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NEWS RELEASE

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FLORIDA MAN SENTENCED FOR INTERNET SEX CRIMES AGAINST MOSCOW TEENAGER

William Edward Stevens, Jr., 52, of Melbourne, Florida, was sentenced in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, this afternoon to 72 months in federal prison for Use of Interstate Facilities to Transmit Information About a Minor, and Conspiracy to Use a Minor to Distribute a Controlled Substance, U.S. Attorney Tom Moss announced.

This prosecution arose after Moscow Police and the Idaho Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force conducted an investigation showing that for approximately three years, Stevens had communicated from his Florida home with a teenage girl from Moscow, Idaho, and engaged in inappropriate sexual activity with her over the Internet. The girl was between the ages of 12 and 15 years of age and was being home schooled.

The investigation showed that Stevens met the victim in an online chat room and misrepresented himself to the minor victim as a law enforcement officer, which he is not. Stevens also misrepresented himself as being younger than he is, and sent the minor victim photos of his 21-year-old son, and claimed they were of him. The chats included dialogue and behavior that was explicitly sexual in nature.

The drug charge came as a result of Stevens encouraging the victim to secretly give her mother Ambien, a prescription sleeping medication, so he and the teenager could have time together to engage in online sexual activity and sex talk.

Besides the prison sentence, U.S. District Court Judge Edward J. Lodge ordered Stevens to have no contact with the victim, to pay a \$200 special assessment, complete sexual deviancy treatment, and serve ten years of supervised release after he completes his prison term.

U.S. Attorney Moss praised the diligent work of the Moscow Police Department and the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force, which is managed statewide by the Idaho Attorney General's Office. "This kind of serious child exploitation and Internet enticement case is deserving of the full investigative and prosecution efforts of the federal government. The skillful investigators and detectives who have handled this case are highly commended."

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