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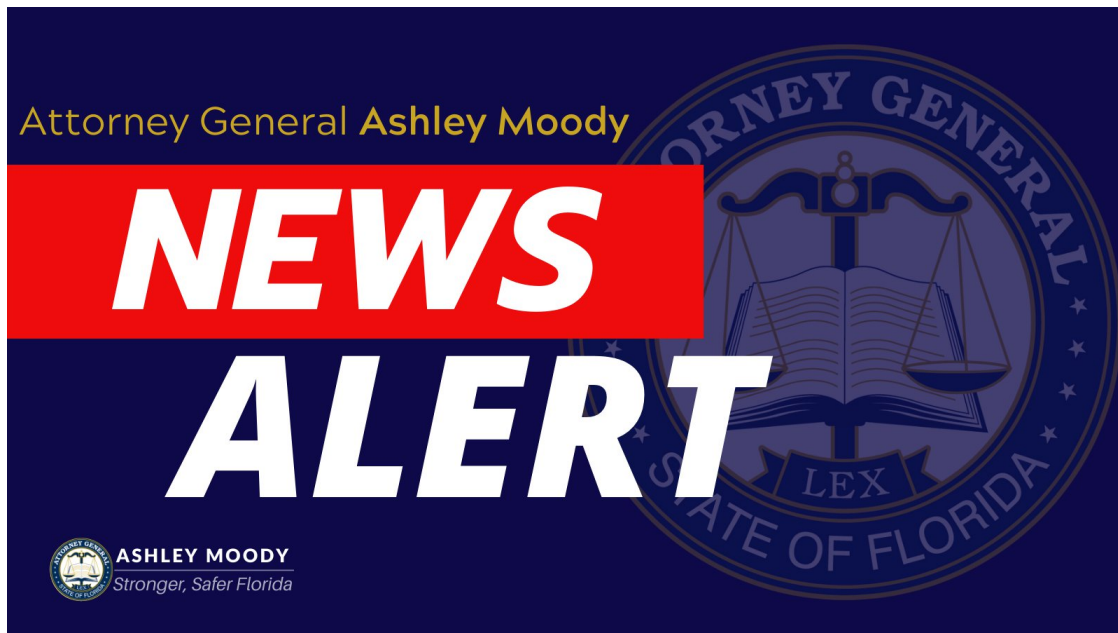
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OFFICE OF THE
ATTORNEY GENERAL
STATE OF FLORIDA

Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

20-Year Prison Sentence Secured for Child Sex Predator



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody’s Office of Statewide Prosecution today secured a 20-year prison sentence for a child sexual predator. Ryan Harding pleaded guilty to attempted sexual battery on a child under the age of 12 and several counts of possession of child pornography, among other charges stemming from his Aug. 28, 2018 arrest. Harding’s lengthy prison sentence will be followed by five years of sex offender probation. Harding will also have to register as a sex offender for the remainder of his life.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, “The abuse and exploitation of a child is an act of pure evil. It is incredibly disturbing and heartbreaking to learn of victims going through years of this form of physical and psychological torture. I am proud of my Statewide Prosecutors for securing a lengthy prison sentence in this case. I hope this will bring some peace of mind to the victim as the healing process continues.”

According to a June 2017 report filed with the St. John’s County Sheriff’s Office, between 2013 and 2017, Harding sexually molested a child who was between the ages of 11 and 14 during the time period of abuse. The sexual battery reportedly occurred in multiple counties, namely Citrus, Lake, Marion and Miami-Dade. The Florida Department of Law Enforcement investigated the case due to the multiple jurisdictions.

Harding pleaded guilty to one count of attempted sexual battery on a child under 12 years of

age, 13 counts of possession of child pornography, one count of promoting a sexual performance by a child, one count of transmission of materials harmful to minors and one count of use of a two-way communications device to facilitate the commission of a felony. Julie Sercus with the Attorney General's Office of Statewide Prosecution prosecuted the case.