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PHILADELPHIA MAN PLEADS GUILTY IN CHILD EXPLOITATION CASE

Austin Ayers Winther, 65, of Philadelphia, pleaded guilty today to one count of attempting to entice another individual to travel in interstate commerce to engage in illegal sexual activity, and four counts of attempting to transfer obscene matter to a child less than 16 years of age, announced United States Attorney Zane David Memeger. Winther admitted that he attempted to entice a mother and her 13-year old daughter to travel to Pennsylvania from Idaho to engage in illegal sexual activity and attempting to send obscene images to a minor. The “mother” and “child” were actually an undercover detective with the Boise Idaho Police Department.

U.S. District Court Judge Jan E. DuBois scheduled sentencing for April 13, 2012. Winther faces an advisory sentencing guideline range of 78 to 97 months in prison, a \$1.25 million fine, a \$500 special assessment, and a mandatory minimum of five years supervised release.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice. Led by United States Attorneys’ Offices and the Criminal Division’s Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS), 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 to identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafechildhood.gov.

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Sherri A. Stephan.

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