



Department of Justice

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Eastern District of California

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VISALIA RESIDENT SENTENCED TO 8 YEARS, 1 MONTH IN PRISON FOR CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

FRESNO, Calif.—Acting United States Attorney Lawrence G. Brown announced today that Chief United States District Judge Anthony W. Ishii sentenced CHRISTOPHER JOSEPH RENGA, 50, of Visalia, to eight years and one month in prison to be followed by a life term of supervised release for his conviction of one count of receipt of child pornography. He is also required to participate in a sex offender treatment program while incarcerated and will be required to register as a sex offender upon his release from custody, and to forfeit property used to commit the offense.

This case was the result of an investigation by the Fresno Cyber Crimes Task Force, which includes participants from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Fresno Police Department, the United States Secret Service, the California Department of Justice, and the Fresno County Sheriff's Department.

According to Assistant United States Attorney David Gappa, who prosecuted the case, RENGA admitted that from approximately September 2006 through October 2007, he used a computer and the Internet to receive more than 600 images of child pornography. Some of the images were of prepubescent children and some depicted violence or sadistic abuse.

RENGA has been in federal custody since entering his guilty plea on March 16, 2009. The court conducted a hearing on restitution and stated that it will order restitution to one victim whose images the defendant possessed, and the amount of restitution will be stated in a separate written decision.

This prosecution was part of Operation Valley Predator II, a month-long multi-agency effort in August 2008 that primarily targeted individuals who had previously been convicted for offenses involving the sexual exploitation of minors. During Operation Valley Predator II, more than 22 federal, state, and local agencies throughout the Central Valley made contact with approximately 377 individuals, executed approximately 20 search warrants, and arrested 61 persons on a variety of offenses ranging from child pornography crimes to failure to register as a sex offender. More than 17 new federal indictments resulted from the enforcement operation.

Project Safe Childhood (PSC) is 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, PSC marshals federal, state, and local resources to locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as to identify and rescue victims. For more information, visit www.projectsafechildhood.gov or call the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of California and ask to speak with the PSC coordinator.

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