



Department of Justice

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NORTH CAROLINA MAN INDICTED AND ARRESTED IN CHILD PORNOGRAPHY CASE

WASHINGTON – Timothy Lloyd Christenbury, 46, of Charlotte, N.C., has been charged by a federal grand jury and arrested for possession of child pornography, Acting Assistant Attorney General Matthew Friedrich of the Criminal Division and U.S. Attorney Gretchen C. F. Shappert for the Western District of North Carolina announced today.

A grand jury in the Western District of North Carolina returned the indictment against Christenbury, unsealed today after his arrest by ICE special agents, on Dec. 16, 2008. Christenbury is charged with one count of possessing child pornography. If convicted, he faces a maximum of 10 years in prison. He also faces a fine of up to \$250,000. An indictment is merely a charge and defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty.

Christenbury was identified through “Operation Joint Hammer” – the U.S. component of an ongoing global enforcement operation targeting transnational rings of child pornographers. The operation already has led to the arrest of more than 60 people in the United States involved in the trade of child pornography. Operation Joint Hammer was initiated through evidence developed by European law enforcement and shared with U.S. counterparts by Europol and Interpol. The European portion of this global enforcement effort, “Operation Koala,” was launched after the discovery of a handful of people in Europe who were molesting children and producing photographs of that abuse for commercial gain. Further investigation unveiled a number of online child pornography rings – some of which hosted dangerous offenders who not only traded child pornography, but who themselves sexually abused children. Law enforcement has determined that the customers of the Web site were located in nearly 30 countries around the world, including the United States.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Cortney Escaravage and Kimlani Ford of the Western District of North Carolina and Trial Attorney Alecia Riewerts Wolak of the Criminal Division’s Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section. The investigation is being handled by Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

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