



U. S. Department of Justice

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PORT SAINT JOE MAN SENTENCED TO 25 YEARS IN PRISON FOR PRODUCING AND POSSESSING CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

PENSACOLA, FLORIDA – Clark Downs of Port Saint Joe, Florida, was sentenced today to 25 years in federal prison following his conviction for producing and possessing child pornography. Lawrence Keefe, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Florida, announced the sentence.

“Child pornography is a vile act that can ruin the lives of its innocent victims, and we will do everything possible to put an end to it by investigating and prosecuting the depraved individuals who prey on children in this way,” U.S. Attorney Keefe said. “The exceptional work of our local, state, and federal law enforcement partners has ensured that this individual will not be able to exploit young innocents again.”

Downs, 72, was convicted by a federal jury in Pensacola last November. Jurors found Downs guilty of one count each of producing child pornography and possessing child pornography. The evidence showed that in November 2014, Downs intentionally coerced a minor to engage in sexually explicit conduct for the purpose of producing child pornography. In April 2018, he was found to be in possession of material containing child pornography.

“We are proud of the successful conclusion of this case,” said Gulf County Sheriff Mike Harrison. “I hope this sentencing sends a strong message to those who choose to exploit the young and innocent.”

Downs’ prison sentence will be followed by 10 years of supervised release. He will also be required to register as a sex offender and will be subject to all sex offender conditions.

“We are appreciative of the dedication and work of our agents and our partners in Homeland Security Investigations and Gulf County Sheriff’s Office that led to the apprehension of this individual, and grateful for the prosecutorial action of the U.S. Attorney’s Office,” said Jack Massey, Special Agent in Charge, FDLE Pensacola Regional Operations Center. “The safety of our citizens is always a priority of FDLE.”

The case was investigated by the Gulf County Sheriff's Office, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, and Homeland Security Investigations (HSI). Assistant United States Attorneys Michelle Spaven and Aine Ahmed prosecuted the case.

"The law enforcement team of HSI, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement and the Gulf County Sheriff's Office worked together to bring this child predator to justice," said HSI Tampa Assistant Special Agent in Charge Micah McCombs.

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