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SOUTHERN MARYLAND MAN SENTENCED TO OVER 9 YEARS IN PRISON FOR  
TRANSPORTING CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Gaithersburg Man Sentenced in an Unrelated Case to Two Years in Prison  
for  
Failing to Register as a Sex Offender

Greenbelt, Maryland - Chief U.S. District Judge Deborah K. Chasanow sentenced Jeffrey Sopher, age 40, of Marbury, Maryland, today to 114 months in prison, followed by lifetime supervised release, for two counts of transportation of child pornography. Chief Judge Chasanow ordered that, upon his release from prison, Sopher must register as a sex offender in the place where he resides, where he is employed, and where he is a student, under the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act (SORNA).

Chief Judge Chasanow also sentenced Tracy Saole, age 42, of Gaithersburg, Maryland, to two years in prison, followed by three years of supervised release, for failure to register as a sex offender.

The sentences were announced by United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein; Special Agent in Charge Richard A. McFeely of the Federal Bureau of Investigation; and U.S. Marshal Johnny Hughes.

According to Sopher's plea agreement, on July 4, 2009, Sopher took two photos of a three year old child who was sleeping in his home, including a sexually explicit photo. Sopher took the photos with his cell phone, then uploaded them to his computer. From May 9, 2009, through September 20, 2009, Sopher exchanged child pornography with other individuals, including the photos he had taken of the young girl at his home. On October 28, 2011, a search warrant was executed at Sopher's residence. A bedroom, bed linens and other objects matched the background of the photos Sopher had taken of the young girl. Law enforcement also identified 10 files of child pornography on Sopher's digital media, including one of the images Sopher had taken of the girl.

In an unrelated case, Tracy Saole admitted that he was required to

register as a sex offender after being convicted in 1997 on charges related to his molestation of a 13 year old girl. Saole had been molesting the girl for several years. After serving his 66 day sentence, Saole relocated to California, where he did not register as a sex offender. On March 25, 2010, Saole was convicted in California of failing to register as a sex offender and sentenced to 180 days in jail. Upon his release, Saole registered as a sex offender in California. On December 16, 2011, Saole left California and on December 19, 2011, moved into a residence in Gaithersburg, with his girlfriend and another unregistered sex offender. On January 5, 2012, the other sex offender was arrested for failure to file as a sex offender. Although Saole was present at the arrest, he provided law enforcement with an alias. On January 10, 2011, Saole was also arrested for failing to register as a sex offender in Maryland. Saole was also required to keep his registration current in California and he had not notified California state authorities that he had relocated. Saole advised law enforcement that he had moved to Maryland to avoid an open warrant for a probation violation in California and, although he was aware of his requirement to register as a sex offender, he was not planning to do so.

These cases were brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse. Led by the United States Attorneys' Offices and the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state, and local resources to locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who sexually exploit children, and to identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit [www.usdoj.gov/psc](http://www.usdoj.gov/psc) For more information about internet safety education, please visit [www.usdoj.gov/psc](http://www.usdoj.gov/psc) and click on the "resources" tab on the left of the page.

United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein commended the FBI and the U.S. Marshals Service for their work in these investigations. Mr. Rosenstein thanked Special Assistant U.S. Attorney LisaMarie Freitas, assigned from the Department of Justice Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, who prosecuted these cases.

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