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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: August 27, 2024

RE: Stave v Earl Samuel Jones III

On February 9, 2024, Earl Samuel Jones III, 44, of Whiteford, pled guilty to First Degree Rape before the Honorable Judge Diane Adkins-Tobin in the Circuit Court for Harford County. The plea agreement was for open sentencing, meaning that both the State and the Defense were free to argue for any period of incarceration they deemed appropriate.

Facts presented in support of the plea showed that on September 12, 2022, officers from the Aberdeen Police Department responded to the Red Roof Inn on Hospitality Way in Aberdeen for a report of a rape. The victim, a 36-year-old female, reported being asleep in a room when she was awoken by a naked man she did not know. It was later determined that the victim's boyfriend had left the room to use the vending machine, propping the door open with the swing bar lock.

The victim was awoken by the naked suspect, who grabbed her by the throat and began strangling her. She described the suspect as a thin white male with short hair and a distinctive black curvy line tattoo on the side of his torso. The suspect threatened to kill her if she screamed, penetrated her vaginally, attempted to penetrate her anally, and forced her to perform fellatio.

The Aberdeen Police Department responded and began an immediate investigation. Detectives collected DNA, photographs, video footage of the suspect entering and leaving the hotel, and a Sexual Assault Forensic Examination was performed on the victim.

The Aberdeen Police Department posted a media release via Facebook seeking help identifying the suspect and his vehicle. An anonymous individual responded identifying the suspect as Earl Samuel Jones III of Ridge Road in Whiteford, Maryland. A vehicle registered to Jones and his wife matched the type of vehicle in which the suspect fled. Jones's wife contacted Detective Lightner identifying the pictures released on social media as her husband, provided Jones' clothing, which matched what was worn on the video, and his cell phone. A DNA analysis also confirmed Jones as the contributor to the DNA found inside the victim during the Sexual Assault Forensic Examination. Additionally, the victim drew a rendition of the distinctive cursive tattoo on the suspect's torso, which closely resembled the tattoo Jones had at arrest.

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On Thursday, August 22, 2024, Deputy State's Attorney David Ryden and Assistant State's Attorney Rebecca Malkowski requested a sentence of Life, suspend all but Sixty (60) years to serve, well over the Maryland Sentencing Guidelines, which were calculated at eighteen (18) to twenty-five (25) years. Conversely, the defense argued for a below-guidelines sentence. Ultimately, Judge Adkins-Tobin sentenced Jones to Life, suspend all but fifty (50) years to serve, requiring a 5-year period of supervised probation and lifetime sex offender registration upon release.

Following the sentencing hearing, State's Attorney Alison M. Healey issued the following statement: "This victim lived through every woman's worst nightmare. Asleep, attacked, and violated in the most horrific of ways, and now she is forced to forever live with the trauma of what Earl Jones did to her that September night. I applaud her bravery in presenting her impact statement to the court in sentencing and for her involvement with the investigation and prosecution of this case. This is another example of the aggressive and relentless manner in which my office will pursue above-guidelines sentences to seek justice for victims of violent crime."

State's Attorney Healey further thanks Deputy State's Attorney David Ryden and Assistant State's Attorney Rebecca Malkowski for their advocacy for the victim in this case, as well as their efforts in successfully securing such a significant sentence. She also thanks Aberdeen Police Department Patrol and Criminal Investigation Divisions, and specifically Detective Lightner, for diligently and swiftly identifying and apprehending the Defendant. She also expresses her gratitude to the Maryland State Police Forensic Sciences Division for their crucial work in conducting the DNA analysis, which was critical to the investigation.