

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS  
EASTERN DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

v.

RYAN ZELEK

CASE NUMBER: 21 CR 496-1

**FILED**  
**AUG 10 2021**  
MAGISTRATE JUDGE  
GABRIELA A. FUENTES

**CRIMINAL COMPLAINT**

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

On or about July 30, 2021, at Wilmington, in the Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division, and elsewhere, the defendant violated:

*Code Section*

*Offense Description*

**Count 1**

Title 18, United States Code, Section 2251(a)

knowingly employed, used, persuaded, induced, enticed, and coerced a minor, namely Minor 1, to engage in sexually explicit conduct for the purpose of producing a visual depiction of such conduct, which visual depiction was produced and transmitted using materials that have been mailed, shipped, and transported in and affecting interstate and foreign commerce by any means;

**Count 2**

Title 18, United States Code, Section 2423(a)

knowingly transported a minor, namely, Minor 1, who was then less than eighteen years of age, in interstate commerce, from the state of Iowa to the state of Illinois, with the intent that such individual engage in sexual activity for which any person can be charged with a criminal offense, namely, aggravated criminal sexual abuse, in violation of Title 720, Illinois Compiled Statutes 5/11-1.60(d)

This criminal complaint is based upon these facts:

X Continued on the attached sheet.

*Carrie Landau by JS*  
CARRIE LANDAU  
Special Agent, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)

Pursuant to Fed. R. Crim. P. 4.1, this Complaint is presented by reliable electronic means. The above-named agent provided a sworn statement attesting to the truth of the Complaint and Affidavit by telephone.

Date: August 10, 2021

*[Signature]*  
Judge's signature

City and state: Chicago, Illinois

GABRIEL A. FUENTES, U.S. Magistrate Judge  
Printed name and title



purpose of having sex with her. At his residence, ZELEK engaged in both oral and vaginal sex with the 13-year-old and used his Samsung Galaxy cell phone to record portions of the sexual encounter.

## **I. FACTS SUPPORTING PROBABLE CAUSE**

5. On July 30, 2021, a 13-year-old minor female (Minor 1) located in Clinton, Iowa, was reported missing by her guardian. Minor 1's guardian reported to law enforcement that he brought Minor 1 to a local movie theatre in Clinton, Iowa, to see a movie with Minor 1. During the movie, Minor 1 left the movie to use the restroom. Minor 1's guardian later went to locate Minor 1 and determined Minor 1 had left the movie theatre. Minor 1's guardian called law enforcement to report Minor 1 missing.

6. Law enforcement reviewed surveillance footage from the movie theatre and determined Minor 1 left the theatre at approximately 8:23 p.m. on July 30. Based on information provided by a friend of Minor 1<sup>1</sup>, law enforcement learned that Minor 1 intended to meet up with a man named Ryan that she had previously met online. Minor 1's friend stated that Minor 1 was going to meet Ryan in the parking lot located outside the movie theatre.

7. Law enforcement received additional information from Minor 1's mother that a friend of Minor 1 was able to access an application on Minor 1's cell phone which determined the location of Minor 1's cell phone to be in the area of ZELEK's

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<sup>1</sup> Law enforcement received this information from Minor 1's mother who obtained it from a friend of Minor 1 who was in contact with Minor 1 during this time period and provided the pertinent details to Minor 1's mother who passed it along to law enforcement.

residence located in Wilmington, Illinois, in the early morning hours of July 31, 2021.<sup>2</sup>

8. Iowa law enforcement contacted Wilmington, Illinois local law enforcement and provided them with the information regarding Minor 1's disappearance. Wilmington police stated they were familiar with an individual named Ryan ZELEK who resided at an address in Wilmington, Illinois, which was located in the same area as Minor 1's cell phone was determined to last be. Law enforcement responded to ZELEK's residence and attempted to make contact with ZELEK but were unable to locate anyone at the residence, and ZELEK's vehicle was not located at that location.

9. Local law enforcement were familiar with Ryan ZELEK based on a prior incident that occurred in June 2021 involving ZELEK and another individual. During that incident ZELEK provided law enforcement with his cell phone number. According to information provided by the cellular provider associated with that number, on July 31, 2021, at approximately 3:59 a.m., ZELEK's cell phone was located in Clinton, Iowa.<sup>3</sup>

10. At approximately 4:20 a.m. on July 31, 2021, Minor 1's guardian called law enforcement to report that Minor 1 had returned home.

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<sup>2</sup> Minor 1's mother explained that Minor 1 had an application named "Life 360" installed on her cell phone. Based upon my own knowledge of "Life 360", as well as publicly available information, I know that "Life 360" is a commercial based product that allows individuals authorized by the customer to access approximate location information for the individual's cell phone. Thus, Minor 1's friend was allowed to determine the location of Minor 1's cell phone through the "Life 360" application.

<sup>3</sup> According to records provided by Verizon wireless the number provided by ZELEK to law enforcement is subscribed in ZELEK's name at ZELEK's residence.

## Interview of Minor 1

11. Minor 1 was interviewed by law enforcement regarding her disappearance. Initially Minor 1 stated she had just left the movie theater to go on a walk by herself. Minor 1 later admitted that she was with an individual she knew as Ryan (ZELEK) and went back to ZELEK's house in Illinois in ZELEK's vehicle. Initially, Minor 1 denied any sexual contact with ZELEK.

12. Minor 1 further admitted that she had met ZELEK online through the Snapchat application on her cellphone and she had been communicating with ZELEK on Snapchat for about two months. Minor 1 stated ZELEK told her he was 22 or 26 years old, and Minor 1 told ZELEK she was 13 years old. Minor 1 stated that ZELEK had requested Minor 1 to send him naked photographs of herself but that Minor 1 never did.

13. Minor 1 said she and ZELEK had previously talked about sex and that they had exchanged sexual themed messages prior to meeting in person.

14. Minor 1 identified a Snapchat account ("ZELEK Account") as the one with which she had been communicating. Minor 1 identified a photograph from the ZELEK Snapchat Account as the individual she knew as Ryan. Based on my comparison of Ryan ZELEK's Illinois driver's license photograph and the photograph used for the ZELEK Snapchat Account, I believe they are of the same individual.

15. Minor 1 stated she agreed to meet up with ZELEK in the parking lot of the movie theatre in Clinton, Iowa around 8:20 p.m. on July 30, 2021. Minor 1 stated that after she got into ZELEK's vehicle, they drove for about 2 hours back to ZELEK's

home in Illinois. Minor 1 said she had never met ZELEK in person before that day. Minor 1 stated that during the trip from Iowa to Illinois ZELEK instructed her to turn her cell phone off. Minor 1 further stated that when they arrived at ZELEK's residence, ZELEK took her cell phone from her.

16. Minor 1 stated that she was scared at times when she was in the car with ZELEK and when they arrived at his residence in Illinois, ZELEK offered Minor 1 alcohol, but she refused. Minor 1 stated after first arriving at ZELEK's residence they played video games.

17. Minor 1 stated that after playing video games, ZELEK took her to a bedroom in the house, where they engaged in both oral and vaginal sex. Minor 1 stated that ZELEK had a chest full of sex toys in his bedroom. Minor 1 stated that ZELEK blindfolded her and put handcuffs on her. After being blindfolded and handcuffed, Minor 1 stated that ZELEK used a vibrating sex toy on her vagina and anus. Law enforcement noticed scratches on both of Minor 1's wrists, and Minor 1 explained the scratches were caused by the handcuffs. Minor 1 stated these restraints and sex toys came from the chest inside ZELEK's room.

18. Minor 1 stated that ZELEK used his cell phone to record at least part of their sexual encounter.

19. Minor 1 said ZELEK did not use a condom and that after he engaged in sexual conduct with her, ZELEK instructed Minor 1 to take a shower.

20. Minor 1 stated that after the sexual encounter ZELEK took her clothes and washed them.

21. After approximately 2 hours at ZELEK's residence, ZELEK drove Minor 1 back to Iowa. Minor 1 explained that her clothes were not dry by the time ZELEK drove her back to Iowa so Minor 1 had to use the vents in ZELEK's vehicle to dry the clothes during the trip back to Iowa. During the ride back, ZELEK showed Minor 1 his cell phone, which displayed a video depicting law enforcement arriving at ZELEK's residence.<sup>4</sup> ZELEK told Minor 1 that if the police questioned her about where she went to just say that she went for a walk. Minor 1 stated that ZELEK told her to tell police she did not know him if she was ever asked.

#### **Interview of ZELEK and search of ZELEK's Residence**

22. On August 10, 2021, ZELEK's residence was searched pursuant to a federal search warrant and he was interviewed by law enforcement about the disappearance of Minor 1.<sup>5</sup> ZELEK was advised of his *Miranda* rights and voluntarily agreed to speak with law enforcement.<sup>6</sup>

23. ZELEK admitted that he picked up Minor 1 near a movie theater in Clinton, Iowa. He thereafter drove Minor 1 back to his residence in Wilmington, Illinois. ZELEK did not remember the exact date, but when asked by investigators if it had been on July 30, 2021, he stated that he knew he made this trip in July and it was possible that July 30th was the date, but he could not be certain.

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<sup>4</sup> Minor 1 stated ZELEK had a security system at this residence and Minor 1 observed a video of officers with flashlights at "ZELEK's residence on ZELEK's cell phone.

<sup>5</sup> Ryan ZELEK is a 28-year-old male.

<sup>6</sup> This is a summary of some of the statements that ZELEK told law enforcement agents during the course of his interview, and does not include all of the statements ZELEK made to law enforcement agents.

24. ZELEK described that he and Minor 1 played video games and had sex at his residence. According to ZELEK, he performed oral sex on Minor 1, and Minor 1 also performed oral sex on him. He further stated that he had vaginal sex with Minor 1, but did not fully penetrate her. He also stated that he masturbated until he ejaculated on Minor 1.

25. ZELEK admitted to using a sex toy on Minor 1 during their sexual encounter.

26. ZELEK admitted that he recorded his sexual conduct with Minor 1 using his cell phone, which was a Samsung Galaxy cell phone.<sup>7</sup> He also stated that he downloaded the video from his phone to an SD card, physically broke the SD card, and threw it in the trash.

27. During a search of ZELEK's residence law enforcement recovered a chest full of sex toys as Minor 1 described above, as well as clothing that Minor 1 described being given by ZELEK to wear while he washed Minor 1's clothes.

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<sup>7</sup> I know from my training and experience that Samsung cell phones are manufactured outside the United States.



## II. CONCLUSION

28. Based on the above information, I respectfully submit that there is probable cause to believe that on or about July 30, 2021, Ryan ZELEK knowingly employed, used, persuaded, induced, enticed, and coerced a minor, namely Minor 1, to engage in sexually explicit conduct for the purpose of producing a visual depiction of such conduct which visual depiction was produced and transmitted using materials that have been mailed, shipped, and transported in and affecting interstate and foreign commerce by any means, and knowingly transported Minor 1, who was then less than eighteen years of age, in interstate commerce from the state of Iowa to the state of Illinois, intending that Minor 1 engage in sexual activity for which an individual can be charged with a criminal offense.

FURTHER AFFIANT SAYETH NOT.



Carrie Landau  
Special Agent  
Federal Bureau of Investigation

Subscribed and sworn  
to by telephone this 10th day of August, 2021



Honorable GABRIEL A. FUENTES  
United States Magistrate Judge