

December 22, 2020

**ATTORNEY GENERAL RAOUL ANNOUNCES MISSOURI MAN SENTENCED FOR GROOMING,
ATTEMPTING TO MEET MINOR**

Chicago — Attorney General Kwame Raoul today announced a Missouri man was sentenced to 13 years in prison after he traveled across state lines in an attempt to meet up with a minor.

Shelby Weston, 45, of Monett, Mo., was sentenced by Fayette County Circuit Court Judge Kimberly Koester to 13 years in prison after being convicted on Oct. 1 of one count of traveling to meet a minor, a Class 3 felony; two counts of child pornography, Class 3 felonies; and one count of grooming, a Class 4 felony. Weston also must register as a sexual predator.

"This sentence should send a message to predators who attempt to groom minors over the internet: you will be held accountable," Raoul said. "I am committed to partnering with state's attorneys and local law enforcement to protect Illinois communities from individuals who prey upon children."

Prosecutors alleged that Weston attempted to groom a minor by engaging in explicit online conversations and exchanging illicit images. Weston was arrested March 24, 2017, when he traveled from Missouri to Fayette County to meet the minor, who alerted authorities to his unexpected visit. Investigators later examined his cellphone and discovered images of child pornography. Weston previously had been convicted of similar offenses in Missouri.

The case was co-prosecuted with Fayette County State's Attorney Josh Morrison.

"Thanks to the men and women of law enforcement for all of their help investigating this case," said Fayette County State's Attorney Joshua Morrison. "I am committed to prosecuting all types of crimes, especially crimes against children. Our thanks to Attorney General Prosecutor Shannon O'Brien and the Attorney General's office for all of their help on this case."

Deputy Bureau Chief Shannon O'Brien handled the case for Raoul's High Tech Crimes Bureau.