



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL HENRY McMASTER
STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

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Anderson Police Department Arrests Belton Man In Internet Predator Sting

Columbia - Attorney General Henry McMaster announced today that Joseph Donovan Watt, 34, of 141 Blount Road in Belton, was arrested on November 29, 2006, in an undercover Internet sting conducted by the Anderson Police Department.

The Anderson Police Department is a member of the Attorney General's Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force.

Watt was arrested on one (1) count of Criminal Solicitation of a Minor (§ 16-15-342), a felony offense punishable to ten (10) years imprisonment and one (1) count of Attempted Criminal Sexual Conduct With a Minor (§ 16-3-655(B)), a felony offense punishable to twenty (20) years imprisonment.

Arrest warrants allege that Watt began online "chats" on October 24, 2006, with a person he believed to be a twelve (12) year old girl. In reality, he was communicating with an undercover Anderson Police Department investigator. Watt further arranged to meet the "girl" for sex at a predetermined location in Anderson County. He was arrested upon his arrival at that location on November 29.

A search warrant was executed at Watt's residence on November 29, and resulted in the seizure of a computer and computer-related items.

Watt's bond was set at \$50,000. A booking photo is available through the Anderson County Detention Center.

This is the forty-seventh (47th) arrest since the Internet Predator law was passed in April 2004.

The case will be prosecuted by the Attorney General's Office.

McMaster stressed that all defendants are presumed innocent unless and until they are proven guilty in a court of law.

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