



# Department of Justice

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## **GEORGIA MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO TRANSPORTING A MINOR FOR ILLEGAL SEXUAL ACTIVITY**

WASHINGTON – Mack Gordon Harris Sr., 67, of Social Circle, Ga., pleaded guilty today to transporting a minor for illegal sexual activity, announced Assistant Attorney General Lanny A. Breuer of the Criminal Division and U.S. Attorney Neil H. MacBride of the Eastern District of Virginia.

Harris was indicted by a federal grand jury in Richmond, Va., on July 21, 2009. According to court documents, in June 2005, Harris began communicating with a Maryland girl, then 15, through a Christian online chat room. As they continued chatting during the next few months, Harris admitted that at times he suggested they engage in sexual intercourse; exposed himself on a computer webcam; urged her to send naked pictures; and engaged in “phone sex.” Harris eventually visited the girl around the time that she turned 16, which is the age of consent in Maryland. Harris admitted that several times during his visit and after the girl’s sixteenth birthday, the two engaged in sexual intercourse.

Shortly afterward, Harris and the girl decided that he would take her to live with him in Georgia. Harris admitted that he instructed the girl to pack her belongings and leave farewell notes for her family. According to court documents, Harris picked up the girl in Maryland in December 2005 and began driving her to his home in Georgia. Harris admitted he told the girl that while travelling, she was not to speak with anybody, but if asked her age, she should respond that she was 25. During the journey, they stopped overnight at a hotel in Skippers, Va., where the age of consent is 18, and engaged in sexual intercourse.

Harris faces a maximum sentence of 30 years in prison, a fine of \$250,000, and a lifetime of supervised release. Sentencing is scheduled for Feb. 24, 2010.

The case is being prosecuted by Trial Attorney Barak Cohen of the Criminal Division’s Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section and Assistant U.S. Attorney Elizabeth C. Wu of the Eastern District of Virginia. The case is being investigated by U.S. Postal Inspection Service and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

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