



October 22, 2010

ATTORNEY GENERAL MADIGAN ANNOUNCES NEW ARREST IN STATEWIDE CRACKDOWN ON CHILD PORNOGRAPHERS***Madison County Man Arrested on Child Pornography Charges***

Alton — Attorney General Lisa Madigan announced today the arrest of a Madison County man brings to 14 the number of suspects that have been charged since her crackdown began in August targeting the most active participants in downloading and trading child pornography on the Internet.

The Madison County State's Attorney's office and Alton Chief of Police David Hayes joined Attorney General Madigan at a morning news conference to announce the arrest of Scott Simmons, 46, of Alton. Simmons is charged with three counts of aggravated possession of child pornography, a Class 2 felony punishable by three to seven years in the Illinois Department of Corrections and seven counts of possession of child pornography, a Class 3 felony punishable by a term of two to five years in prison. The initial investigation revealed hundreds of computer files containing child pornography. Simmons bond was set at \$150,000.

"Unfortunately, the ease and pervasiveness of the Internet has allowed child pornography to flourish. But child pornographers should know this: Law enforcement has the same tools you do and we are using them to come after you," Attorney General Madigan said. "Assume you live in a glass house. We can see what you are downloading and disseminating. We will find you and arrest you."

Madigan said cooperation among her office, state's attorney's offices and local law enforcement is essential to the success of the ongoing effort to crack down on child pornographers in the state.

"Those who prey on our children and exploit them on the Internet in Madison County will be sought and charged and vigorously prosecuted," Madison County State's Attorney William Mudge said. "I commend the joint effort by local, state and federal authorities in apprehending these individuals in our county."

Alton Police Chief David Hayes believes the battle against child pornographers can avert other crimes against children.

"It is important to remove these individuals from our community before their predatory behavior from behind their computers manifests into the actual stalking of our children," Hayes said.

In late August, Attorney General Madigan announced a new initiative to find and arrest the worst child pornographers in Illinois using the unique identifier that each computer is assigned when it accesses the Internet, known as an Internet protocol (IP) address. Over the past month more than 6,400 Illinois IP addresses were seen trading child pornography images and videos.

"The people we have arrested so far are charged with serious and vile crimes that victimize some of the most vulnerable in our society, our children," said Madigan. "We know that thousands more are trafficking in child pornography across Illinois. They do so at great risk. They should know we are aggressively and methodically coming for them. There will be more arrests."

Studies have shown that users of child pornography are more likely to also be sexual abusers of children. A total of 24,625 sex offenders are listed on the Illinois Sex Offender Registry, of which more than 81 percent committed a crime against a child. The Illinois Sex Offender Registry is located at www.isp.state.il.us.

Along with this initiative to arrest child pornographers, Madigan also works with local and national law enforcement organizations to address Internet exploitation of children and women. Madigan's office, with a grant from the Department of Justice, runs the Illinois Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) task force, which investigates child exploitation crimes and trains law enforcement. Since

2006, Madigan's office has been involved in more than 300 arrests of sexual predators and provided Internet safety training and education to more than 128,000 parents, teachers and students and more than 10,000 law enforcement professionals.

The public is reminded that the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty by a court of law.

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