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## **TEXAS MAN SENTENCED TO 76 MONTHS IN PRISON FOR TRAVEL WITH INTENT TO ENGAGE IN SEX WITH MINORS**

WASHINGTON – Patrick Cochran, 47, of Lake Jackson, Texas, was sentenced late on Monday in Phoenix to 76 months in prison for travel with intent to engage in sex with minors and possession of child pornography, Assistant Attorney General of the Criminal Division Lanny A. Breuer and U.S. Attorney for the District of Arizona Dennis K. Burke announced today.

In addition to the prison term, Cochran was sentenced to lifetime supervised release by U.S. District Judge Stephen M. McNamee of the District of Arizona.

Cochran was indicted on Dec. 5, 2007, in Phoenix on two counts of travel with intent to engage in a sexual act with a minor. According to allegations contained in the indictment, Cochran paid a deposit and traveled to a pre-arranged meeting spot in Arizona in order to go on what he believed would be a tour of Mexico that would offer him the opportunity to have sexual contact with two boys aged 8 and 13. In reality, the tour was an undercover operation run by the Department of Homeland Security's Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

Cochran was indicted on Jan. 20, 2009, in Houston on one count of possession of child pornography and one count of destruction of records. According to court documents, search warrants were executed at Cochran's residence near Houston and child pornography was discovered on digital media seized from his home. Additionally, according to the court documents, when ICE agents returned to Cochran's home to recover his computer, he told them he had thrown it away.

The Texas case against Cochran was transferred to Arizona for plea and sentencing. Cochran pleaded guilty on May 5, 2009, to one count of travel with intent to engage in sex with minors and one count of possession of child pornography. According to the plea agreements, Cochran admitted to arranging and paying to be taken to Mexico in order to have sex with two boys. Further, Cochran admitted to possessing more than 600 images of child pornography.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice. Led by U.S. Attorneys' Offices and the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS), Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as to identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit [www.projectsafechildhood.gov](http://www.projectsafechildhood.gov).

The case was prosecuted by Trial Attorney James Silver of CEOS, with assistance from Senior Litigation Counsel Vincent Q. Kirby of the District of Arizona and Assistant U.S. Attorney Robert Stabe of the Southern District of Texas. ICE conducted the investigation.

ICE maintains "Operation Predator," an ongoing initiative to protect children from sexual predators, including those who travel overseas for sex with minors, Internet child pornographers, criminal alien sex offenders and child sex traffickers. ICE encourages the public to report suspected child predators and any suspicious activity through its toll-free hotline at 1-866-347-2423. This hotline is staffed around the clock by investigators.

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