

# NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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## **GRANITE CITY MAN CONVICTED OF CHILD PORNOGRAPHY, BANK FRAUD CHARGES**

A. Courtney Cox, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, announced today that following a five day trial which began last week, **CARL COURTRIGHT III**, age 37, of Granite City, was convicted today of all counts by a jury in United States District Court in East St. Louis. **COURTRIGHT** was convicted of production of child pornography, receipt of child pornography, two counts of possession of child pornography, and a single count of bank fraud.

Sentencing has been scheduled for June 12, at which time **COURTRIGHT** faces a possible sentence of life imprisonment.

Evidence presented at trial revealed that the investigation of **COURTRIGHT** began when Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan required social networking site MySpace.com to provide information regarding all registered sex offenders in her state who were maintaining profiles on the site. **COURTRIGHT** was identified as someone who had a MySpace profile, and further investigation prompted investigators to seek a search warrant for his residence.

Evidence at trial showed that when the warrant was executed, law enforcement agents discovered evidence that **COURTRIGHT** had produced child pornography using a local victim, downloaded and possessed child pornography on two computers, and engaged in bank fraud. The bank fraud scheme involved **COURTRIGHT**'s production of counterfeit checks, which were "donations" to an online ministry he maintains. **COURTRIGHT** deposited the counterfeit checks into an account which he controlled..

U.S. Attorney Cox restated the commitment of the United States Attorney's Office to devote the manpower and resources necessary to effectively combat the exploitation of children. "Those who prey on the most vulnerable in our communities will be identified and prosecuted to the fullest extent the law allows. The horrible victimization which results from the commission of child pornography crimes will not be tolerated by this Office."

"Mr. **COURTRIGHT**'s conviction sends a clear message to all sex offenders that you cannot hide." said Illinois Attorney General Madigan "If you are exploiting our children, we will find

you and you will be brought to justice."

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice. Led by U.S. Attorneys' Offices and the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS), 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.projectsafechildhood.gov](http://www.projectsafechildhood.gov).

Evidence supporting this conviction was obtained in an investigation conducted by the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, the State of Illinois Attorney General's Office, the Illinois Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force, the Granite City Police Department, the Madison County Sheriff's Department, the Alton Police Department, the Bethalto Police Department, the FBI Metro East Cyber Crime Task Force, and CEOS's High Tech Investigative Unit. The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Nicole E. Gorovsky of the Southern District of Illinois and Trial Attorney James Silver of CEOS.