

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT**  
for the  
Southern District of Ohio

United States of America  
v.

Tyler Nike Thomas  
947 Hunter Avenue  
Columbus, Ohio 43201

Case No. 2:26-mj-67

*Defendant(s)*

**CRIMINAL COMPLAINT**

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

On or about the date(s) of January 6 to 7 in the county of Franklin and Hocking in the  
Southern District of Ohio, the defendant(s) violated:

*Code Section*

*Offense Description*

18 U.S.C. §2251

Sexual Exploitation of a Minor

18 U.S.C. §2423(b)

Travel in Interstate Commerce with Intent to Engage in Illicit Sexual Conduct

This criminal complaint is based on these facts:

See the attached Affidavit which is fully incorporated herein by reference

☒ Continued on the attached sheet.



Digitally signed by  
SALTAR.JOSH.A13U65E39  
Date: 2026.02.09 10:28:52  
-05'00'

*Complainant's signature*

FBI Special Agent Josh Saltar

*Printed name and title*

Sworn to before me and signed in my presence.

Date: February 9, 2026

City and state: Columbus, Ohio

Kimberly A. Johnson  
United States Magistrate Judge



**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF OHIO  
EASTERN DIVISION**

**In the matter of:**

<b>United States of America</b>	:	
	:	<b>Case No.: 2:26-mj-67</b>
<b>v.</b>	:	
<b>Tyler Nike Thomas</b>	:	
<b>947 Hunter Avenue</b>	:	<b>Magistrate Judge:</b>
<b>Columbus, Ohio 43201</b>	:	

**AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF CRIMINAL COMPLAINT**

I, Josh Saltar (Your Affiant), a Special Agent (SA) with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), being first duly sworn, hereby depose and state as follows:

**INTRODUCTION**

1. I am a Special Agent (SA) with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and have been since October 2014. I am currently assigned to the Child Exploitation and Human Trafficking Task Force, Cincinnati Division, Columbus Resident Agency. I am primarily responsible for investigating internet crimes against children, including child pornography offenses and the online exploitation of children. During my career as a SA, I have participated in various investigations involving computer-related offenses and have executed numerous search warrants, including those involving searches and seizures of computers, digital media, software, and electronically stored information. I have worked with multiple international law enforcement agencies around the world, focusing on cyber-terrorism and terrorist financing through computer intrusions. I have also assisted on various cases and violations, ranging from violent crimes against children and white collar to healthcare fraud, counterintelligence, and counterterrorism. As part of my duties as a Special Agent, I investigate criminal violations relating to child exploitation and child pornography violations, including the illegal production, distribution, transmission, receipt, and possession of child pornography, in violation of 18 U.S.C. §§ 2251, 2252, and 2252A. I have reviewed numerous examples of child pornography (as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 2256) in all forms of media, including computer media. Prior to joining the FBI, I spent four years working as a civilian Intelligence Specialist for the U.S. Air Force at the National Air and Space Intelligence Center located at the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, under both the cyber and counterspace squadrons, performing classified intel and reverse engineering duties. During my employment, I have received numerous forensic trainings with the both the Department of Defense and Department of Justice, as well as from private sector security conferences. I have received multiple certifications in Windows, mobile, and memory forensics, as well as incident response and penetration testing, and am certified by the Department of Justice as a Digital Extraction Technician. I received my B.A. from Anderson University in computer science, with a focus on programming, artificial intelligence, and machine learning. As a SA with the FBI, I am authorized to

investigate violations of the laws of the United States and to execute warrants issued under the authority of the United States.

2. I make this affidavit in support of a criminal complaint to arrest for violations of 18 U.S.C. §§ 2251 and 2423(b). Since this affidavit is being submitted for the limited purpose of securing a criminal complaint and arrest warrant, your affiant did not include each and every fact known concerning this investigation. Your affiant did not withhold any information or evidence that would negate probable cause. Your affiant set forth only the facts that are believed to be necessary to establish probable cause that Tyler Nike Thomas (THOMAS) committed the violations listed above.

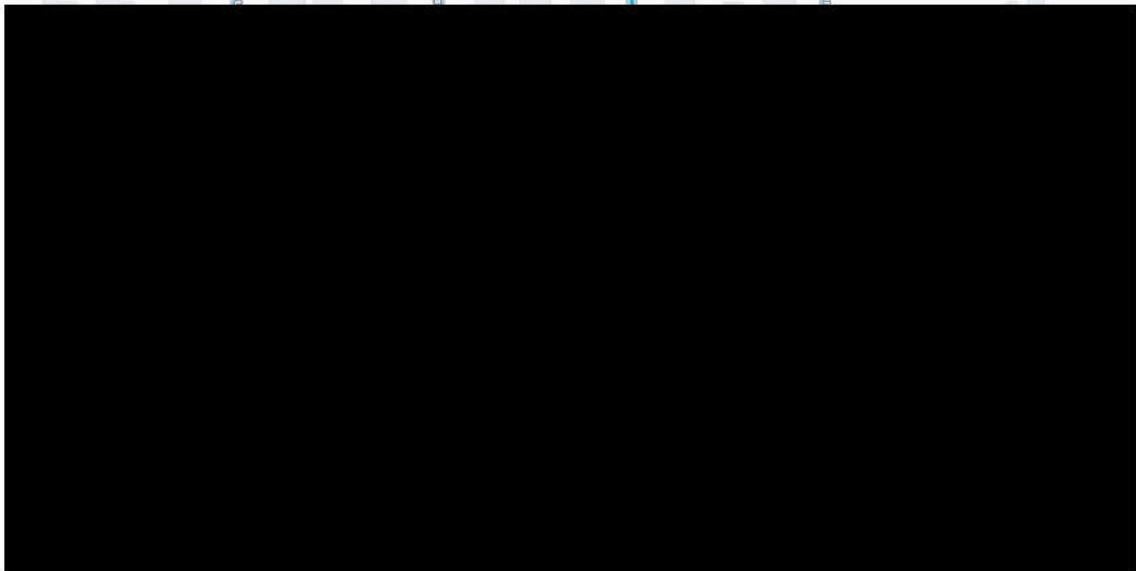
### **FACTS SUPPORTING PROBABLE CAUSE**

3. Since approximately January 22, 2026, your affiant has been receiving information from various law enforcement agencies, including the Fishers, Indiana Police Department (FPD), FBI Indianapolis, Columbus, Ohio Police Department (CPD), Hocking County (Ohio) Sheriff's Office (HCSO), and Perry County (Ohio) Sheriff's Office (PCSO) regarding the disappearance and death of <sup>Minor Victim 1 (MV1)</sup>, a 17-year old female, DOB 10/XX/2008, from Fortville, Indiana. Your affiant has spoken to other law enforcement officers, read reports, and conducted examinations of digital devices pertaining to this investigation. As a result, your affiant knows the following:
4. On the morning of January 6, 2026, the parents of MV1 [REDACTED] awoke to find that MV1 was missing from the residence in Fortville, IN, where she lived with them. They found a note from MV1 stating that she had run away and asking that no one search for her. They noticed that MV1 had taken her cell phone and a few personal items with her. They then called 911 to report MV1 [REDACTED]'s disappearance to law enforcement.
5. Officers with the FPD responded to the home that morning and initiated an investigation. MV1's parents informed the responding FPD officers about the circumstances of her disappearance, as well as what they knew of her past online activity [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] Officers attempted to contact [REDACTED] friends of acquaintances of MV1 [REDACTED] but no one was able to provide information about MV1's whereabouts. FPD also obtained a ping warrant for MV1 [REDACTED]'s phone number, but the information received from the cellular phone provider indicated that her phone had been shut off or placed in airplane mode because it was not receiving a signal from any cellular tower.
6. In the following days, FPD canvassed the neighborhood surrounding MV1 [REDACTED]'s residence and continued to contact her friends and family. The canvass led to two residences in the neighborhood near where MV1 [REDACTED] lived. The owner of one of the residences was woken up by his dogs' barking around 3:30 am on the morning of January 6, 2026. He looked out and saw what appeared to be a dark colored minivan in front of his



residence. He walked outside and the vehicle drove away. He provided a copy of the video footage to FPD, but it was not of sufficient quality to determine any details of the vehicle.

7. Camera footage from the second residence revealed a dark colored SUV travelling east bound on 101st Street in the direction of the street where MV1 lived at 3:14am on January 6, 2026 (see map below). The SUV pulled into a side street believed to be West St., stopped, turned off its headlights for a period of time, then turned the headlights back on, and continued travelling eastbound on 101st street in the direction of MV1's street. At that point, it went out of camera view. It returned into camera view and was observed stopped at the end of MV1 street at 3:19am. At 3:21am, a dog could be heard barking. At the same time, the SUV began traveling westbound on 101st Street.



8. FPD submitted an Emergency Disclosure Request (EDR) to Apple for any potential iCloud information that had been retained. Apple provided a partial return showing that the device's last outgoing text message activity was at 3:04 am on January 6, 2026, to an automated message from TikTok. Her reply message appeared to show her attempting to log into an account. MV1's father also informed FPD that MV1's devices had been removed from the home's internet router between 3:05 and 3:10am on January 6. Based on this information and the camera footage described above, it was believed that MV1 left her home sometime between 3:00 and 3:30am on January 6. However, at that time FPD did not have sufficient information to believe that MV1 was an endangered missing juvenile.
9. In the days after MV1's disappearance, her parents disclosed to FPD additional details about MV1. MV1 had been able to log into MV1's Snapchat account and observed private messages with an adult male.

10. [REDACTED]
11. On January 16, 2026, FPD reviewed Flock license plate reader cameras that were in the area of MV1 [REDACTED]'s residence around the time she was believed to have left her residence. That review revealed a black 2014 Acura SUV with Indiana license plate WEP220 in the area. FPD tracked the vehicle across several Flock cameras and noticed it traveling eastbound away from Fishers, Indiana. FPD reviewed the Flock camera history for the Indiana license plate WEP220 and noted that the vehicle's pattern of life was primarily in Columbus, Ohio.
12. FPD quickly reached out to the owner of the vehicle, Jane Doe 2, via telephone. Jane Doe 2 confirmed that she owned the black 2014 Acura SUV with Indiana license plate WEP220. Jane Doe informed FDP that she was in Florida on January 6, 2026, but THOMAS may have been driving the vehicle at that time. Approximately an hour after the initial phone call ended, Jane Doe called FPD back and informed them that she spoke to THOMAS and confirmed that he was the one driving the vehicle the morning of January 6 in the area of "Luxhaven," which was approximately 1 mile from MV1 [REDACTED]'s residence. Jane Doe provided THOMAS' phone number as 808-381-1466.
13. Later that same day, FPD sent T-Mobile an exigent request for call detail records related to the phone number 808-381-1466. FBI Indianapolis had previously offered assistance in the investigation of MV1 [REDACTED]'s disappearance, and FPD provided the call detail records they received from T-Mobile to the FBI's Cellular Analysis Surveillance Team (CAST) for review. CAST's analysis of the records revealed that the phone traveled from Columbus, Ohio to Fortville, Indiana overnight on January 5 into January 6, and returned to Columbus the morning of January 6. CAST further determined the subsequent travel of the phone from Columbus, Ohio to Logan, Ohio on the afternoon of January 6. It arrived in the area of several Airbnb residences off Walnut Dowler Road in Logan, left the location of the Airbnb residences approximately 5 to 10 minutes later, and traveled into the town of Logan, Ohio, ending in the vicinity of a Kroger grocery store off Chieftain drive. The phone remained in the area of the Kroger for approximately 5 to 10 minutes before traveling back to the previous area of the Airbnb residences. According to the CAST analysis, the phone remained in that location until approximately 9:25am on January 7, 2026, at which time it traveled to an area northeast of Logan, Ohio, near the North Country Trail Trailhead. The phone remained in that location until approximately 2:15pm, when it began to travel back towards Columbus, Ohio.
14. FPD reviewed law enforcement databases and confirmed that THOMAS resided at 947 Hunter Avenue, Columbus, Ohio.



15. Also on January 16, 2026, FPD traveled to Columbus, Ohio and met with several uniformed Columbus Police Department (CPD) officers at 947 Hunter Avenue, Columbus, Ohio. FPD talked to THOMAS about reason for being in Fishers, Indiana on the morning of January 6, 2026. THOMAS confirmed that he was driving the Acura SUV on the morning of January 6, 2026, in Indiana. He initially stated that he was in the area to look at different places, including the local airport and an apple orchard. Partway through the interview, THOMAS admitted to picking up MV1 from her residence. FPD showed THOMAS a picture of MV1 and THOMAS confirmed that picture depicted the person he picked up in Fishers, Indiana. THOMAS stated that he met MV1 online through Discord and had been playing various games with her. At that point in the interview, THOMAS retrieved his phone and showed FPD his Discord account and how he was communicating with MV1. THOMAS stated that MV1 asked him to pick her up from her residence, to which he agreed. THOMAS stated once he picked up MV1 from her residence, he drove eastbound towards Ohio with her. THOMAS stated that near Eaton, Ohio, MV1 requested that he drop her off on the side of the road [REDACTED]

THOMAS also revealed that he communicated with MV1 via an application called "Session," which was a secure communication application. THOMAS retrieved his phone and showed FPD the exact location from a map on his phone where he claimed he had dropped off MV1 at the intersection of US35 and SR 320 in Eaton, OH. [REDACTED]

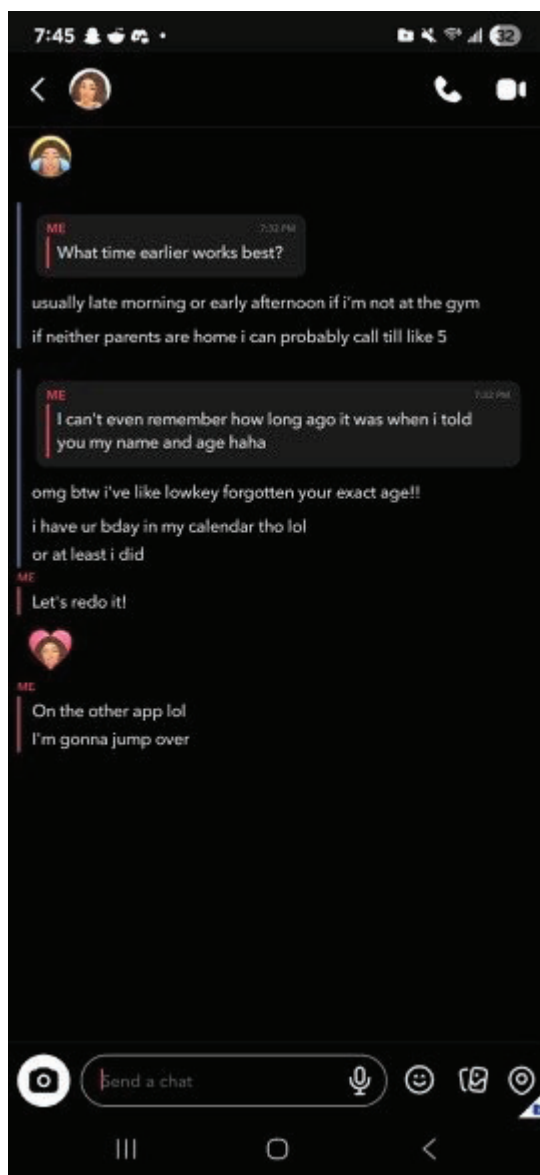
16. FBI CAST analysis of THOMAS' phone records were not consistent with THOMAS' claim that he stopped in Eaton, Ohio.
17. On January 18, 2026, FPD confirmed with Airbnb in Ohio that THOMAS had stayed at a Hocking Hills Airbnb on Walnut Dowler in Logan, Ohio on January 6, 2026, with another person on the reservation.
18. On January 21, 2026, a search warrant was signed in the Franklin County Municipal Court to search the residence of 947 Hunter Avenue, Columbus, Ohio to locate any evidence related to the disappearance of MV1. During the execution of the search warrant that same day, CPD collected numerous items, including cell phones, laptops/computers, and other items of potential evidentiary value.

19. CPD located the black 2014 Acura RDX with Indiana Plate WEP220 backed into the detached garage on the premises. CPD transported the vehicle to the CPD Impound Lot for processing.
20. During the search of the THOMAS' residence on January 21, CPD interviewed THOMAS at CPD headquarters. CPD read THOMAS his Constitutional Rights Waiver, and he confirmed that he understood the waiver portion. THOMAS stated he knew MV1 and that they had been playing video games, such as Roblox and League of Legends, for over a year. He also reiterated that he and MV1 communicated on Discord. CPD asked THOMAS when MV1 would turn 18, to which THOMAS responded "Uh, I thought she was 18, but it came out that she's gotten months until 18." THOMAS described that the plan for him to pick up MV1 came about "near Christmas time," but they ultimately decided on January 5, 2026. THOMAS confirmed to CPD that the reservation for the Airbnb was made on January 4, 2026. THOMAS stated that MV1 did not know about the Airbnb and that it was for him since he "already knew that was like a crime to help someone run away." THOMAS denied hurting or killing MV1. However, when CPD asked THOMAS if he would tell them if he did kill her, he responded, "I think she is alive and safe and...". CPD interrupted him and asked, "So you wouldn't tell me if you did?" to which THOMAS replied "No. No, I wouldn't tell you. I wouldn't say anything earlier because I want her to be 18 and not reach back to her family." CPD told THOMAS that they believed he was not telling the truth and to tell them what really happened, to which THOMAS stated, "She'll be alright, and I would like to talk to a lawyer too." At that point, CPD ended the interview.
21. On January 22, 2026, a search warrant was signed in Franklin County Municipal Court for the black 2014 Acura RDX with Indiana Plate WEP220. CPD collected 5 items, which included a hair tie and DNA swabs.
22. Investigation continued on January 23, 2026. On that date, the HCSO, with the assistance from FBI and Ohio Department of Natural Resources, executed a search warrant at the Airbnb residence on Walnut Dowler in Logan, Ohio, where THOMAS had stayed on the night of January 6, 2026. A physical search of the residence was conducted, along with a digital review of the cabin's router. The same day, Indiana authorities obtained bank records for THOMAS, which revealed charges at a gas station that appeared to be between Columbus, Ohio and Indiana; at a gas station in the area of Knightstown, Indiana, and at the restaurant in Fortville, Indiana where MV1 worked. All the charges occurred on June 5, 2025, suggesting that THOMAS had previously traveled to Indiana to meet MV1. His bank records also revealed a charge from the day prior to the Indiana charges, at an adult novelty store, Lion's Den, in Columbus, Ohio.
23. Also on January 23, 2026, a search warrant was signed in the Franklin County Municipal Court for THOMAS' cell phone seized on January 21, 2026, to locate any evidence related to the disappearance of MV1. The same day, your affiant performed a forensic extraction of the device pursuant to the search warrant.

24. During review of the THOMAS' cellular phone, your affiant identified the phone number of the device as 808-381-1466. Your affiant also identified forensic fragments that appeared to relate to communications and interactions between THOMAS and **MV1**

The forensic fragments, detailed in the following paragraph, pertained to files that had been deleted from the phone.

25. Your affiant identified a cached image titled -4945689730538383135.0, which depicted a screenshot of a Snapchat user profile with the username of **MV1**. At the bottom right corner of the image was a white triangle with an icon of a blue folder, indicating that the application was running inside of Samsung's Secure Folder. Additionally, your affiant identified a cached image titled -5529591111670219427.0, which depicted a screenshot of a Snapchat conversation with username of **MV1** and another party, believed to be THOMAS. At the bottom right corner of the image was a white triangle with an icon of a blue folder, indicating that the application was running inside of Samsung's Secure Folder. There was no date visible in the conversation, however the last access time of both screenshots was on July 1, 2025. The following is the conversation that appeared in the second screenshot:





26. Your affiant was able to determine that Snapchat had previously been installed on the device inside of the Samsung Secure Folder but had been uninstalled at some point prior to the forensic extraction.

27. Your affiant identified other cached images that appeared to possibly relate to **MV1**

Those cached images were titled -5036776046654402525.0, -38563287653101822.0, 4582717842235505731.0. The images depicted THOMAS sitting in the seat of a vehicle staring at the camera, and an individual sitting next to him with long, curly dark brown hair similar to **MV1** 's leaning over with her face next to his neck, giving the appearance of kissing his neck. The vehicle seats and interior were similar to the 2014 Acura RDX that was photographed and processed by CPD on January 22, 2026. The files all had last access dates of July 2, 2025. CAST analysis of additional T-Mobile records for THOMAS' phone number, 808-381-1466, revealed that the phone placed a call on July 2, 2025, utilizing a cellular tower near Fortville, Indiana.

28. Also during review of the device, your affiant identified several cached audio files that were turn-by-turn navigation audio files. An audio file titled "-1842720525\_1767691418562" said: "In two miles, take exit 131 for Wilbur Wright Road". The file access time was listed as January 6, 2026, at 4:23am. An audio file titled "263102938\_1767691884569" said: "In two miles, take exit 137 for Indiana 1 toward Hagerstown-Connersville." The file access time was listed as January 6, 2026, at 4:31am. An audio file titled "-418560011\_1767692293583" said: "In two miles, take exit 145 towards Centerville." The file access time was listed as January 6, 2026, at 4:38am. Your affiant identified the specific exit numbers and names as exits off the Interstate 70 highway in Indiana, west of Richmond, Indiana.

29. Cached image file located during the review of THOMAS' device appeared to relate to navigation within the state of Ohio. A cached image titled c9d0fea7bfd9fc458279e26748ee6f5e916786a5c62061d5b93fe8a6d93831fd.0 depicted a photo of Google Maps with the location "North Country Trail Trailhead" selected. A cached image titled b820826a3092f443893a55273b942b4cbfd3ecab0fd725c67254a0d3d05040f2.0 depicted a photo of Google Maps with the location "North Country Trail Trailhead" selected, and a blue dot representing the current location of the user, which was southwest of the selected trailhead, near where the Airbnb was located on Walnut Dowler, Logan, Ohio.

30. Continued review of THOMAS' device identified a conversation on Discord between THOMAS and an individual who claimed to be in 10<sup>th</sup> grade, hereinafter identified as Minor 1 beginning on December 13, 2025. Below is a snippet of the conversation between THOMAS and Minor 1:

- THOMAS - Why helloooooo 🤔
- Minor 1 – Hiiiiiii
- THOMAS - We've such cute looking pictures, no one would ever guess hehehe
- THOMAS - And.. was daydreaming about us disposing of a toy for Christmas!
- Minor 1 - Mmmm okiee?
- THOMAS - Sorry.. depraved gore thoughts.. is that going too far?

- Minor 1 - Ohhh I just didn't understand it
- THOMAS - Ahhh forgive me 😊 I wanted to make a few new holes in it to see how good it felt
- Minor 1 - In what?
- THOMAS - Some young little fuckmeat teen
- Minor 1 - Ohhhhhh okieeee
- THOMAS - Mhmmmm..
- THOMAS - Does baby carve parts of her own body?
- Minor 1 - We need to finish this later I'm studying

Conversation continued on December 15, 2025:

- Minor 1 - Hiiiiiii
- THOMAS - Babyyyy
- THOMAS - How youuuu??
- Minor 1 - I'mmmm goooddd, youuuu?
- THOMAS - I'm having very dark but stimulating thoughts 😈
- Minor 1 - Oh nooooooooo
- THOMAS - I knowwwww
- THOMAS - I was wondering how I would get away with it cuz she would definitely tell 😬
- Minor 1 - Oh ummm i dunnoooo
- THOMAS - Keep it locked in the basement??
- Minor 1 - Mmmmmmm i dunnoooo, I don't know the girl
- THOMAS - I guess I'll be a good man for time being
- THOMAS - And ask how much you've been carving yourself
- Minor 1 - Mmmm not a lottt
- THOMAS - Aww.. but you'd look so good covered in red
- THOMAS - Not in class now, are you?
- Minor 1 - Noooooo, we're off today
- THOMAS - How lucky, college?
- Minor 1 - Mmmm noo
- THOMAS - Mmmmm even better
- Minor 1 - Hehe 😊
- THOMAS - I hope our gap is even larger than I think
- Minor 1 - Me toooooo
- THOMAS - Would you be fine with someone really old encouraging you to cut yourself while he's inside you? I'd think the pain will make you tighten up even more
- Minor 1 - Mhmmmmmmmm 😊
- THOMAS - Let's see.. your age minus mine..
- THOMAS - 26 years?
- Minor 1 - How old r u?
- THOMAS - 41
- THOMAS - 42 this year

- THOMAS - In a week
- Minor 1 - Mmmm yea ur right
- Minor 1 - Ohhh happy early birthday
- THOMAS – Thank youuuu
- THOMAS - Is that 9th grade?
- Minor 1 - 10th

31. During the initial review of the device, your affiant also discovered a file that appeared to depict child sexual abuse material (CSAM), specifically a cache image titled - 7645322788852519765.0. The image depicted a fully nude prepubescent girl, approximately 7-10 years old, laying on her back wearing a purple mask over her eyes. An individual wearing a black mask was laying on top of the girl with his hands on her buttocks and his mouth next to her vagina. The watermark “kpp83.com” was visible in the lower right corner of the image. At that point, your affiant ceased review of the device until a second search warrant was obtained to include anything related to the possession and distribution of CSAM. That search warrant was obtained on January 26, 2026, and permitted your affiant to search for and seize visual media or communications related to CSAM.

32. During the second review of the device, your affiant identified 15 cached images from the Gallery application, all of which appeared to be device-created artifacts related to files that had been deleted from the device. The image titled -7309927557167654360.0 depicted **MV1** laying on her back on a blue, diamond patterned blanket with her eyes closed and an adult male’s penis touching her face and mouth. The blanket matched the blanket found and seized from 947 Hunter Avenue during the execution of a search warrant on January 21, 2026. The image titled -1279327249699292577.0 depicted a series of images from a video in which **MV1** fully nude, was laying on her back on the same blanket while an adult male was grabbing her neck and inserting his penis into her mouth. The image titled 1415656115196738103.0 depicted a series of images from a video in which **MV1**, fully nude, was laying on her back on the same blanket while an adult male inserted his penis into her mouth. Additional images showed a close up of a nude vagina with an adult male’s face over top of it. The image titled – 8313250335271757484.0 depicted a series of images from a video in which an adult male, fully nude, was laying on his back on the same blanket while **MV1** nude but covered with a white blanket, was on top of the adult male holding his penis and inserting it into her mouth. The bed frame behind **MV1** was the same as the bed frame identified in the search warrant photos of 947 Hunter Avenue on January 21, 2026. The image titled -275933863651429622.0 depicted a series of images from a video in which a fully nude adult male was standing behind a fully nude female who was bent over a sink in a bathroom. Your affiant identified the bathroom as the one located in the Airbnb on Walnut Dowler, Logan, Ohio from the photos taken during the search conducted on January 23, 2026. The image titled -401543944433370418.0 depicted a series of images from a video in which a nude female was lying face down on a bed facing away from the camera, and a fully nude male climbed on top of her, also facing away from the camera, with his penis near the female’s vagina. Your affiant identified the bed as the one located in the Airbnb on Walnut Dowler, Logan, Ohio from the photos taken during the search



conducted on January 23, 2026. Your affiant also noticed that the sun had set, and it was dark outside from the window in the image.

33. Also during review of the device, your affiant identified the applications Roblox and Discord installed on the device. Your affiant also identified Sessions, Snapchat, Kik, and Telegram applications previously installed in the Secure Folder, but had been deleted from the device. Other than the cached Snapchat screenshot, which was a device-created file that an average user would not know to delete, no communications between THOMAS and **MV1** could be located on the device.
34. On January 31, 2026, a criminal complaint and arrest warrant was signed in Franklin County charging THOMAS with one count of ORC 2907.322(A)(1) - Pandering Sexually Oriented Matter Involving a Minor – Create/Produce Material, a felony of the second degree, and 2921.12(A)(1) – Tampering With Evidence – Alter/Destroy/Conceal/Remove Record, a felony of third degree. THOMAS was taken into custody the same day.
35. On February 1, 2026, THOMAS was picked up from Franklin County Corrections Facility by Franklin County Sheriff's Office (FCSO), CPD, and FBI, and transported to the North County Trail Trailhead in Wayne National Forest. THOMAS' attorney followed THOMAS and law enforcement in a separate vehicle from Columbus to the trailhead. Upon arrival, THOMAS, his attorney, and the transporting officers met with personnel from PCSO, Perry County Prosecutor's Office, US Forest Service, and FBI. The parties all walked to a location northeast of the trailhead where THOMAS pointed out that **MV1** **MV1**'s body was buried. The location was secured by PCSO while THOMAS was transported back to Columbus.
36. Once THOMAS had indicated the location where **MV1**'s body was buried, the Bureau of Criminal Investigation's (BCI) Crime Scene Unit (CSU) was contacted and traveled to the trailhead where they met with personnel from PCSO and FBI. CSU navigated toward the location identified by THOMAS earlier that day. CSU removed the snow and upper layer of frozen dirt and eventually unearthed dismembered human remains. CSU placed the recovered remains into a body bag and turned it over to the Perry County Coroner, who arrived on scene once the remains were discovered.
37. The following day, February 2, 2026, FPD traveled to Ohio to obtain a DNA sample from the human remains that had been recovered. FPD then returned to Indiana, where they conducted a "rapid DNA test" against a DNA sample they had collected from **MV1** **MV1**'s residence. The test concluded that the DNA sample from **MV1**'s residence matched the DNA sample taken from the remains located in Perry County, confirming that the dismembered body was **MV1**.
38. The same day, the FBI Evidence Response Team (ERT) executed a second search warrant at the Airbnb residence located on Walnut Dowler, Logan, Ohio where THOMAS had stayed on January 6. Utilizing advanced scientific methods, ERT located potential traces of blood throughout the residence and seized numerous items that potentially contained traces of blood. Those items are awaiting further analysis.

39. Based upon the foregoing information, your affiant submits that there is probable cause to believe that Tyler Nike THOMAS traveled from Columbus, Ohio, to Fortville, Indiana during the overnight hours of January 5 to January 6, where he picked up MV1 a female who was less than 18 years of age, and returned from Indiana to the Southern District of Ohio with the intent to engage in illicit sexual activity, specifically the production of child pornography. There is further probable cause to believe that within the Southern District of Ohio, specifically Columbus and Logan, Ohio, Tyler Nike THOMAS, did use and transport MV1 with the intent that MV1 engage in any sexually explicit conduct for the purpose of creating a visual depiction of such conduct. Therefore, your affiant respectfully requests this court issue a criminal complaint charging Tyler Nike THOMAS with violations of 18 U.S.C. §§ 2251 and 2423(b), as well as an arrest warrant.

Respectfully submitted,

*Josh Saltar*

Josh Saltar  
Special Agent  
Federal Bureau of Investigation

Subscribed and sworn to before me on February 9, 2026

*Kimberly A. Johnson*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kimberly A. Johnson  
United States Magistrate Judge

