



U.S. Department of Justice

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **District Man Sentenced to 40 Months in Prison For Traveling from Virginia to D.C. To Have Sex With 13-Year-Old Child**

WASHINGTON - Craig Byrnes, 53, of Washington, D.C., was sentenced today to 40 months in prison after earlier pleading guilty to a charge of traveling interstate to engage in illicit sexual conduct, announced Ronald C. Machen Jr., U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia, James W. McJunkin, Assistant Director in Charge of the FBI's Washington Field Office, and Cathy L. Lanier, Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD).

Byrnes appeared today before the Honorable Judge Ricardo M. Urbina. Upon completion of his prison term, he will be placed on 10 years of supervised release. In addition, he is required to register as a sex offender.

According to a proffer of evidence presented at the time of Byrne's guilty plea in November, between July 22, 2010 and August 5, 2010, an MPD member of the FBI's Child Exploitation Task Force, who was operating undercover and posing as a pedophile as part of an investigation, communicated to the defendant via text messaging and telephone.

During the course of those communications, Byrnes expressed interest in meeting an under-aged boy and expressed hope that he wouldn't get "caught." On August 5, 2010, Byrnes traveled from Virginia, where he was working, to a pre-arranged meeting place in Washington, D.C. with plans to engage in sexual contact with the boy. He was then arrested.

This case was brought as part of the Department of Justice's Project Safe Childhood initiative and investigated by the FBI's Child Exploitation Task Force, which includes members of the Metropolitan Police Department.

In February 2006, the Attorney General created Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative designed to protect children from online exploitation and abuse. Led by the U.S.

Attorney's Offices, 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 identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit [www.projectsafefchildhood.gov](http://www.projectsafefchildhood.gov).

In announcing the sentence, U.S. Attorney Machen, Assistant Director McJunkin and Chief Lanier commended MPD Detectives Timothy Palchak, Miguel Miranda, Jonathan Andrews, and Mornai Hines, and the Special Agents from the FBI's Washington Field Office who worked on the case. They also commended U.S. Attorney's Office Legal Assistants Teesha Tobias and Latoya Wade. Lastly, they thanked Assistant U.S. Attorneys Julieanne Himmelstein and David Kent, who are prosecuting the case.

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