



**BILL MASON
CUYAHOGA COUNTY PROSECUTOR**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Montgomery County Prosecutor's Office Joins
Statewide Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force
Prosecutor Mathias H. Heck, Jr. Leads Efforts
to Fight Internet Predators**

CLEVELAND- Cuyahoga County Prosecutor Bill Mason announced that Montgomery County Prosecutor's Office joined the Ohio Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force (OICAC). The OICAC Task Force is comprised of numerous Ohio Prosecuting Attorneys, Sheriffs and Chiefs of Police, along with state and federal authorities, whose goal is the apprehension and successful prosecution of online predators.

Prosecutor Mat Heck said, "The internet is the latest tool used by predators to perpetrate crimes upon our children. We look forward to participating in this statewide task force to ensure that our children are safe and internet predators are apprehended and prosecuted."

Today children of all ages have access to the Internet. Unfortunately, while the benefits are obvious and numerous, there are dangers as well. The openness of the Internet provides pedophiles direct access to our children in our homes. Online child sexual exploitation—both the luring of minors into illicit sexual relationships and the production, distribution or solicitation of child pornography—is a serious threat to our youth and families.

Bill Mason created the Northeast OICAC Task Force in 2000 to combat the rise of Internet crime against children. In 2003, Mason was asked by the Department of Justice to expand the Task Force across Ohio. Mason is currently the Chairman of the OICAC Task Force. Through the commitment of law enforcement departments and other ICAC affiliate agencies across the state, the OICAC Task Force has made 634 arrests.

The OICAC Task Force has continued to grow. It now has 223 law enforcement partner agencies across Ohio: 105 Police Departments, 66 County Sheriffs, 43 County Prosecutors, and 9 other agencies that include the FBI, US Treasury, US Attorney, Metropark Rangers, and US Marshals. There is at least one ICAC member in each of the 88 Ohio Counties. Mason oversees 26 undercover chatter locations and 12 computer forensic sites across Ohio.

This breadth of coverage allows the OICAC task force not only to investigate ICAC related complaints but also to be proactive. The Task Force has done 64 Internet Safety presentations reaching 4,563 people statewide in the last six months.

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