



News Release

OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL ALAN WILSON
STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

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West Virginia Man Arrested on Child Pornography Charge When Cruise Ship Docks in Charleston

(COLUMBIA, S.C.) South Carolina Attorney General Alan Wilson announced the arrest of Eric Jason Blankenship (DOB: 1974) of Sod, West Virginia on one (1) count involving the sexual exploitation of minors. The Charleston Police Department, a member of the Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force, made the arrest. Assistance was provided by the U. S. Department of Homeland Security, also a member of the ICAC Task Force.

Investigators looked into a report that Blankenship received child pornography. When authorities learned he was on a cruise, they detained Blankenship upon his arrival in Charleston on June 16, 2015. Multiple images containing child pornography were discovered on his phone.

Blankenship was arrested and charged with one (1) count of Sexual Exploitation of a Minor, third degree (§16-15-410), a felony offense punishable by up to ten (10) years imprisonment. Bond was set at \$100,000 and he must stay away from children and is not allowed to have Internet access.

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

Attorney General Wilson stressed all defendants are presumed innocent unless and until they are proven guilty in a court of law.

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