

For Immediate Release

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Lyerly Man Guilty of Aggravated Child Molestation

February 24, 2023 – Summerville, GA –

A Lyerly man was convicted for the molestation of his minor stepdaughter by a Chattooga County jury following a two day trial before Judge Brian House ending on February 21, 2023. Clifford Eugene Hubbard, 51, was convicted of 8 counts including multiple counts of aggravated child molestation, aggravated sexual battery, and incest stemming from nearly a decade of sexual abuse.

The allegations came to light when the victim told a school counselor. Under Georgia law, school counselors are mandatory reporters of child abuse. The counselor contacted Chattooga County Sheriff's Office Chief Investigator Jason Burrage, who responded to the school along with a representative from the Department of Family and Children's Services. After interviewing the victim and her sibling, both children were placed in protective custody. Burrage traveled to the victim's residence to conduct interviews with several family members, and he observed terrible living conditions. Each individual who lived in the house at the time of the report corroborated the victim's account and were aware of the abuse that had been ongoing for several years, but failed to make a report to law enforcement.

Both the victim and her sibling were interviewed at the Children's Advocacy Center in Summerville. During her forensic interview, the victim disclosed numerous sexual acts that Hubbard had performed on her since she was 9 years old. The victim's sibling disclosed that he was awakened in the night by the noises of Hubbard having sexual intercourse with his sister when he was staying in her bedroom on one occasion.

Hubbard admitted during an interview with law enforcement that a few years ago, his wife had accused him of cheating on her when she found a used condom in the back of their family van. The victim disclosed during her forensic interview that Hubbard would have sexual intercourse with her in the back of the van, and identified the condom her mother found as having been used with her. During his interview with law enforcement, Hubbard claimed the condom was left by a co-worker who asked to borrow his van to have sex during a lunch break. Through his investigation, Burrage was able to identify the co-worker Hubbard described, and the co-worker was able to refute Hubbard's claims.

The same day Burrage applied for arrest warrants, Chattooga County law enforcement officers responded to a 911 call from Hubbard's residence. Hubbard was found lying in his bed with a shotgun pointed to his chest. After a 17 hour standoff, law enforcement was able to deploy tasers and safely apprehend Hubbard when his finger slipped from the trigger.

The case was presented by Chief Assistant District Attorney Kevin Baugh and Chattooga County Resident Assistant District Attorney Alan Smith. Hubbard was sentenced on February 21, 2023 to a life sentence, with 35 years to be served in prison. The defendant will not be eligible for parole consideration for at least thirty (30) years.

District Attorney Arnt praised the efforts of the Chattooga County Sheriff's office in investigating this case and the prosecution team in presenting a strong and compelling case to the jury. "This case represents the priority we place on protecting kids, even when others in their life do not. Thanks to the efforts of Investigator Burrage, Chief Assistant Baugh and ADA Smith this predator will spend at least the next three decades behind bars and our community can rest a little easier that this

criminal is off the streets. We hope this verdict can bring some sense of justice to the victim in this case.”

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