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July 1, 2022
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CARROLL COUNTY JURY CONVICTS FARLIN BANEGAS-RUIZ OF RAPE, STATUTORY RAPE, AGGRAVATED CHILD MOLESTATION, INCEST, AND AGGRAVATED CHILD MOLESTATION

On June 29, 2022, a Carroll County jury convicted Farlin Enrique Banegas-Ruiz, 23, of Rape, Statutory Rape, two counts of Aggravated Child Molestation, two counts of Incest, and two counts of Child Molestation. Coweta Judicial Circuit Superior Court Judge Dustin Hightower presided over the trial. Sentencing has been scheduled for August 22, 2022.

Assistant District Attorney Maggie Meetze and Chief Assistant District Attorney Jep Bendinger prosecuted the case. Lieutenant Blake Hitchcock of the Carrollton Police Department was the lead investigator.

The investigation began on May 6, 2020, when the minor victim showed her mother a diary entry disclosing that an adult male relative, the defendant, had raped her three days prior. The victim was taken to the Stephanie V. Blank Center for Safe and Healthy Children at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta where a sexual assault examination revealed physical injuries consistent with the victim's disclosure. The victim was interviewed at the Carroll County Child Advocacy Center, where it was further revealed that the defendant touched the victim's intimate parts in numerous ways that violated Georgia law.

I am thankful to the Carroll County jurors for validating the child victim's courageous decision to testify in open court about these crimes by delivering a verdict of guilty in all counts. This case is a testament to the exemplary working relationship that exists between the Carrollton Police Department, Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, Carroll County Child Advocacy Center, and the Coweta Judicial Circuit District Attorney's Office. All of these organizations work together to protect children, to expose the truth, and to obtain justice.

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