



**U.S. Department of Justice**

*United States Attorney  
Northern District of New York*

July 8, 2011

**NEWS RELEASE**

United States Attorney Richard S. Hartunian announced that JOHN LEAVENS, age 22, of Oswego, New York, was arrested today on a federal child exploitation charge.

A criminal complaint filed in United States District Court charges LEAVENS with using a facility of interstate commerce to persuade, induce, entice, and coerce and attempt to persuade, induce, entice and coerce a minor to engage in unlawful sexual activity. It alleges that in March, 2011 LEAVENS contacted 14 year old Oswego boy over the social networking site Facebook and thereafter attempted to persuade the child to meet him for a sexual encounter. The contact was reported to the police, and an investigation by the Oswego Police Department led to the arrest of LEAVENS.<sup>1</sup>

The charge filed against LEAVENS carries with it a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years, a maximum sentence of life, a fine of up to \$250,000, and a term of supervised release of at least 5 years and up to life. Also, should LEAVENS be convicted, he will be required to register as a sex offender.

LEAVENS was ordered detained on the federal charge by United States Magistrate Judge George H. Lowe pending a detention hearing scheduled for Tuesday, July 12, 2011 at 1:00 p.m.

LEAVENS' arrest is the result of an investigation by the Oswego Police Department, with the assistance of the United States Secret Service as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative designed to protect children from online exploitation and abuse. Led by the United States 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 [www.projectsafechildhood.gov](http://www.projectsafechildhood.gov). LEAVENS is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Lisa Fletcher, who can be reached at 448-0672.

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<sup>1</sup>The charges are merely accusations and the defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.