



DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

News Release

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**MAUI MAN FOUND GUILTY OF ELECTRONIC ENTICEMENT OF A CHILD
IN THE FIRST DEGREE**

HONOLULU-Attorney General Mark J. Bennett announced that on September 17, 2007 Robert John McKnight Jr., aka "atropical_knight", was found guilty by a Maui jury of Electronic Enticement of a Child in the First Degree. Sentencing is set for November 14, 2007 at 8:00 a.m. before the Honorable Joel E. August. Bail remains at \$20,000, pending sentencing.

Mr. McKnight faces a maximum sentence of ten years in prison and under a new sentencing law passed in July 2006, a minimum sentence of five years probation with a one year prison term as a condition of probation. He must also register as a sex offender. The jury deliberated for just over two hours, including a lunch break, before returning with a guilty verdict.

The investigation of Mr. McKnight involved law enforcement agents of the Hawaii Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force (HICACTF), including the Department of the Attorney General, the County of Maui Police Department, and the County of Maui Prosecutor's Office.

This is the first case to go before a jury under the new sentencing law and the first trial for the crime of Electronic Enticement of a Child in the State.

Attorney General Bennett stated, "We are very pleased with this conviction that resulted from the joint efforts of the members of the HICAC Task Force, and as this prosecution exemplifies, we are committed to vigorously prosecuting those individuals who prey on our children."

Because of the serious nature of this offense that targets children as victims, the Maui Police Department and the Attorney General ask parents and young people to be mindful of the potential for abuse of the Internet. To aid parents and young people in

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recognizing the dangers of the Internet and to help them take protective measures, HICACTF has created a web site at www.hicac.com. The web site contains Internet safety tips and provides information on how to report any suspected illegal Internet activity that targets children.

Anyone having information concerning possible Internet crimes against children should call investigators at 808 586-1240.

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