

Leavenworth man sentenced to prison for child sex crimes

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LEAVENWORTH, Kan. --- An investigation that started with a sex offender located in Virginia has led to a prison sentence for a 56-year-old Leavenworth man.

During a sentencing hearing held today, January 17, 2024, Steven Ray Cridlebaugh was sentenced to 165 months on one count of **aggravated criminal sodomy**, a severity level 1, person felony, and 61 months on one count of **sexual exploitation of a child**, a severity level 3, person felony. Both sentences were ordered to run consecutively for 226 months, or nearly 19 years, to be served in the Kansas Department of Corrections.

Steven Ray Cridlebaugh, of Leavenworth, Kansas, pled no contest on both charges on November 30, 2023, and was found guilty by a judge.

According to court documents, Cridlebaugh came to the attention of law enforcement due to an investigation into a sex offender located in Virginia. Communications were found between that sex offender and Cridlebaugh, leading law enforcement to believe Cridlebaugh was committing sexual-related crimes against a juvenile he had a connection to. Local law enforcement eventually conducted an investigation, which revealed Cridlebaugh would compensate the victim with money and toys for sexual acts or photographs.

Leavenworth County Attorney Todd Thompson said, “Sex offenders prey and victimize the innocent; our law enforcement partners remain proactive in rooting out evil by pursuing these predators.” Thompson continued, “And my office continues its efforts to protect our children from these predators through awareness and prosecution.”