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JUSTICE NEWS

Department of Justice

Office of Public Affairs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Wisconsin Man Pleads Guilty to Sexual Exploitation of a Minor in Belize

WASHINGTON – A Wisconsin man pleaded guilty today in federal court in Milwaukee to traveling in foreign commerce and engaging in and attempting to engage in illicit sexual conduct with a minor, announced Assistant Attorney General Lanny A. Breuer of the Justice Department's Criminal Division; U.S. Attorney James L. Santelle of the Eastern District of Wisconsin; John Morton, Director of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE); and Scott Bultrowicz, Director of the U.S. State Department's Diplomatic Security Service (DSS).

Roland J. Flath, 72, pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge J.P. Stadtmueller.

According to court documents, Flath, of Fond du Lac, Wis., traveled to Belize in July 2006, and subsequently sexually molested a minor girl from Belize. Flath was originally charged by a criminal complaint filed in the Eastern District of Wisconsin in October 2010. He was arrested by the Guatemalan National Civil Police on Feb. 20, 2011, expelled to the United States and arrested in the United States by ICE agents and the U.S. Marshal Service. Flath was indicted on March 22, 2011, by a grand jury sitting in the Eastern District of Wisconsin.

Flath faces a maximum penalty of up to 30 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000.

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, as well as to identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafchildhood.gov.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Penelope Coblenz of the Eastern District of Wisconsin and Trial Attorney Mi Yung Park of CEOS. Assistance was provided by the Office of International Affairs in the Justice Department's Criminal Division. This case is a result of investigative efforts led by ICE Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) in Milwaukee and the DSS's Regional Security Office in Belize, CEOS's High Technology Investigative Unit, and the Belize Police Department.

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Criminal Division