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Jacksonville Man Pleads Guilty to Child Sexual Abuse Materials Charges, Will Serve Entirety of Sentence under the Protect Act

Griffin: 'We will not relent in protecting our most vulnerable population and ensuring perpetrators face the full consequences of their actions'

LITTLE ROCK – Attorney General Tim Griffin today issued the following statement announcing a guilty plea entered by Michael Edwards, 24, of Jacksonville on 50 counts of Pandering or Possessing Visual or Print Medium Depicting Sexually Explicit Conduct Involving a Child:

“On March 12, my Special Investigations Division executed a search warrant at Edwards’s home with the assistance of the Lonoke County Sheriff’s Office. We seized multiple electronic devices, and forensic analysis revealed 461 files of Child Sexual Abuse Materials. Today, Edwards pleaded guilty to 50 counts of Pandering or Possessing Visual or Print Medium Depicting Sexually Explicit Conduct Involving a Child, all Class C felonies. Edwards received a sentence of 20 years in the Arkansas Department of Corrections and will also be required to register as a sex offender. Because all 50 charges fall under provisions of the PROTECT Act requiring serious offenders to serve most if not all of their time, Edwards will serve 100% of his sentence.

“I am grateful to my Special Investigations Division for their excellent work on this case and to the Lonoke County Sheriff’s Office for their assistance in the arrest. I especially want to thank Senior Assistant Attorney General Jeanna Sherrill and Assistant Attorney General Alexa Vetsch, who handled the case as the Special Deputy Prosecuting Attorneys at the request of the Prosecuting Attorney for the Twenty-Third Judicial District of Arkansas, Chuck Graham. Each time we learn of children being exploited, it is deeply heartbreaking. My office remains steadfast in our commitment to pursuing justice for these victims. If you exploit children, you will be held accountable. We will not relent in protecting our most vulnerable population and ensuring perpetrators face the full consequences of their actions.”

About Attorney General Tim Griffin

Tim Griffin was sworn in as the 57th Attorney General of Arkansas on January 10, 2023, having previously served as the state’s 20th Lieutenant Governor from 2015-2023. From 2011-2015, Griffin served as the 24th representative of Arkansas’s Second Congressional District, where he served on the House Committee on Ways and Means, House Armed Services Committee, House Committee on Foreign Affairs, House Committee on Ethics and House Committee on the Judiciary while also serving as a Deputy Whip for the Majority.

Griffin has served as an officer in the U.S. Army Reserve Judge Advocate General’s (JAG) Corps for more than 28 years and currently holds the rank of colonel. In 2005, Griffin was mobilized to active duty as an Army prosecutor at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, and served with the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) in Mosul, Iraq.

He is currently serving as the Commander of the 2d Legal Operations Detachment in New Orleans, Louisiana. His previous assignments include serving as the Commander of the 134th Legal Operations Detachment at Fort Liberty (née Bragg), North Carolina, and as a Senior Legislative Advisor to the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness at the Pentagon. Griffin earned a master’s degree in strategic studies as a Distinguished Honor Graduate from the U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.

Griffin also served as U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Arkansas, and Special Assistant to the President and Deputy Director of Political Affairs for President George W. Bush; Special Assistant to Assistant Attorney General Michael Chertoff, Criminal Division, U.S. Department of Justice; Special Assistant U.S. Attorney, U.S. Attorney’s Office, Eastern District of Arkansas; Senior Investigative Counsel, Government Reform and Oversight Committee, U.S. House of Representatives; and Associate Independent Counsel, Office of Independent Counsel David M. Barrett, In re: HUD Secretary Henry Cisneros.

Griffin is a graduate of Magnolia High School, Hendrix College in Conway, and Tulane Law School in New Orleans. He attended graduate school at Oxford University. He is admitted to practice law in Arkansas (active) and Louisiana (inactive). Griffin lives in Little Rock with his wife, Elizabeth, a Camden native, and their three children.

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