

#### No Contest Plea Entered in Brown Co Sex Case

(KNZA)--A Country Club, Missouri man has entered a plea to a felony sex offense, canceling a three-day jury trial that had been set to begin Wednesday in Brown County District Court.

After rejecting previous inquiries at pleading to a sex crime, Brown County Attorney Kevin Hill says 20-year-old Russell Dafford had a change of heart on the eve of his trial and entered a "no contest" plea Tuesday afternoon to a charge of aggravated sexual battery. The victim was present in the courtroom to witness the plea.

Dafford had originally been charged with aggravated criminal sodomy.

Sentencing was set for November 16, and his bond was revoked.

Hill says Dafford faces a prison sentence of between 31 and 136 months, depending on his prior criminal history. In addition, Dafford will be required to register as a sex offender after his release from prison followed by lifetime post release supervision.

Dafford was arrested in early January following an investigation by the Hiawatha Police Department, which included a forensic examination of multiple cell phones devices. Hill says the forensic investigation of the cell phones resulted in the discovery of several damaging texts from Dafford to the victim and witnesses that were crucial to the state's case.

Many Signals Communications