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**FORMER ACADIANA HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER SENTENCED FOR
ENTICING A MINOR TO ENGAGE IN SEXUAL ACTIVITY**

Defendant receives 27 years in prison and lifetime supervised release

Lafayette, La.: United States Attorney Stephanie A. Finley announced that former Acadiana High School teacher, Stephen McKay Hurst, was sentenced to 324 months in prison followed by lifetime supervised release for enticing a minor to engage in sexual activity.

Hurst, 38, of Lafayette, La., pleaded guilty in February of 2011, to using a facility in interstate commerce to cause a minor to engage in criminal sexual activity. According to testimony at today's sentencing, Hurst acknowledged that beginning in 2005 through March of 2010, he offered male students under the age of 18 the opportunity to use his residence so that they could engage in sexual activities with female students under the age of 16. The defendant would text the students via his cell phone and offer his apartment for them to meet. On some occasions, Hurst would hide a video camera in the room and videotape the minors engaging in sexual activity.

Subsequent to his plea of guilty, in an effort to obtain a lesser sentence, Hurst submitted false information to the FBI. He claimed that a major drug dealer had the address of an Assistant United States Attorney and intended to kill him. As a result of an investigation, it was determined that Hurst had obtained the information about the Assistant from somewhere other than jail and was attempting to get a reduced sentence by lying to federal authorities.

At sentencing, Judge Haik found that the Sentencing Guidelines were not appropriate. He stated that "a teacher who exploits children over and over again is the most serious crime that one could commit." The judge advised the defendant that the fact that he submitted false information to the FBI was a further demonstration that he was not truly sorry for the crimes that he had committed. To give a lesser sentence than the

guidelines called for would fail to take into account the seriousness of the offense and that the sentence of 324 months in prison was necessary to protect the public from Hurst.

United States Attorney Stephanie A. Finley stated, "This defendant created an environment with the goal of exploiting children. This offense is the most serious of offenses because this defendant was a trusted teacher placed in charge of these children, and he violated their trust and the trust of their parents. Hurst not only caused them to produce child pornography, but he exploited them even further by showing the pornography that he made of them to other children, exploiting even more children. Prosecuting those who exploit children is a top priority of this office and the Department of Justice. We will continue to aggressively pursue the investigation and prosecution of these crimes."

Special Agent in Charge of the FBI's New Orleans Division, David Welker, stated: "The FBI takes seriously our responsibility to protect our most vulnerable citizens. Predators like Mr. Hurst often gravitate to positions of trust which enables them to gain the trust of their victims. This is what Hurst did. This sentence is appropriate in that he will no longer be in a position to victimize our children."

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney John Luke Walker.

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