

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA  
PENSACOLA DIVISION**

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

**v.**

**Case Number 3:17cr28/MCR**

**THOMAS E. MATASSA**  
\_\_\_\_\_ /

**FACTUAL BASIS FOR GUILTY PLEA**

The defendant admits that if this case were to proceed to trial, the government could prove the following facts.

In September 2015, Victim #1, who was a fourteen (14) year old male, disclosed during a forensic interview that Defendant Thomas Matassa had been sexually abusing Victim #1 for approximately seven (7) years. Victim #1 disclosed the sexual abuse occurred at Victim #1's residence in Alabama and at the Defendant's residence located in Gulf Breeze, Florida. According to Victim #1, most of the sexual abuse occurred in Gulf Breeze. Victim #1 described incidents throughout his childhood such as:

- Oral sex between Matassa and Victim #1
- Manual sex between Matassa and Victim #1
- Matassa fondling Victim #1 on top and underneath his clothing
- Matassa ejaculating on Victim #1

On February 16, 2016, Santa Rosa County Sheriff's Office Detective Melissa Spratt conducted a voluntary recorded interview with Matassa at the Santa Rosa

County Sheriff's Office located in Milton, Florida. During the interview, Matassa admitted to the sexual abuse. The majority of the sexual abuse occurred at Matassa's residence located in Gulf Breeze, Florida; however, Matassa agreed it also happened in Alabama.

Additionally, Matassa admitted to viewing and downloading child pornography via the internet while at his residence in the Northern District of Florida. Matassa admitted he constantly searched for child pornography. Matassa agreed to provide Detective Spratt with his laptop, which contained child pornography. Matassa signed a consent to search form and inventory receipt for his HP laptop computer. On or about March 8, 2016, Matassa was arrested on a warrant for violating Florida sexual battery laws. Detective Spratt obtained a search warrant for Matassa's laptop. A forensic examination of Matassa's laptop was completed. Matassa was thereafter pending state charges for his offenses against Victim #1 and remained in custody.


Approximately 200 images were found on the Defendant's HP laptop computer that depicted child pornography. There were also over a dozen computer generated images (C.G.I.) that were classified as child sexual grooming material. These items all travelled in interstate or foreign commerce through the use of the internet (which is a facility of interstate and foreign commerce). There was also electronic evidence to indicate the Defendant was communicating with underage

males and exchanging videos and images of child sexual acts. These communications primarily occurred through the messaging program Skype. This included, found within the desktop directory, videos that depicted boys who appeared to be between the ages of eight and thirteen years of age engaged in sexual activity involving masturbation as well as oral sex and object penetration. Over 30,000 chat messages/communications were recovered on this device. The majority of the files on this device indicate it was active from January 2014 through February 16, 2016.


On November 6, 2016, while the aforementioned state case was still pending, Victim #1 died. Thusly, the state of Florida dismissed the sexual battery charges against Matassa. The matter was thereafter investigated for federal prosecution as the Defendant, who now knowingly concedes as much, violated federal child pornography receipt laws over a two year span as alleged in the fully incorporated indictment and this agreed upon factual basis.

**Elements of the Offense**

Eleventh Circuit Pattern Jury Instructions (2015) - Criminal, Offense Instr. No. O83.4A has been reviewed by the Defendant along with his counsel, and the Defendant understands the elements of the charge to which he is entering a guilty plea.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
MICHELLE L. HENDRIX  
Attorney for Defendant  
Florida Bar No. 0172510  
Vernis & Bowling of NW Florida, P.A.  
315 South Palafox Street  
Pensacola, Florida 32502  
(850) 433-5461

3/29/17  
Date

CHRISTOPHER P. CANOVA  
United States Attorney  
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
DAVID L. GOLDBERG  
Assistant U.S. Attorney  
Northern District of Florida  
Member of the Maryland Bar  
21 East Garden Street, Suite 400  
Pensacola, Florida 32502  
(850) 444-4000

4/10/17  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
THOMAS E. MATASSA  
Defendant

3-29-17  
Date