



PRESS NOTICE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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GREENVILLE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR WON'T FACE FEDERAL CHARGES

Columbia, South Carolina ---- United States Attorney W. Walter Wilkins stated today that Greenville County Administrator Joseph Kernell will not face federal charges stemming from the recent investigation and prosecution of former Greenville County Councilman Harold "Tony" Trout.

Trout was convicted of computer spying charges earlier this year, and was sentenced to serve one year plus one day in federal prison. During Trout's trial, testimony revealed that Trout had surreptitiously accessed Kernell's office computer with spyware, and intercepted Kernell's private, non-government e-mail communications. United States District Judge Henry F. Floyd opined at Trout's sentencing that given the nature and content of the intercepted e-mails, Kernell

should have faced harsher punitive action than the verbal warning given to him by the Greenville County Council.

“Given Judge Floyd’s concerns, the FBI and my office have looked closely at this matter. Even if the e-mails from Mr. Kernell had violated the law, we have concluded that Trout’s illegal interception makes them inadmissible in any proposed federal prosecution against Mr. Kernell. Accordingly, we will not be seeking charges against Mr. Kernell,” stated Mr. Wilkins.

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