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MADIGAN: TAZEWELL COUNTY OFFENDER DECLARED SEXUALLY VIOLENT

Chicago — Attorney General Lisa Madigan today announced that a Tazewell County man will remain in custody after being declared a Sexually Violent Person (SVP).

A Tazewell County jury Tuesday, May 23, found that John R. Smith, 34, is a Sexually Violent Person and as a result, he will remain in the custody of the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) for treatment instead of being released. Madigan's office, as well as local State's Attorney's Offices, handles the filing of such cases by the State of Illinois to keep sexually violent persons in custody.

"This verdict is a victory for the women and children of Illinois," Madigan said. "My office is committed to enforcing this law to protect our communities from sexually violent persons."

In the 1980s and 1990s, Smith committed several sex offenses against children in Macoupin, Christian and Tazewell Counties and was convicted of several sexually violent offenses. In 1990, he pleaded guilty to Criminal Sexual Abuse in Macoupin County. In 1993, Smith was found guilty of Aggravated Criminal Sexual Abuse in Christian County and in 1996 Smith was convicted in Tazewell County of Predatory Criminal Sexual Assault. He was sentenced to 12 years in the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC). Tuesday's verdict follows a petition for commitment that was filed by the Attorney General's office in June 2002. Smith has been detained at the IDHS Joliet Treatment and Detention Facility pending trial.

To be committed under the Sexually Violent Persons Commitment Act, Madigan said a person must have been convicted of a sexually violent offense and exhibit a mental disorder which creates a substantial probability that the person will commit future acts of sexual violence if released from custody. Once committed to IDHS, offenders are reevaluated on a regular basis to determine if they continue to meet the criteria for commitment as a SVP. Since its enactment in 1998, approximately 193 convicted sex offenders have been committed as SVPs under the Act. More than 100 additional commitment petitions have been filed by Madigan's office seeking commitment of offenders who otherwise would be released from prison.

Assistant Attorneys General Matthew Hoppock and Robert Hollinshead are handling the case for Madigan's Sexually Violent Persons Bureau.

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