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JUSTICE NEWS

Department of Justice

Office of Public Affairs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, January 15, 2013

Pennsylvania Man Pleads Guilty to Coercion and Enticement of a Minor and Possession of Child Pornography

WASHINGTON – A Pennsylvania man pleaded guilty today for coercing and enticing a minor and possessing child pornography, announced Assistant Attorney General Lanny A. Breuer of the Justice Department's Criminal Division, U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Pennsylvania David J. Hickton and Special Agent in Charge John Kelleghan of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) in Philadelphia.

Jeffrey W. Herschell, 54, of Washington, Pa., pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge David Stewart Cercone in the Western District of Pennsylvania. According to a statement of facts entered into the record by the government and agreed to by the defendant, Herschell sent money to the Philippines in February 2010 for a live, online sex show that included a 12-year-old minor female engaging in sexual activity. Herschell also admitted to possessing child pornography videos at his Pennsylvania residence.

At sentencing, Herschell faces a minimum sentence of 10 years in prison and a maximum sentence of life in prison on the coercion and enticement charge, and a maximum of 10 years in prison on the child pornography possession charge. Herschell also faces a term of supervised release of five years to life following his prison sentence, and will be required to register as a sex offender in any jurisdiction in which he lives, works or attends school. Sentencing has been scheduled for May 28, 2013. Judge Cercone deferred acceptance of the plea agreement until Herschell's sentencing hearing.

This case was investigated by ICE-HSI Pittsburgh and the ICE-HSI Attache's Office in the Philippines with significant assistance from the National Bureau of Investigation (Philippines) and the Philippine National Police. This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jessica Lieber Smolar of the Western District of Pennsylvania and Trial Attorney Bonnie L. Kane of the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS).

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 U.S. Attorneys' Offices and 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.

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Criminal Division

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