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RICHMOND MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO RECEIVING CHILD PORNOGRAPHY VIA PEER-TO-PEER SOFTWARE

WASHINGTON – A Richmond man has pleaded guilty to receipt of child pornography, Assistant Attorney General Alice S. Fisher of the Criminal Division and U.S. Attorney Chuck Rosenberg of the Eastern District of Virginia announced today.

On April 24, 2007, the day before his trial was scheduled to begin, David Leroy Knellinger Sr., 59, pleaded guilty before the Honorable Robert E. Payne in the Richmond Division of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia to one count of receiving child pornography.

Knellinger faces a sentence of no less than five years and up to 20 years in prison, a fine of \$250,000, and supervised release for any term of years up to the remainder of his life after being released from prison. Sentencing has been scheduled for Aug. 17, 2007.

As part of his plea agreement, Knellinger admitted to using iMesh, a peer-to-peer software program, to obtain videos depicting children engaged in sexually explicit conduct. Peer-to-peer software is a program that allows users to connect directly over the internet to other individuals in order to trade audio, image and video files. Knellinger admitted that on April 3, 2005, he used terms associated with child pornography to search for files, and downloaded and saved three illegal videos. One of the videos depicts a girl, aged 10 or 11, performing sexual acts on an adult male. The child victim in that video has been identified by law enforcement officers; her alleged abuser, Kenneth Freeman, is a fugitive who is on the "15 Most Wanted" list of the United States Marshal's Service. More information about Freeman is available at www.usmarshals.gov/investigations/most_wanted/freeman/freeman15.pdf

The investigation of Knellinger was conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and arose out of an investigation conducted by the U.S. Postal Inspection Service. The case is being prosecuted by Brian R. Hood, Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, Matthew Nelson, a Special Assistant United States Attorney, and Alexandra Gelber, a trial attorney from the Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section of the Justice Department's Criminal Division.

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