



PRESS RELEASE

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RETIRED TEACHER FROM RATON, N.M., ARRESTED
ON FEDERAL CHILD PORNOGRAPHY CHARGES

ALBUQUERQUE – **Joseph F. Zinkiewicz**, 72, a retired teacher who resides in Raton, N.M., was arrested yesterday on a criminal complaint that alleges that he distributed, received and possessed child pornography in Colfax County between October 14, 2011 and April 4, 2012. Zinkiewicz made his initial appearance this morning in federal court in Albuquerque, and is scheduled for a preliminary hearing tomorrow morning. Zinkiewicz is temporarily detained pending a detention hearing which also is scheduled for tomorrow morning.

U.S. Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales said that Zinkiewicz was arrested as the result of an investigation by Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) that initially targeted a suspect in the District of Colorado. According to the criminal complaint, an HSI agent who was acting in an undercover capacity (undercover agent) engaged in communications with the Colorado suspect and learned that the suspect was a member of a group that used E-mail accounts to distribute and receive child pornography. In November 2011, after the undercover agent obtained a hard drive containing thousands of child pornography images and videos from the Colorado suspect, HSI obtained a search warrant for the E-mail account used by the Colorado suspect and was able to identify the E-mail accounts of individuals, including Zinkiewicz, who allegedly shared child pornography with the Colorado suspect.

Beginning in January 2012 and continuing until March 5, 2012, the undercover used the E-mail account belonging to the Colorado suspect to communicate with Zinkiewicz through his E-mail account. During these communications, Zinkiewicz sent a series of E-mails that included child pornography images and videos to the undercover agent.

On April 4, 2012, law enforcement officers executed a federal search warrant at Zinkiewicz's residence in Raton, and seized computers and computer-media in addition to photographs and DVDs that contain child pornography. Zinkiewicz was arrested while the search warrant was being executed.

If convicted of distribution or receipt of child pornography, Zinkiewicz faces a minimum of 15 years and a maximum of 40 years of imprisonment. If convicted of possession of child pornography, Zinkiewicz faces a minimum of 10 years and a maximum of 20 years of imprisonment. Zinkiewicz also faces a lifetime of supervised release following any sentence of incarceration for a child pornography offense. Zinkiewicz faces these enhanced penalties because he previously has been convicted of a child pornography offense. Records reveal that Zinkiewicz was convicted of distribution of child pornography in the Superior Court of the State of New Jersey in January 2002.

The case was investigated by the HSI offices in Albuquerque and Greeley, Colorado with assistance from the New Mexico State Police and the Fifth Judicial District Attorney's Office, and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Charlyn E. Rees.

The case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice (DOJ) to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse. Led by United States Attorneys' Offices and DOJ's Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as to identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafchildhood.gov.

The case also was brought as part of the New Mexico Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force's (ICAC Task Force) mission to locate, track, and capture Internet child sexual predators and Internet child pornographers in New Mexico. There are 61 federal, state and local law enforcement agencies associated with the ICAC Task Force, which is funded by a grant administered by the NMAGO. Anyone with information relating to suspected child predators and suspected child abuse is encouraged to contact federal or local law enforcement.

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