

Chronology of an Offender

WATCH is a court monitoring and judicial policy non-profit located in Minneapolis, Minnesota. WATCH works to make the justice system more responsive to crimes of violence against women and children, focusing on greater safety for victims of violence and greater accountability for violent offenders.

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Jeffrey John Latawiec.

WATCH FEATURE

CHRONOLOGY OF AN OFFENDER: Jeffrey John Latawiec

Jeffrey John Latawiec, 32, has an extensive criminal history of violence against women and children, culminating in his Aug. 9, 2013 sentencing for promoting and soliciting prostitution of a 17-year-old girl. He is currently serving a six-year prison term, less than a quarter of the presumptive sentence for a person with his criminal history.

Latawiec's criminal activity began at age 19, with a first-degree conviction for burglary and motor vehicle theft. Between 2007 and 2010, he was arrested fifteen times for offenses ranging from domestic assault, making terroristic threats, theft, violating domestic assault no-contact orders and violating orders for protection.

In 2007 alone, Latawiec was arrested nine times for offenses against a single victim, Victim A. Four of those arrests resulted in no charges. On Feb. 10, he was arrested and later charged with: interfering with an emergency call, domestic assault, disorderly conduct, and theft of \$200 or less. Latawiec pleaded guilty to theft, a misdemeanor that cannot be used to enhance the sentence if there is a future domestic violence conviction; all other charges were dropped.

In March 2007, Latawiec was arrested but never charged for allegedly violating a domestic abuse no-contact order against Victim A, and for fifth-degree domestic assault. Two months later, he was arrested and convicted of making terroristic threats against Victim A. In July 2007, he was arrested for fifth-degree assault, but again was not charged.

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In early 2008, Latawiec was arrested several times for alleged offenses against Victim A including: 911 call interference (twice), domestic assault, domestic assault by strangulation, and making terroristic threats. None of the arrests led to charges.

On July 21, 2008 Latawiec was convicted of domestic assault-fear, a gross misdemeanor, and theft. A WATCH court monitor noted that the prosecutor wanted him in prison and offered credit for time served. The prosecutor also agreed to bypass a pre-sentencing investigation so Latawiec would agree to be sentenced to prison the same day. The court took his criminal history into account and sentenced him to one year, with credit for 49 days served.

In October 2009, shortly after being released from custody, Latawiec was charged with violating an order for protection that was to be in effect until June of 2010. Latawiec's mother provided daycare for the child he had with Victim A, and on October 16, Victim A dropped the child off with plans to pick up the child the next day so that the child could attend an out-of-town wedding with Latawiec's mother. Latawiec, however, took the child and did not return her in time to leave with the grandmother for the trip. Latawiec then called Victim A, telling her to pick up the child because he was getting tired of her and threatened to drop the child off at the police station.

Latawiec called Victim A five times the next day, including early in the morning, when he asked her to pick him up from a strip club. After he left a message later in the day to come pick up the child, she reached the house only to find that the child was not there. Victim A then flagged down police for help, and when an officer called Latawiec, he said he would return the child the next day and didn't care whether he was arrested. An unknown female later dropped the child off at Victim A's address, saying she had had the child since the previous evening.

On June 15, 2010, Latawiec pled guilty to violating the order of protection. The court also found that since committing that crime, he had been charged with a felony—stealing and misuse of a motor vehicle, and had been listed as a predatory offender but failed to register. He was sentenced to 2½ years in prison with credit for 141 days served.

Latawiec's 11-year criminal history culminated in 2012, with charges resulting from the sex trafficking of an underage runaway. (Her story was chronicled in a four-part *Star Tribune* series entitled "[Saving Bobbi](#)".) According to a criminal complaint, a woman notified police on July 31 that her 17-year-old daughter had run away. An officer found that a phone number associated with the girl belonged to Latawiec.

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In mid-August, the officer found the number on a backpage.com female escorts site, beside a picture of the victim. An officer set up an appointment with the victim and arrested her on August 14.

Upon her arrest, the victim said she had met Latawiec and another man a few days earlier and agreed to go to Latawiec's home to get high. She then placed an ad on backpage.com using Latawiec's number and later was paid to have sex with several men at Latawiec's home. Latawiec ordered the victim to give him all of the money she made.

On Aug. 13, the victim packed up her things and tried to leave, but Latawiec and the other man confronted her, telling her she needed to make more money first. Eventually, the victim was able to leave when a friend picked her up.

Latawiec was charged in Hennepin County with two felony counts of soliciting, inducing and promoting prostitution; one of the counts referred to an underage victim. He was out on bond for nearly a year, until the week of his sentencing. Because his criminal conduct had escalated into the prostitution of a minor, Latawiec was subject to a prison sentence of up to 20 years. Even so, and despite the fact that the prosecutor requested a ten-year sentence and the victim's father asked for for no less than 7½ years, Latawiec accepted a plea deal and was sentenced on Aug. 9, 2013 to a prison term of six years, with credit for 37 days served.

In a letter to the *Star Tribune* published later in the week, WATCH board members Kate Kelly and Randy Debruyn wrote: "This plea deal was negotiated behind closed doors ... Certainly it was best that the girl not have to endure going through and testifying at a trial, but 72 months—less than one-fourth of the time called for? ... Until these perpetrators are given real sentences that are commensurate with the crime and their criminal history, women and children will continue to be devalued in our society."

At the very least, Jeffrey John Latawiec had a six-year history of violence at the time of his sentencing, with barely any time spent in prison. His criminal conduct escalated into the prostitution of a minor which alone, according to Minnesota statute, could get him 20 years in prison. Is less than six years, considering his pattern and history of violence, really enough?"