

**Department of Justice**  
U.S. Attorney's Office  
District of Minnesota

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, May 31, 2017

## **Woodbury Woman Pleads Guilty In Labor Trafficking Case**

### **Lili Huang admits to enslaving, starving and beating nanny**

Acting United States Attorney Gregory G. Brooker today announced the guilty plea of LILI HUANG, 36, for withholding the victim's documents in furtherance of forced labor. HUANG, who was indicted on October 4, 2016, entered her guilty plea today before U.S. District Senior Judge David S. Doty in Minneapolis, Minn.

"It is critical for law enforcement to be able to recognize the indicators of human trafficking because these types of crimes can exist right in our own communities," said Acting U.S. Attorney Gregory Brooker. "The collaborative work of the ACTeam and our local law enforcement partners brought forth this successful prosecution and provided the victim with a sense of safety and closure."

"Forced labor is nothing short of modern-day slavery," said Special Agent in Charge Alex Khu of HSI St. Paul. "On behalf of HSI I would like to gratefully acknowledge the Woodbury Police Department's cooperation in this matter and their support in having their officers specifically trained to identify victims of human trafficking."

According to the defendant's guilty plea and documents filed in both state and federal court, on February 25, 2016, HUANG brought the victim (identified as F.L.) from Shanghai, China to her home in Woodbury, Minn. to work as a nanny and housekeeper. Although F.L. had previously worked for the defendant in China where she cooked, cleaned and cared for the defendant's children, the scope of work and the defendant's treatment of F.L. was significantly different once she arrived in Minnesota. HUANG forced F.L. to work up to 18 hours a day cooking, cleaning, and providing childcare. HUANG was very demanding about household tasks and became emotionally and physically abusive toward F.L. if she did not do exactly what was asked.

According to the defendant's guilty plea and documents filed in both state and federal court, on April 23, 2016, due to the repeated physical abuse, F.L. asked HUANG to buy her an airplane ticket so she could return home to China. Instead of buying her a ticket, HUANG took F.L.'s passport and told F.L. that she was not leaving. HUANG continued to physically abuse F.L. by kicking, punching, grabbing

F.L. by her hair, and subjecting her to other abuse. On July 13, 2016, F.L. fled the house after HUANG approached her with a large kitchen knife. Just after midnight on July 14, 2016, F.L. was found wandering the streets several miles from the defendant's home walking in the direction of the airport. F.L., who was visibly shaken and crying, was taken to United Hospital for medical treatment. The victim sustained several bruises and injuries to her face, including two black eyes, significant weight loss, and fractures to her sternum and ribs.

HUANG has also been charged in Washington County with five felony counts and will be pleading guilty to third-degree assault.

The District of Minnesota is one of six districts designated through a competitive, nationwide selection process as a Phase II Anti-Trafficking Coordination Team (ACTeam), through the interagency ACTeam Initiative of the Departments of Justice, Homeland Security and Labor. ACTeams focus on developing high-impact human trafficking investigations and prosecutions involving forced labor, international sex trafficking and sex trafficking by force, fraud or coercion through interagency collaboration among federal prosecutors and federal investigative agencies.

This case is the result of an investigation conducted by Homeland Security Investigations, Woodbury Police Department, U.S. Department of State Diplomatic Security Service, U.S. Department of Labor Office of the Inspector General, and the Washington County Attorney's Office.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Laura M. Provinzino and Manda M. Sertich.

**Defendant Information:**

LILI HUANG, 36  
Woodbury, Minn.

**Convicted:**

- Unlawful conduct with respect to documents in furtherance of forced labor, 1 count