



Department of Justice

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OHIOAN WHO FLED TO PHILIPPINES WHILE UNDER INVESTIGATION PLEADS GUILTY TO CHILD PORN CHARGES

COLUMBUS – Timothy L. Lantz, age 57, pleaded guilty in United States District Court here to one count of transporting child pornography in interstate commerce, and one count of failure to update sex offender registration. He faces a minimum sentence of 15 years imprisonment for transporting child pornography.

Gregory G. Lockhart, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio, James M. Wahrab, United States Marshal for the Southern District of Ohio, and Keith L. Bennett, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Cincinnati Field Division, announced the plea entered today before U.S. Magistrate Judge Mark Abel.

Lantz fled Columbus in January, 2007 a few days after members of the FBI Cybercrime Task Force searched his west Columbus apartment and seized multiple computers, hard drives and other media. Forensic analysis uncovered more than 9,000 images and 1,200 videos of child pornography on the computer and storage media.

An international search that reached from Amsterdam, to Spain where he tried to set up Internet café, to the Philippines ended in June 2008 when Philippine Immigration and Philippine National Police arrested him without incident in a remote region of the Philippines, Kolambugan, Lanao Del Norte. Philippine authorities turned him over to the U.S. Department of State Diplomatic Security Service in Manila. Deputy U.S. Marshals returned him to the United States where he has been in custody since his arrest.

During today's plea hearing, Lantz admitted transporting and shipping child pornography from Ohio to New York through the Internet, and to failing to update his sex offender registration. Lantz further admitted that he provided access for others to download his child pornography files either for free or in exchange for other child pornography images

Lantz was convicted in Franklin County Common Pleas Court in 1994 of Gross Sexual Imposition, and convicted in 1998 of pandering obscenity. These convictions required him to register as a sex offender with the state of Ohio. Failure to keep his state registration current is a violation of the Sexual Offender Registration and Notification Act which is part of the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act passed by Congress in 2006.

Transporting child pornography is punishable by 15 to 40 years imprisonment. Failure to update sex offender registration is punishable by up to ten years imprisonment. "Lantz's sentence could also include court supervision for the rest of his life," Lockhart said. "Child pornography is an international crime that requires international cooperation if we are to fight it effectively."

A sentencing date will be scheduled for Lantz.

Lockhart commended the joint investigation by deputy U.S. Marshals, FBI agents, the Diplomatic Security Services and Embassy staff in Manila, and Assistant U.S. Attorney Deborah Solove of the Southern District of Ohio and Trial Attorney Mi Yung C. Park of the Department of Justice Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS), who are prosecuting the case.

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