



U. S. Department of Justice

*Pamela C. Marsh
United States Attorney
Northern District of Florida*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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For more information contact:
Assistant U.S. Attorney Len Register
(850) 444-4000

FEDERAL "SEXTORTION" AND CYBERSTALKING CHARGES FILED

PENSACOLA, FLORIDA – Christopher P. Gunn, 31, previously of Walton County, Florida, was indicted today on multiple charges involving the online sextortion and cyberstalking of young girls ranging in age from 13 to 17 years old. The indictment was announced by Pamela C. Marsh, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Florida.

The federal indictment alleges that Gunn, who was recently arrested on related charges in Alabama, extorted images and videos of minor females in "various states of undress, naked, and engaging in sexually explicit conduct." The indictment also charges that Gunn violated federal cyberstalking statutes by engaging these females online with the "intent to injure, harass, and cause substantial emotional distress." The conduct with which Gunn is charged in the Northern District of Florida is alleged to have occurred between October 2009 and March 2011. In total, the indictment alleges that Gunn victimized eleven minor females who resided in various states throughout the nation.

Gunn is currently in custody in Montgomery, Alabama, on a federal indictment that also charges him with the production and possession of child pornography. If convicted on all charges in the Florida indictment, Gunn faces over fifty years in federal prison.

This case is being brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse. Led by the United States Attorneys' Offices and the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state, and local resources to locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who sexually exploit children, and to identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit <http://www.justice.gov/psc/>.

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Walton County Sheriff's Office. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney David L. Goldberg. An indictment is merely a formal charge by a grand jury that a defendant has committed a violation of federal criminal law. All defendants are presumed innocent unless and until the government proves their guilt beyond a reasonable doubt to the satisfaction of a jury at trial.

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NEWS

New Charges For Montgomery Man Accused Of Massive Online Sextortion Plot

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 26, 2012

Montgomery, Alabama - 31-year-old Christopher Patrick Gunn, of Montgomery, Alabama, is facing new criminal charges in connection with an online sextortion investigation that spans the globe. Earlier today, a federal grand jury sitting in Montgomery returned a superseding indictment charging Gunn with two counts of production of child pornography, three counts of interstate extortion, and three counts of using a facility of interstate commerce in furtherance of unlawful activity, in addition to the two counts of possession of child pornography with which he had already been charged, U.S. Attorney George L. Beck, Jr., announced. The ten-count superseding indictment alleges that, over a period of more than two years, GUNN repeatedly used computers and interactive computer services to transmit threatening communications to hundreds of young girls ages 9 to 16 located throughout the United States and internationally.

The investigation of Gunn started in April 2011 by officers of the Prattville (Alabama) Police Department, after female students at Prattville Junior High School complained that someone using the screen name "Tyler Mielke" had been soliciting them for inappropriate pictures over Facebook. Prattville investigators were able to trace an IP address for the bogus "Tyler Mielke" account back to Gunn's residence in Montgomery and obtained and executed a state search warrant for his residence on April 14, 2011. The seized computers revealed evidence of the online sextortion plot under the account names "Tyler Mielke" and "Jason Lempke."

Separate investigations conducted in September 2011 by the Biloxi (Mississippi) Police Department and the Livingston Parish (Louisiana) Sheriff's Office revealed that someone in the Montgomery area had been committing the very same crimes against young girls in those jurisdictions using Facebook accounts with the names "C.J. Harper" and "Dalton Powers."

Based upon the information obtained from these investigations, the FBI was able to develop evidence which showed that Gunn was the person behind all of the criminal conduct. On March 20, 2012, FBI agents executed a federal search warrant at Gunn's residence, where they discovered a cell phone and a laptop computer containing images and videos of child pornography.

Among the pictures that Gunn possessed were several of young girls posing in various states of undress and which appear to have been produced by the girls themselves using their cell phone cameras. These images corroborate information that the FBI's investigation had already uncovered – that for over a year Gunn had been repeatedly using fake Facebook profiles to extort nude photos and videos from underage girls in numerous states, including Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana.

According to the superseding indictment, Gunn used two principal methods of deception in furtherance of his extortion scheme.

The first scheme – dubbed "The New Kid Ruse" – allegedly began sometime in 2009 and continued until at least August 2011. Under that scheme, Gunn initiated contact with the minor victims by sending them a message over Facebook, pretending to be a new kid in town looking for friends. For this purpose, Gunn allegedly established and used a number of different online aliases, including Tyler Mielke, Jason Lempke, CJ Harper, Dalton Powers, Dalton Walthers, Daniel Applegate, and Daniel Rodgers. Once he had gained their trust through chatting, Gunn would ask the girls a series of personal questions, such as their bra size, their sexual history, intimate details about their bodies, and so on. When they had finished divulging that personal information, Gunn would then ask the girls to send him a topless photo. If they refused, he would threaten to e-mail their intimate conversation to the school principal or post it on Facebook for everyone to see.

The second scheme – dubbed "The Justin Bieber Ruse" – allegedly began sometime in November 2011, or possibly even earlier, and continued until shortly before Gunn was arrested in March of this year. Under that scheme, Gunn is alleged to have initiated contact with the minor victims primarily by using internet-

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based interactive video chat services, such as Omegle and Skype, pretending to be internationally famed pop star, Justin Bieber. According to the superseding indictment, Gunn's aliases for this ruse included Justin Babin, justinqazabc123, and suprise.suprise1. Once he had convinced the minor victims that he was, in fact, Justin Bieber, Gunn would allegedly offer them free concert tickets, backstage passes, or some other fan-related benefits if they would agree to send him a webcam transmission or a photo of themselves with their breasts exposed.

Some of the minor victims of Gunn's two extortion schemes complied to varying degrees with his demands; others did not. For those who complied, Gunn allegedly carried on his pattern of extortion by sending further demands and more threatening communications. For example, girls who provided a photo of themselves in nothing but underwear were extorted for topless photos. Those who provided topless photos were extorted for pictures of themselves completely naked. And for the minor victims who continued to accede to his demands, Gunn would require them to appear on webcam and perform sexually explicit acts on themselves. If any of his demands were not met, Gunn would threaten to withhold the benefits he had promised the girls and/or to injure the girls' reputations by publishing their compromising images and videos over the internet.

The superseding indictment charges Gunn with extorting three identified young girls in Louisiana using the New Kid Ruse, and with using numerous threatening communications to coerce two of the girls, ages 14 and 15, to produce child pornography. The FBI is currently working to identify additional victims of both schemes in numerous other states, including Florida, North Carolina, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Michigan, and California. **Members of the public who believe they may have information concerning these or related crimes are urged to contact the Montgomery field office of the FBI at (334) 263-1691.**

If convicted of the charges currently pending against him, Gunn faces no less than 15 years and as much as 100 years in federal prison and could be ordered to spend the rest of his life on supervised release. On March 29, 2012, United States Magistrate Judge Charles S. Coody ordered Gunn detained until trial, which is currently set for September 10, 2012.

This case is being investigated by the Montgomery field office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, with assistance from the Alabama Bureau of Investigation, the Prattville (Alabama) Police Department, the Biloxi (Mississippi) Police Department, and the Livingston Parish (Louisiana) Sheriff's Office. Assistant United States Attorney Nathan D. Stump is prosecuting the case.

This case is being brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse. Led by the United States Attorneys' Offices and the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state, and local resources to locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who sexually exploit children, and to identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.justice.gov/psc. For more information about internet safety education, please visit www.justice.gov/pse/resources.

Members of the public are reminded that the indictment contains only charges, and that a defendant is presumed innocent of those charges unless and until the government proves the defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt at trial.

PRESS CONTACT: Clark Morris
Email: usaalm.press@usdoj.gov
Telephone: (334) 551-1755
Fax: (334) 223-7617

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