



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY

District Attorney Susan K. Treadaway
Blue Ridge Judicial Circuit, Cherokee County
90 North Street, Canton GA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Notice of Sentencing **Four Life Sentences Plus 120 Years for Man Guilty of 18 Counts, Including Raping 6-Year-Old Child** ***State vs. John David Elrod***

CANTON, GA (October 9, 2026) – District Attorney Susan K. Treadaway announces that on October 6 Chief Superior Court Judge David L. Cannon Jr. sentenced John David Elrod, 64, to four consecutive life sentences plus an additional 120 years to serve in prison.

The sentencing hearing followed a jury trial in which Elrod was convicted of all 18 charges he faced: rape (2 counts) aggravated child molestation (6 counts), child molestation (8 counts), and cruelty to children in the first degree (2 counts).

Charges stem from a Canton Police Department investigation that began in August 2018 after a woman reported that Elrod had sexually abused her 9-year-old daughter. The victim was known to Elrod through her family. In a forensic interview, the child disclosed abuse that began when she was 6 years old and occurred at two different homes in Cherokee County. The abuse continued over a three-year period, from 2015 through 2018.

“This defendant was brazen in his actions – targeting, grooming, and abusing a little girl, and creating opportunities to be alone with her,” said Assistant District Attorney Meaghan Frankish, of the Special Victims Unit, who prosecuted this case on behalf of the State. “His calculated conduct exploited her innocence, and she deserved so much better.”

Assistant District Attorney Frankish also read an impact statement from the victim, who said that she hopes never again to think about what the defendant did to her and that she can finally “go into a new chapter in life and move on from this part.”

The State recommended three consecutive life sentences, while the Defense recommended 25 years to serve followed by life on probation.

Before issuing his sentence, Judge Cannon remarked on the defendant’s criminal history and the egregious nature of the crimes. He then ordered Elrod to serve four consecutive life sentences followed by an additional 120 years in prison.

“Now a young woman, the child who was abused by this defendant stands resilient and determined to move forward with her life, despite the trauma she endured,” said District Attorney Susan K. Treadaway. “We are thankful for the jury’s verdict and the sentence imposed by the court, which hold the defendant fully accountable.”

The case was investigated by the Canton Police Department and prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Meaghan Frankish of the Special Victims Unit, Office of the District Attorney.

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The Office of the District Attorney for the Blue Ridge Judicial Circuit is committed to seeking justice, acting with integrity, and collaborating with partner agencies in the criminal justice system in order to protect the citizens of Cherokee County and the State of Georgia.

CONTACT:

Cyndi Crossland

Public Information Officer

cbcrossland@cherokeega.com