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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MCCARTHY SENTENCED TO 20 TO 21 YEARS IN PRISON

TOLEDO, Ohio – Lucas County Prosecuting Attorney Julia R. Bates announced that on Feb. 26, 2026, Judge Stacy Cook sentenced Ernest McCarthy to 20 to 21 years in prison after he pleaded guilty in case CR2025-01477 to 15 felony offenses involving child sexual abuse material (CSAM).

McCarthy, 84, pleaded guilty to the following second-degree felony offenses in violation of the Ohio Revised Code:

- Nine counts of pandering obscenity involving a minor, R.C. 2907.321(A)(1) and (C)
- Four counts of pandering sexually oriented matter involving a minor, R.C. 2907.322(A)(1) and (C)
- Two counts of illegal use of a minor in nudity-oriented material, R.C. 2907.323(A)(1) and (B)

At sentencing, Judge Cook addressed the horrific nature of the digital images found on McCarthy's device, including images involving children as young as two years old. Judge Cook remarked that such conduct would not be tolerated in Lucas County.

The charges stemmed from the Toledo Police Department's investigation into McCarthy reproducing CSAM. As a result of the conviction, McCarthy will be classified as a Tier II sex offender and will be required to register for 25 years.

"These crimes exploit the most vulnerable members of Lucas County," Bates said. "This sentence reflects the seriousness of the harm caused and sends a clear message that those who possess and reproduce this material will be held accountable."

Assistant Prosecutor Jennifer Effler of the Special Victims Unit led the case for the Lucas County Prosecutor's Office.

About the Lucas County Prosecutor's Office

The Lucas County Prosecutor's Office pursues justice, safeguards our community and advocates for victims. We balance accountability with individual rights, partnering with law enforcement to ensure public safety and fair governance. We are committed to integrity, outreach and justice for all.

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