



Department of Justice

United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein
District of Maryland

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2009
www.usdoj.gov/usao/md

CONTACT: VICKIE E. LEDUC OR
MARCIA MURPHY
PHONE: (410) 209-4885

MARYLAND MAN SENTENCED TO 45 YEARS IN PRISON FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN

Children Saved from Ongoing Abuse Thanks to “Awe-Inspiring Law Enforcement Coordination” by U.S. and Foreign Authorities

BALTIMORE - U.S. District Judge J. Frederick Motz sentenced Joseph Vieson III, age 43, of Annapolis, MD., today to 45 years in prison, followed by supervised release for life, for conspiracy to produce child pornography, sexually exploiting a minor to produce child pornography and assisting another to engage in sexually explicit conduct with a child, and transportation, distribution and possession of child pornography, announced U.S. Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod J. Rosenstein. Judge Motz also ordered Vieson to pay restitution of \$30,403.66.

“The international law enforcement effort that saved two little girls in Maryland from ongoing sexual abuse is awe-inspiring, and it has become a source of admiration and inspiration at national seminars focused on combating child exploitation,” said U.S. Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein. “First, a Canadian police officer found new images of child pornography on the internet and notified U.S. authorities that a beer can in the photographs appeared to come from the northeastern United States. Then, a Maine police officer assigned to the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force noticed that the victim was wearing unusual eyeglasses and worked with a federal prosecutor and FBI agent in New York to contact ophthalmologists throughout the region. Finally, Maryland FBI agents joined with local authorities and Maryland Assistant U.S. Attorneys to arrest the perpetrator and help the victims. Thanks to their extraordinary commitment and exceptional investigative skills, the discovery of a photograph in Canada led to an arrest here in Maryland and the rescue of two victimized children.”

According to the 12 counts of the indictment to which Vieson pleaded guilty, beginning in 2006 he conspired with Timothy Beers to sexually abuse two young children. Vieson and Beers sexually abused the victims, photographed and took video of the abuse and then distributed the images over the Internet.

This investigation began in May 2007, when police officers in Canada identified images documenting the sexual abuse of a then-unidentified child being distributed over the Internet. In June 2007, the images were provided to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children for distribution to law enforcement so that they could attempt to identify the victim. Due to the presence of a can of a particular brand of beer in one image, law enforcement officers believed the child was located in one of eight states in the U.S., including Maryland, where that brand of beer is distributed. In addition, law enforcement officers observed that the victim was wearing a particular brand and model of eyeglasses, which are not widely distributed. Law enforcement agents spoke

with ophthalmologists in the Maryland area who had prescribed this brand and model of glasses and were able to identify, locate and rescue the victims of this conspiracy.

“This is a great example of why Project Safe Childhood is so important and underscores the importance of agencies sharing information,” said Sergeant Glenn Lang, Supervisor of the Maine State Police Computer Crimes Unit and Commander of the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force.

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. Details about Maryland’s program are available at <http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/md/Safe-Childhood/index.html>.

Co-defendant Timothy Malcolm Beers, age 47, of Bowie, Md., was sentenced on May 14, 2009, to 36 years in prison, followed by supervised release for life, for conspiracy to produce child pornography, sexually exploiting a minor to produce child pornography, and possession of child pornography and paid the victims \$75,000 as was required under his plea agreement.

U.S. Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein praised the Maine State Police Computer Crimes Unit, the FBI, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Toronto (Canada) Police Department, U.S. Attorneys Paula D. Silsby of Maine and Benton J. Campbell of the Eastern District of New York and Assistant U.S. Attorneys Gail F. Malone and Andrea Goldbarg of their offices, for their work in this investigation and prosecution. Mr. Rosenstein thanked Assistant U.S. Attorneys Sandra Wilkinson and Bonnie S. Greenberg, who prosecuted the case.

###