



Department of Justice

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FRIDAY, JULY 17, 2009
WWW.USDOJ.GOV

CRM
(202) 514-2007
TDD (202) 514-1888

ILLINOIS MAN SENTENCED TO LIFE IN PRISON FOR PRODUCTION OF CHILD PORNOGRAPHY AND OTHER OFFENSES

WASHINGTON – Carl Courtright III, of Granite City, Ill., was sentenced today to life plus 10 years in prison for production of child pornography and other offenses, Assistant Attorney General Lanny A. Breuer of the Criminal Division and U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois Courtney Cox announced.

A federal jury convicted Courtright of one count of production of child pornography, two counts of possession of child pornography, one count of receipt of child pornography and one count of bank fraud following a five-day trial in March 2009.

Evidence presented at trial revealed that the investigation of Courtright began when Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan required social networking site MySpace.com to provide information regarding all registered sex offenders in her state who were maintaining profiles on the site. Courtright was identified as someone who had a MySpace profile, and further investigation prompted investigators to seek a search warrant for his residence.

Evidence presented at trial showed that when the warrant was executed, law enforcement agents discovered evidence that Courtright had caused a local female child to engage in sexually explicit conduct and photographed the activity; downloaded and possessed child pornography videos and photographs including videos of prepubescent children being raped by adult males; and engaged in a bank fraud scheme involving his production of counterfeit checks that Courtright deposited into an account at Regions Bank as “donations” to an online ministry he maintains.

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.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Nicole E. Gorovsky of the Southern District of Illinois and Trial Attorney James Silver of CEOS. The case was investigated by the

Granite City, Ill., Police Department; the State of Illinois Attorney General's Office; the U.S. Postal Inspection Service; the Illinois Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force; the Madison County, Ill., Sheriff's Department; the Alton, Ill., Police Department; the Bethalto, Ill., Police Department; the FBI Metro East Cyber Crime Task Force; and CEOS' High Tech Investigative Unit.

###

09-697