

NEWS

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pelle0906.rel
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Sept. 6, 2007

Bellmawr Man Gets 72 Months for Transporting Minor to Engage in Sexual Activity

(More)

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NEWARK – A Bellmawr man was sentenced today to 72 months in federal prison for transporting a minor in interstate commerce, knowing that the purpose of this travel was for that individual to engage in sexual activity, and for possession of child pornography, U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie announced.

Robert G. Pelle, 41, had previously admitted that he had reached an agreement with another man to transport a 12-year-old boy from New Jersey to New York so that the boy could engage in sexual activity with the man. Pelle further admitted that in November 2003, he did, in fact, drive the minor to New York and that actual sexual activity between the minor and the adult male did occur. Pelle further admitted that in and around March 2004, he possessed images of child pornography that he obtained through use of the Internet. Pelle stated that he was aware that these images depicted real, prepubescent minors, who were displaying their genitals in a sexually suggestive manner. Pelle was aware that all of this conduct was against the law.

U.S. District Judge Jerome B. Simandle told Pelle to surrender to the Bureau of Prisons on Oct. 22, 2007. In the meantime, he remains confined to his home on house arrest with electronic monitoring. He is restricted from having contact with minors and from using the Internet. His release is secured by a \$500,000 bond.

Pelle pleaded guilty, on April 27, 2007, to Counts Two and Three of a three-count Indictment. Count Two charged Pelle with the possession of child pornography, which carries a maximum statutory penalty of ten years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. Count Three charged Pelle with the transportation of a minor in interstate commerce, which carries a statutory minimum penalty of five years and a statutory maximum penalty of thirty years. As part of the negotiated plea agreement, Count One of the Indictment, which charged receipt of child pornography, was dismissed at the conclusion of the sentencing hearing.

In determining the actual sentence, Judge Simandle consulted the advisory U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges to take into account the severity and characteristics of the offense, the defendant's criminal history, if any, and other factors. The Judge, however, was not bound by those guidelines in determining the sentence. Parole has been abolished in the federal system. Defendants who are given custodial terms must serve nearly all of that time.

Christie credited Special Agents of the Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Kyle Hutchins, with the investigation of Pelle.

The Government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Philip James Degnan and Karl H. Buch of the Criminal Division in Newark.

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Defense Counsel:
David Bahuriak, Esq.
Edward Crisonino, Esq.