



Department of Justice

United States Attorney Gregory G. Lockhart
Southern District of Ohio

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CONTACT: Fred Alverson
614-469-5715

COLUMBUS MAN RECEIVES 33 MONTH SENTENCE FOR FAILING TO KEEP HIS REGISTRATION AS A SEX OFFENDER CURRENT

COLUMBUS – Frank M. Benton, Jr., age 39, of Columbus, was sentenced in United States District Court here today to thirty-three months imprisonment and five years supervised release for failing to keep his registration as a sexual offender current.

Gregory G. Lockhart, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio, James M. Wahlrab, United States Marshal for the Southern District of Ohio, and Franklin County Sheriff Jim Karnes announced the sentence handed down by United States District Judge Gregory L. Frost.

Benton pleaded guilty on January 5, 2009 to one count of interstate travel and failure to register as a sex offender. Benton's record of sex crimes includes an April, 1992 conviction for gross sexual imposition, an August, 1995 conviction for sexual battery and a December 2000 conviction for sexual battery and failure to register as a sexual offender, all in Franklin County Common Pleas Court. After his last conviction, Benton served one year of incarceration. Upon his release from prison, Benton signed the Notice of Registration Duties of Sexually Oriented Offender or Child-Victim Offender (SORN) Form that classified him a sexual predator and notified him of his duty to register in Ohio as a sex offender for his lifetime with verification every 90 days.

Benton moved to Knox County, Tennessee in February, 2007 and registered as a sexual offender there, at which time he was further notified of the Federal penalties for failure to register. When he moved back to Ohio in July, 2007, he failed to register in Ohio. He was arrested for his failure to register in July, 2008.

The Sexual Offender Registry Notification Act (SORNA) is part of the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act in 2006. The law requires anyone convicted of sex crimes under federal law, or anyone convicted in state court and traveling in interstate commerce, to register with law enforcement agencies where they live, work or are a student.

United States District Judge Frost noted at sentencing that a significant sentence was important in discouraging others from failing to comply with registration requirements.

Lockhart commended the investigation by the U.S. Marshals Service, Franklin County Sheriff's Deputies, and Assistant U.S. Attorney Deborah Solove, who prosecuted the case.

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