



Department of Justice

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Seattle Attorney Sentenced In Online Child Sexual Exploitation Case

*Washington attorney traveled to Oregon to meet with an undercover FBI agent
Sentenced to 63 months.*

Portland, Ore. – Seattle attorney William Brook Knowles appeared before U.S. District Judge Michael W. Mosman today for sentencing on enticement of a minor and travel with the intent to engage in sexual conduct with a minor. A federal jury found Knowles, 53, guilty of both charges on Friday, August 17, 2007. Judge Mosman sentenced Knowles to 63 months in a federal prison followed by 5 years of supervised release.

“This case shows that adults who troll the internet for underage sex victims will be prosecuted and sent to jail,” stated United States Attorney Karin J. Immergut.

“As a lawyer, this defendant held a position of trust within our society,” said David Ian Miller, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI in Oregon. “He violated that trust by targeting children for sex. The Innocent Images project is committed to protecting our most cherished citizens - our children.”

On June 14, 2004, the defendant, through his online screen name, entered an AOL internet chat room and began corresponding with an undercover FBI special agent, who was posing on the internet as a 14-year old female from Portland, Oregon. Starting on that date and continuing over the course of about one month, the defendant engaged in sexually suggestive and explicit internet chats with the undercover FBI agent. The defendant pursued setting up a meeting with the FBI agent in Portland to engage in the illicit sexual activities described in their internet conversations.

On July 15, 2004, in accordance with plans established between the defendant and the agent during the internet chats, the defendant flew from Seattle, Washington to Portland, Oregon. After arriving in Portland, the defendant rented a car and ran some errands related to his work as a labor attorney. He then stopped to purchase condoms and alcohol before checking into a Portland hotel. The defendant then went to the PGE Park MAX train stop to meet the person he thought was a 14-year old female as they had pre-arranged. After the defendant’s arrival at the PGE Park MAX train stop, he was placed under arrest by FBI agents.

After the defendant was arrested, he consented to a search of his hotel room. During the search, law enforcement officers found a laptop computer, one bottle of wine, one bottle of sparkling wine and various sexual aids, including a box of condoms, a box of latex gloves, 2 red whips, several rubber and nylon restraints, and a variety of sexual lubricants, among other things. A forensic examination of the laptop computer found in the defendant's hotel room revealed several images of child pornography.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood. In February 2006, the U.S. Department of Justice created Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative designed to protect children from online exploitation and abuse. Led by the United States Attorney's Offices, 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 identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafechildhood.gov.

This case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Greg Nyhus. For further information, please contact First Assistant United States Attorney Kent Robinson at (503) 727-1019.