



Department of Justice

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August 19, 2009			PHONE: (813) 274-6136	
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EUSTIS WOMAN PLEADS GUILTY TO OFFERING CHILDREN FOR SEX AND PRODUCTION OF CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Orlando, Florida - United States Attorney A. Brian Albritton announces that Rhonda Jennette Bays (age 39, of Eustis) today pleaded guilty to producing child pornography and conspiring to travel in interstate commerce in order to engage in illicit sexual conduct with a minor. Bays faces a maximum penalty of sixty years in federal prison.

According to court documents, in May 2009, Bays and her boyfriend, Tanner Stickney, concocted a plan for Stickney to travel from Washington, D.C. to the Orlando area in order to have sex with a child whom Bays knew and had access to. During the course of the plan, Bays offered Stickney two different children for sex. Agents with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) discovered the plan, and, on May 15, 2009, agents arrested Stickney as he landed at the Orlando International Airport. Bays was arrested at her home later that night.

During the course of the investigation, FBI agents further discovered that Bays and Stickney had arranged a previous trip in June 2008. During this previous trip, Stickney flew down to the Orlando area, where Bays and Stickney made a video of Stickney sexually abusing a young child. Agents found this video at Stickney's home in Washington, D.C.

This case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. It is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Vincent S. Chiu.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse. Led by United States 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, and as to identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafechildhood.gov.