

# Man enters guilty plea in child pornography and predatory criminal sexual assault of a child cases

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**EDWARDSVILLE** — A **Godfrey man** pleaded guilty Friday to two (2) counts of Child Pornography and two (2) counts Predatory Criminal Sexual Assault of a Child charges.

**Madison County State's Attorney Tom Gibbons** filed charges against **David J. Von Bergen** (d.o.b. 11/26/80) on September 17, 2014, after an investigation led by the investigators with the **Madison County Sheriff's Forensic Computer Crimes Unit** revealed evidence of child pornography and multiple criminal sexual assault acts against two girls. Von Bergen was charged with Child Pornography and Predatory Criminal Sexual Assault of a Child, for acts and videos related to each of the children.

The defendant was set for trial on Monday, October 31. He pled guilty Friday to two counts of Predatory Criminal Sexual Assault of a Child and two counts of Child Pornography, charges relating to each of the two victims. All four (4) counts are Class X Felonies. The sentencing range on the Child Pornography charges is 9-30 years, and 6-60 years for the Predatory Criminal Sexual Assault of a Child charges. Since the defendant was previously convicted of Child Pornography in 2001, he qualifies for an enhanced minimum sentence. Each of the charges will run consecutive to the others, ensuring that Von Bergen now faces between 30 and 180 years in prison.

State's Attorney Gibbons stated that "a guilty plea means that the defendant has admitted the horrible acts he committed. Hopefully, these young victims will be able to find hope and healing, now that they can see justice done without having to shoulder the responsibility of convincing a jury of the suffering they endured."

Prosecutors discussed the plea and possible sentence with the family in advance, taking their wishes and concerns fully into account before reaching a decision on the specifics of the plea. "The family was supportive of the decision as it requires the defendant to admit his guilt and gets justice for the girls," said Gibbons.

State's Attorney Gibbons acknowledged the vital work of **Assistant State's Attorneys Kathleen Nolan**, head of the Children's Justice Division, and Ali Foley, whose collaboration with the **Madison County Child Advocacy Center** and the **Madison County Sheriff's Office** secured the plea and conviction of Von Bergen.

"These cases demonstrate the importance of the coordinated effort to protect the children in Madison County. I am thankful that we were able to successfully resolve this case, without requiring the young victims to testify in front of a courtroom of people – including the defendant. Our Children's Justice Division works tirelessly to fight for the victims of these deplorable crimes and ensure that these dangerous individuals are removed from our communities," said State's Attorney Gibbons.

Prosecutors plan to seek the maximum sentence for Von Bergen, who will remain in custody at the **Madison County Jail** in Edwardsville pending sentencing. Following the completion of a Pre-Sentencing Investigation, which typically takes six to eight weeks, Associate Judge Neil Schroeder, will set a sentencing date.

