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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## City Secures TRO on Another Hotel Known for Prostitution and Drug Dealing

*Red Carpet Inn on the city's north side evacuated and boarded up today*

**COLUMBUS, OH**—Coming on the heels of yesterday's permanent injunction against *Columbus Inn and Suites*, a neighboring hotel also is being shut down and boarded up.

Columbus City Attorney Richard C. Pfeiffer, Jr. announced that the City of Columbus filed a complaint against the *Red Carpet Inn* in the Franklin County Environmental Court and received a temporary restraining order against the owners. The court's order effectively shuts down the hotel pending a hearing for preliminary and permanent injunction on January 29, 2014.

The hotel, located near the I-71 and S.R. 161 interchange in north Columbus, has been a target of police investigation following complaints of on-going drug sales and prostitution occurring on the premises. The hotel also was the location of multiple shootings, including an incident on May 13, 2012 when the victim was pronounced dead at the scene.

**“We’re making a concerted effort to target problem hotels,” said City Attorney Richard C. Pfeiffer, Jr. “Building cases takes time but I want the public to know that these public nuisances are a top priority of ours.”**

There were at least 234 police runs to the *Red Carpet Inn* in 2012 and 358 in 2013. The State Fire Marshall also found multiple fire code violations during eight different inspections last year.

Several police investigations resulted in the arrest and conviction of numerous individuals for prostitution-related offenses. Covert operations also uncovered evidence of extensive drug dealing, including several purchases of heroin and crack cocaine.

On six occasions via certified mail, in-person visit, and direct phone call, the Columbus Division of Police notified the owners/proprietors of the hotel that illegal activity was occurring on the premises.

**“We hope today’s action, coupled with yesterday’s court decision, sends a clear message that the Columbus community won’t tolerate rampant criminal activity operating out of hotels,” said Assistant City Prosecutor William A. Sperlazza. “We would prefer that the owners work with the city to clean up their establishments willingly, but when they don’t we are ready to take action.”**

Maryhaven and several other social service agencies were on-site to assist any remaining occupants of the hotel in relocating to a safer environment. COTA also provided a bus to help keep individuals warm.