



NEWS RELEASE

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10/28/2019

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DAVID HASTINGS CONVICTED OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. – Greene County Prosecuting Attorney Dan Patterson announces that David Keith Hastings, 67, of Springfield, Missouri was convicted Friday, 10/25/2019, by a Greene County jury of one count of statutory rape in the first degree, four counts of statutory sodomy in the first degree, one count of child molestation in the second degree, one count of enticement of a child, one count of manufacture of marijuana, one count of possession of marijuana, and two counts of unlawful use of a weapon following a five day jury trial before the Honorable David Jones. The victim in this case was one of the defendant's family members, with whom he had a close relationship.

The victim, now ten years old, testified at trial. It was clear the victim was afraid and stressed every time she took the stand to face the defendant. The victim's testimony had to be spread out over two days and she had to be given multiple breaks, including an overnight break, to be able to address her level of trauma during testimony. The victim's Child Advocacy Center forensic interview was played for the jury and the jury was able to watch the victim describe sexual abuse that began from the time she was seven years old. During the interview, the victim asked if the interviewer talked to other kids and had "any of the other kids had this happen to them" and that the victim was worried "because I don't want other kids going through what I had to". The victim also testified that she did not tell anyone about what happened initially because the defendant told her that she would never get to see his animals again. Jennifer Leek, a forensic interviewer with the Child Advocacy Center, testified that those who sexually abuse children often groom children into participating in abuse and groom them into silence through the use of gifts, threats, and taking advantage of the close relationship between abuser and victim. The victim ultimately decided to tell her mother because she was "fed up" with the abuse and felt comfortable telling her mother because her mother was a "girl".

During trial, the jury also heard from members of the Greene County Sheriff's Office, the Southwest Missouri Cyber Crimes Task Force, and criminalists from the Missouri State

Subject: Greene County Prosecuting Attorney Press Release, State v. Hastings, 1831-CR03033

Highway Patrol. During the execution of the search warrant looking for evidence of the child sexual abuse crimes, law enforcement unexpectedly found a marijuana grow operation and two firearms in the defendant's home. In addition to the evidence regarding the marijuana grow operation, the jury heard evidence corroborating the victim's account including about DNA evidence located on a sex toy found within the defendant's home.

The defendant testified on his own behalf and denied all of the allegations and testified that he thought the victim was making these allegations because her mother was putting the victim up to it and because the victim was mad at the defendant for saying "no" to her. On cross-examination, the defendant admitted to not being truthful with the detectives who interviewed him and specifically stated it would be "foolish" to be truthful with the FBI task force officer when the defendant did not have his attorney present. In closing, the defendant argued that the victim's account was not corroborated and it was clear she was coached or led into making these allegations. The State pointed out the victim's demeanor while testifying, her demeanor during the CAC, the victim's disclosure included details and comments that indicated that she had experienced these things, and that the victim was not easily led as evidenced by the fact that the victim even corrected the assistant prosecutor while testifying.

The jury rejected the defendant's arguments and found the defendant guilty of all eleven charged counts after almost four hours of deliberation. The defendant is facing a maximum sentence for his conviction for statutory rape in the first degree and for each conviction of statutory sodomy in the first degree. He is facing a maximum sentence of 15 years for the conviction for child molestation in the second degree. He is facing a maximum sentence of life in prison for the conviction of enticement of a child. He is facing a maximum sentence of four years for the convictions for manufacture of a controlled substance and for each conviction of unlawful use of a weapon. Finally, he is facing a maximum sentence of seven years imprisonment for the conviction for possession of a controlled substance. Judge Jones set a sentencing hearing on December 20, 2019 at 11:00AM following a sentence assessment report to be completed by the Department of Probation and Parole.

**This case is being prosecuted by Assistant Prosecuting Attorneys Stephanie Wan and Cameron Beaver. It was investigated by the Greene County Sheriff's Office and Detective Jennifer Stephens was the lead investigator assigned to the case.**

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