



# Department of Justice

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## **RECIDIVIST SEX OFFENDER PLEADS GUILTY TO CHILD EXPLOITATION CHARGES IN MONTANA**

WASHINGTON – A child sex offender with a long history of sexually assaulting minors has pleaded guilty in U.S. District Court in Montana to knowingly transporting a minor and traveling in interstate commerce for the purposes of engaging in illicit sexual activity, Assistant Attorney General Alice S. Fisher of the Criminal Division and Special Agent in Charge Timothy J. Fuhrman of the FBI, Salt Lake City Division, announced today.

Ferlin Killsnight, 47, formerly of Lame Deer, Mont., admitted that he had transported a person he knew to be 16 years old from Billings, Mont., through Wyoming and Idaho before being arrested in Seattle on December 7, 2005. Killsnight further admitted that he transported the minor for the explicit purpose of engaging in illicit sexual activity with the minor. Killsnight was indicted for these offenses by a federal grand jury in Billings on Sept. 20, 2006.

In 1982, Killsnight was convicted of third-degree rape in King County, Wash., for forcibly raping a 15-year-old. In 1985, he was convicted of sexual assault in Monmouth County, N.J., for raping a sleeping 12-year-old. And in 1993, he was convicted of custodial interference in Cascade County, Mont., for transporting a minor from Elizabeth, N.J., to Montana and attempting to molest the minor along the way. After serving a 12 year sentence for his 1993 conviction—and for federal sexual assault convictions stemming from his molestation and rape of three other minors—Killsnight was released from federal prison on Sept. 13, 2005, less than two months before meeting the victim in this case.

Based on his prior criminal history and the federal criminal charges to which Killsnight pleaded guilty today, the Department of Justice is seeking application of the federal recidivist child sex offender statute, enacted by Congress as part of the PROTECT Act. That provision mandates a life sentence for any person who is convicted of certain federal sex offenses against minors and has qualifying prior convictions for exploiting minors.

Killsnight's sentencing has been set for January 10, 2008. Without application of the recidivist sex offender provision, Killsnight would face five to 60 years in prison and a fine of up to \$250,000.

The case against Killsnight is being investigated by the Billings Resident Agency of the FBI and prosecuted by Trial Attorney Jill Trumbull-Harris of the Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section of the Criminal Division.

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