to post directly onto websites like Backpage.com, Facebook, MySpace or eBay, or to have search engines like Google and Yahoo find postings without pre-screening or censorship. The responsibility, under the law, rests with the person supplying the post.

In the last two years, Backpage.com has had 58 million posts, of which 6 million were adult. In this vast exchange of information, law enforcement agencies have asked for our testimony in precisely five underage cases.

Because one case is too many, we have, and we will continue to, cooperate willingly with authorities.

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