

Leavenworth man awaits sentencing on sexual exploitation of a child and aggravated criminal sodomy charges

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PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – December 1, 2023

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LEAVENWORTH, Kan. --- Steven Ray Cridlebaugh, 55, of Leavenworth, Kansas, pled in case 23CR334 on one count of Aggravated Criminal Sodomy, a severity level 1, person felony, and one count of Sexual Exploitation of a Child, a severity level 3, person felony. Cridlebaugh pled no contest on both charges and was found guilty by a judge. A sentencing hearing is set for January 3, 2024, at 1:00 pm. In Kansas, sentencing ranges are set by statute and the Kansas Sentencing Grid. A level 1 person felony is subject to a sentence between 147 to 653 months, depending on a defendant's criminal history. A level 3 person felony is subject to a sentence between 55 to 247 months, depending on a defendant's criminal history.

The defendant 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 the defendant, leading law enforcement to believe the defendant was committing sexual-related crimes against a juvenile he had a connection to. Local law enforcement conducted an investigation into the defendant, which revealed he would compensate the victim with money and toys for sexual acts or photographs.

Leavenworth County Attorney Todd Thompson said, "Our law enforcement continues to be proactive in pursuing predators like this to protect our kids. This is a battle we will not rest on."