



Department of Justice

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IDAHO MAN PLEADS GUILTY IN INTERNATIONAL CHILD EXPLOITATION ENTERPRISE CASE

WASHINGTON AND PENSACOLA, FL – Warren Weber, 56, of Boise, Idaho, pleaded guilty today to charges concerning his involvement in a vast global child pornography trafficking enterprise, Assistant Attorney General Alice S. Fisher of the Criminal Division, U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Florida Gregory R. Miller and FBI Executive Assistant Director J. Stephen Tidwell announced.

Weber was one of 14 alleged members of the enterprise who were charged in a 40-count superseding indictment on March 19, 2008. He has pleaded guilty to five counts relating to his criminal activities as a member of the group: engaging in a child exploitation enterprise; conspiracy to advertise, transport, ship, receive and possess child pornography; advertising child pornography; transporting child pornography; and receiving child pornography. His case represents one of the first convictions under the Child Exploitation Enterprise statute, passed in July 2006 as part of the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act.

Weber has admitted to participating in a highly-sophisticated and well-organized criminal enterprise whose purpose was to proliferate child sex abuse images to its membership over a two year period. According to Weber's guilty plea, members of the illegal organization utilized Internet newsgroups - large file-sharing networks where text, software, pictures and videos can be traded and shared - to traffic in illegal images and videos depicting prepubescent children, including toddlers, engaged in various sexual and sadistic acts. Group members utilized sophisticated encryption methods to avoid detection and traded more than 400,000 images and videos of child sexual abuse before being dismantled by law enforcement. The charges were developed after law enforcement infiltrated the group in August 2006.

Trial for the remaining defendants is scheduled to begin June 2, 2008, in Pensacola, Fla., before Senior U.S. District Judge Lacey A. Collier. The remaining defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty in a court of law.

Weber faces a minimum prison sentence of 20 years and a maximum of life imprisonment, in addition to statutory fines. He will be sentenced on June 24, 2008.

The case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative designed to protect children from online exploitation and abuse. Led by the U.S. Attorneys' Offices, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend and

prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit <http://www.projectsafechildhood.gov/>.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney David Goldberg of the Northern District of Florida and Trial Attorney LisaMarie Freitas of the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section. The case is being investigated by the FBI and the Queensland, Australia, Police Service, with the assistance of the Bundeskriminalamt (BKA) Child Pornography Unit in Germany, the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre in the United Kingdom, and the Toronto, Canada, Police Department.

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