

JIM LEITNER  
FIRST ASSISTANT



CRIMINAL JUSTICE CENTER  
1201 FRANKLIN, SUITE 600  
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77002

**Patricia R. Lykos**  
DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
HARRIS COUNTY, TEXAS

Feb. 6, 2009

Contact: 713-755-3320  
Donna Hawkins or George Flynn

## **Extradition Returns Ex-fugitive to Face Child Sex Assault Charges**

Houston TX – Alleged sex offender Darren Ray Castleberry is back in Harris County jail without bond Friday, ending a multi-agency extradition effort that began after his arrest in Thailand a month ago, Harris County District Attorney Patricia R. Lykos announced.

Castleberry, formerly of Spring, faces prosecution on six counts of aggravated sexual assault of female children dating as far back as 1984. Investigators said he fled before his indictments in 2006, triggering an international search for the 41-year-old defendant.

Interpol issued a warrant that resulted in his arrest early last month in Bangkok.

“We deeply appreciate the assistance and cooperation of authorities on many levels – area, state, national and international – in returning this defendant to face justice,” Lykos said. “Harris County is committed to the capture and return of all fugitives, particularly ones who have victimized children.”

Lykos especially commended veteran District Attorney’s Investigator John Kleindienst for his year-long work in apprehending Castleberry. Kleindienst reopened the search, coordinated the pursuit with U.S. and foreign authorities and was instrumental in obtaining the Interpol warrant and extradition approvals.

“I’m just glad he’s back,” Kleindienst said. “The victims can finally start to see some closure for what they suffered.”

Castleberry’s extradition process included the District Attorney’s Office, Harris County Sheriff’s Office, U.S. Marshals Service, U.S. Department of State, and the governments of Kuwait, Uzbekistan and Thailand.

Deputy U.S. Marshals returned him from Thailand to Los Angeles on Jan. 15, where he was met by representatives of the Los Angeles Police Department, Harris County District Attorney’s Office, and Harris County Sheriff’s deputies.

After an extradition hearing in Los Angeles County Superior Court, the Texas Governor’s Office issued a warrant to clear the way for his transfer to Houston.

He arrived at the Harris County Criminal Justice Center at about 6 p.m. Thursday. Castleberry’s cases will be heard in the 177<sup>th</sup> District Court. Terese Buess, Chief of the District Attorney’s Public Integrity Division, is the lead prosecutor.

(End)