



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JURY FINDS MAN GUILTY OF STATUTORY SODOMY

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. – Greene County Prosecuting Attorney Dan Patterson announces that Karl David Lawrence, 51, of Aurora, Missouri was convicted yesterday by a Greene County Jury of two counts of statutory sodomy in the first degree for sodomizing his step-niece while she was visiting her father in Republic. The jury deliberated for approximately five hours before returning its verdict.

The now 18 year old victim testified that the defendant sexually abused her for a period of two years in various locations, including: her father's home in Republic, the defendant's home in Lawrence County, his parent's home in Lawrence County, and during out of state family vacations. The victim's two sisters, now 14 and 15, testified to overhearing the defendant talk about sex with the victim and that the defendant asked one of them to remove her underwear. A friend of the victim testified at trial to the abuse that she endured at the hands of the defendant.

In 2014, Missouri voters voted yes on Amendment 2, which amended the Missouri Constitution to allow prosecutors to present, and juries to hear, evidence of a defendant's prior criminal acts, whether charged or uncharged, in prosecutions of sexual crimes involving a victim under eighteen years of age. This was the second jury trial in Greene County where such evidence was presented. In this case, evidence of the abuse the defendant inflicted on the victim at other locations, how he enticed a child to remove her underwear, and the abuse he inflicted on a family friend were admissible as evidence to show his propensity to commit the charged crimes thanks to the constitutional amendment.

The jury trial was presided over by The Honorable Calvin Holden. The defendant is subject to a sentence of five years to life imprisonment. The defendant opted for jury

Subject: Greene County Prosecuting Attorney Press Release, State v. Lawrence, 1631-CR05390-01

sentencing and the jury came back with a 15 year recommendation on each count. Judge Holden set a sentencing hearing for January 5, 2018 at 1:30 PM, following a sentencing assessment report by the Department of Probation and Parole.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant Prosecuting Attorneys Nathan Chapman and Dawn Diel. It was investigated by the Republic Police Department and Detective Mark Wilcox was the lead investigator assigned to the case.

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