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November 8, 2012

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ROCKVILLE MAN SENTENCED TO 8 YEARS IN PRISON FOR
RECEIPT AND POSSESSION OF CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Greenbelt, Maryland - U.S. District Judge Alexander Williams Jr. sentenced Charles Johnson, age 70, of Rockville, Maryland, today to eight years in prison, followed by supervised release for life, for receipt and possession of child pornography. Judge Williams also ordered Johnson to pay a \$20,000 fine and ordered that upon his release from prison Johnson must register as a sex offender in the place where he resides, where he is an employee, and where he is a student, under the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act (SORNA).

The sentence was announced by United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein and Special Agent in Charge William Winter of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI).

According to testimony at the three day trial, Johnson was identified during a national operation targeting individuals accessing a website hosting child pornography. Between March 15 and 19, 2010, Johnson accessed 115 pages displaying images of child pornography. Witnesses testified that during the execution of a search warrant, Johnson confessed to downloading child pornography. Over 300 images of child pornography were found on Johnson's computer. Johnson also provided access to his email account. Dozens of emails were identified in which Johnson engaged in online chats and exchanged stories about the raping of children.

This case was 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 For more information about internet safety education, please visit www.usdoj.gov/psc and click on the "resources" tab on the left of the page.

This case was brought as a part of Operation Gondola, which originated with the National Centre for Combating Pedophilia Online located within the Italian State Police Postal and Communication Service. Italian law enforcement identified a website offering access to child pornographic images and/or video files identified by the domain name "liberalmorality.com." The website was hosted in the United States and HSI obtained Internet records showing each Internet account that accessed the website over a four day period and the specific images each account accessed. Accounts were identified and linked back to the users, who were investigated for receiving and possessing child pornography. To date, there have been 69 criminal arrests, 54 indictments, 47 convictions, 244 seizures and 117 search warrants executed in the United States as part of HSI's Operation Gondola

United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein commended HSI Baltimore for its work in the investigation, and thanked Special Assistant U.S. Attorney LisaMarie Freitas, assigned from the Department of Justice Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section and Assistant U.S. Attorney Mara Zusman Greenberg, who prosecuted the case.

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