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LOUISIANA MAN CONVICTED IN FEDERAL COURT FOR CRIMINAL SEXUAL ACTIVITY

Defendant Faces 15 Years to Life in Prison

LAFAYETTE, LOUISIANA . . . United States Attorney Donald W. Washington announced that KEVIN RAY, age 44, of Opelousas, Louisiana, was convicted by a federal jury today for attempting to entice a minor to engage in criminal sexual activity and attempted production of child pornography following a three-day trial.

Trial testimony established that beginning on April 18, 2009, the defendant, KEVIN RAY, was an employee of the Lafayette Utilities System. On the 18th, while at work and using his City of Lafayette laptop computer, the defendant began chatting in a Yahoo, Louisiana chat room with an undercover Louisiana State Police Officer. The Officer identified himself as a 15-year-old female from Lafayette, Louisiana.

From the outset the defendant, KEVIN RAY, attempted to engage in graphic sexual chat with the undercover officer. The defendant discussed the possibility of meeting with the undercover officer and engaging in sex acts. He repeatedly asked to see the person he believed to be a minor in sexually explicit poses. During the conversation, he also asked the undercover officer to take sexually explicit pictures of herself and send them to him using the Internet.

On April 19, 2009, the defendant arranged to meet with the undercover officer at Veteran's Park in Lafayette, Louisiana, so that they could engage in sexual acts. The defendant arrived at the park at about 1:00 p.m. and was arrested by State Police shortly thereafter.

RAY faces a mandatory minimum sentence of 15 years in prison and a maximum sentence of life in prison, a \$ 250,000.00 fine, or both. Sentencing in federal court is determined by the discretion of federal judges and the governing statute. Parole has been abolished in the federal system.

U. S. Attorney Donald Washington stated: "Online predators often devote considerable time, money, and energy into seducing their targets. This office likewise will continue to aggressively devote time and energy to pursue, prosecute, and seek maximum punishment for those who play upon the vulnerability of our children."

This case was brought by the Louisiana State Police as part of Project Safe Childhood. In February 2006, Project Safe Childhood was created as 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. The United States Attorney thanks the cooperation of the City of Lafayette Consolidated Government for their cooperation in the investigation of this case. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit: www.projectsafefchildhood.gov.

This case was investigated by the Louisiana State Police and was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney John Luke Walker.

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