



NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release
April 20, 2006

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Two Internet Predators Plead Guilty

Columbia, S.C. – Attorney General Henry McMaster announced today that **Sanghoon Lee**, 29, of 604 Moss Creek Drive in Cayce, pleaded guilty on April 20, 2006, to one (1) count of Criminal Solicitation of a Minor (§16-15-342), a felony offense punishable to ten (10) years imprisonment.

Lee is a South Korean citizen in the United States on a student visa.

Lee solicited sex from a person he believed to be a fourteen (14) year old girl on the Internet on July 12, 2005. In reality, he was soliciting sex from an undercover officer of the Aiken County Sheriff's Office – a member of the Attorney General's Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force. Lee solicited the "girl" for sex again on July 14, 2005, and traveled that evening to meet her for sex at a predetermined location in Aiken County. Upon his arrival at that location, Lee was taken into custody.

Judge Doyet A. "Jack" Early, III, presiding over the General Sessions Court of Aiken County, sentenced Lee to ten (10) years imprisonment, suspended to five (5) years probation. As a condition of probation, Lee was ordered to board a flight the same day from Atlanta, Georgia to South Korea.

The case was investigated by the Aiken County Sheriff's Office, the State Law Enforcement Division, and prosecuted by the Attorney General's Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force.

Steve Wayne Gunter, 52, of 240 Jamil Road, Apt. 21, in Columbia also pleaded guilty on Thursday, April 20, 2006, to one (1) count of Criminal Solicitation of a Minor (§16-15-342), Criminal Sexual Conduct with a Minor - Second Degree (§16-3-655(3)), and Attempted Criminal Sexual Conduct with a Minor (§ 16-3-655(a)).

Criminal Solicitation of a Minor carries a maximum penalty of ten (10) years imprisonment. Criminal Sexual Conduct with a Minor - Second Degree carries a maximum penalty of twenty (20) years imprisonment. Attempted Criminal Sexual Conduct with a Minor carries a maximum penalty of twenty (20) years imprisonment.

During the period December 6 through December 21, 2004, Gunter began sexual discussions in an Internet chat room(s) with a girl he believed was fourteen (14) years old. In reality, he was speaking to investigators with the Aiken County Sheriff's Office, who were conducting an undercover investigation. On December 21, 2004, Gunter traveled from Columbia to meet the "girl" for sexual contact at a predetermined location. Upon his arrival, Gunter was arrested for Criminal Solicitation of a Minor (§16-15-342), which carries a maximum penalty of ten (10) years imprisonment.

During the investigation, Gunter told law enforcement authorities that he possessed child pornography at his home, with at least one image assumed to be of a girl ten (10) years of age. Further investigation revealed that Gunter had driven to meet a girl living in Sumter County whom he met over the Internet, and whom he had engaged in sexual contact with on multiple occasions. Investigators learned that Gunter and the victim first established contact when she was approximately fourteen or fifteen years of age, and began having sex when she was sixteen (16).

On December 22, 2004, a search warrant was executed at Gunter's residence. The search revealed a VHS tape of Gunter and a girl (of unknown age) engaged in sexual intercourse. The girl was the same victim Gunter had identified earlier in the investigation.

The victim in the case was identified and located by the Sumter County Sheriff's Office. The victim was interviewed, and corroborated that Gunter began communicating with her when she was fifteen (15) years of age, had traveled to meet her, and engaged in sex acts. She also corroborated that Gunter had videotaped sex acts on at least two occasions when the victim was sixteen (16) years old. The victim also stated that Gunter often provided her with marijuana and champagne.

Judge Doyet A. "Jack" Early, III, presiding over the General Sessions Court of Aiken County, sentenced Gunter to ten (10) years imprisonment for Criminal Solicitation of a Minor, fifteen (15) years imprisonment for Criminal Sexual Conduct with a Minor - Second Degree, and fifteen (15) years imprisonment for Attempted Criminal Sexual Conduct with a Minor. All sentences are to run concurrently.

The case was investigated by the Aiken County Sheriff's Office, the Sumter County Sheriff's Office, and the State Law Enforcement Division. The Attorney General's Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force prosecuted the case.

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