

Nine Men Indicted On Child Sex Crimes Charges Resulting From Rock Island FBI Investigation

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ROCK ISLAND – U.S. Attorney John Milhiser and FBI Springfield Special Agent in Charge Sean M. Cox announced that nine men previously arrested in Rock Island, Ill., have been indicted on charges of attempted enticement of a child to engage in sexual activity. In addition, several of the defendants have also been charged with related crimes including travel with the intent to engage in illicit sexual activity and soliciting images of child pornography. The men were previously charged by criminal complaint.

According to affidavits filed in support of the complaints, each of the men allegedly used mobile dating and social media applications to contact and engage with individuals whom they believed to be minors as young as 11, with the intent of meeting to engage in sexual activity.

The charges are the result of investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation with the assistance of the Rock Island Police Department; Illinois State Police; East Moline Police Department; Davenport Police Department; Galesburg Police Department; Knox County Sheriff's Office; and, the Macomb Police Department. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Jennifer L. Mathew and Alyssa A. Raya are representing the federal government in the case prosecutions.

The defendants and their respective charges follow:

- Charles Walter Christopher, 42, of West Liberty, Iowa, a convicted sex offender currently serving a term of supervised release related to a similar case in the Southern District of Iowa; attempted enticement of a minor to engage in illicit sexual activity, travel with intent to engage in illicit sexual activity;
- Michael Robert McKinney, 23, of Silvis, Ill.; attempted enticement of a minor;
- Joseph Allen Wilcher, 39, of Cedar Rapids, Iowa; attempted enticement of a minor, travel with intent to engage in illicit sexual activity;
- Nicholas Bryan Swank, 31, of Muscatine, Iowa, a convicted sex offender; attempted enticement of a minor, travel with intent to engage in illicit sexual activity, and soliciting child pornography;
- Jeffrey Alan Bosaw, 52, of Bloomington, Ill.; attempted enticement of a minor;
- Douglas L. Christensen, 55, of East Moline, Ill.; attempted enticement of a minor, soliciting child pornography;
- Auston M. McLain, 35, of Davenport, Iowa; attempted enticement of a minor, travel with intent to engage in illicit sexual activity and soliciting child pornography;
- Damien Pernell Shepherd, 35, of Moline, Ill.; attempted enticement of a minor; and,
- Douglas Michael Speer, 30, of Johnston, Iowa; attempted enticement of a child (two counts), and travel with intent to engage in illicit sexual activity.

If convicted, for the offense of attempted enticement of a minor, each defendant faces a minimum of 10 years and up to life in prison; for travel with the intent to engage in illicit sexual activity, the penalty is up to 30 years in prison; for soliciting images of child pornography, the penalty is five to 20 years in prison.

Defendants Christopher, McKinney, Swank, Christensen, Shepherd, and Speer have been ordered detained in the custody of the U.S. Marshals Service. Wilcher and McLain were released on bond with conditions. Bosaw remains detained pending a detention hearing scheduled on Dec. 8, 2020.

Members of the public are reminded that indictments are merely accusations; each defendant is presumed innocent unless proven guilty.

These cases were brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative by the Department of Justice to combat child sexual exploitation and abuse. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.justice.gov/psc.