

News Release

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Local Man-guilty of Criminal Sexual Conduct with a Minor in the 1st Degree

Charleston, S.C. –Solicitor Scarlett A. Wilson announced today that Willie Smalls (DOB 9/8/1951) pled guilty, as charged, to Criminal Sexual Conduct with a Minor in the 1st Degree before Judge Thomas L. Hughston, Jr. The statute mandates a sentence ranging from 10-30 years. The plea was without any negotiations and Judge Hughston sentenced Smalls for a term of 20 years in prison.

Solicitor Wilson praised the recidivist legislation, stating, “With this new statute, any prior conviction that requires a defendant to register as a sex offender becomes admissible evidence in proving CSC with a Minor First Degree and also raises the mandatory sentencing range from 0 to 20 years to a range of 10 to 30 years. The statute gives us more leverage in prosecuting repeat offenders in these cases which have such fragile victims.”

During the guilty plea, Managing Assistant Solicitor Debbie Herring-Lash presented evidence to the judge that the victim, an 11 year old girl, confided to her mother that Willie Smalls, who dated a family friend had been sexually assaulting her between March 4, 2008 and August 27, 2008. Smalls would occasionally take the young girl shopping and later to his home where he repeatedly sexually assaulted her.

After an investigation, North Charleston Police Department (“NCPD”) arrested Smalls on October 9, 2008. “The victim was very relieved to put this behind her and was pleased that the defendant was punished,” said Herring-Lash. “After serving his sentence, the Defendant will be evaluated under the Sexually Violent Predator Act and will face a lifetime commitment to a secured facility,” said Herring-Lash.

Willie Smalls has previously been convicted of two counts of Fraudulent Check offenses in 1985, a Lewd Act on a Minor in 1987, a Criminal Domestic Violence in 1988, and a Criminal Sexual Conduct with a Minor in 1994.

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