



U. S. Department of Justice

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SEX OFFENDER SENTENCED TO TWENTY YEARS IN FEDERAL PRISON **FOR CHILD EXPLOITATION OFFENSES**

PENSACOLA, FLORIDA – Last week, Cody Dewayne Jones, 27, of Laurel Hill, Florida, was sentenced to twenty years in federal prison after pleading guilty on January 11, 2022, for attempted enticement of a minor, attempted transfer of obscene material to a minor, and for committing a felony while a registered sex offender. The sentence was announced by Jason R. Coody, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Florida.

“This sentence acknowledges the deviant acts of a child predator,” said U.S. Attorney Coody. “Ensuring the safety of our communities is a top priority. With the assistance of our law enforcement partners, we remain vigilant to investigate and prosecute those who seek to harm our most vulnerable.”

In December 2020, an undercover Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office (OCSO) investigator began chatting online to identify individuals interested in exploiting children. An individual, later identified as Jones, sent a private message via a social media platform to the investigator, who was posing as a 14-year-old girl. Over the next few days, Jones solicited pornographic photographs and discussed engaging in sexual activity with “her.” Law enforcement identified Jones as a previously convicted sex offender. On December 17, 2020, Jones traveled from Laurel Hill, Florida, to a predetermined location for the purpose of engaging in sexual activity with a person he believed to be a 14-year-old girl and was arrested by law enforcement.

“Protecting innocent children is one of the most important missions we have,” said HSI Jacksonville Assistant Special Agent in Charge K. Jim Phillips. “Our HSI special agents moved quickly to identify and take a child predator off the streets. HSI will always protect our children and will act swiftly to prosecute those who seek to do them harm.”

Jones' federal prison sentence will be followed by 10 years of supervised release. Jones will continue to be required to register a sex offender and will be subject to all registration conditions.

“It's very gratifying to see this lengthy sentence, to be followed by a decade of supervised release, for a registered sex offender who had attempted to continue to exploit and molest children,” said Okaloosa County Sheriff Eric Aden. “Through the joint efforts of all involved, that opportunity has been extinguished for decades to come.”

This conviction was the result of an investigation conducted by the Homeland Security Investigations and the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office. Assistant United States Attorney Jeffrey M. Tharp prosecuted the case.

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