

NEWS RELEASE

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March 28, 2018

Violent habitual felon sentenced to life in prison for sex assault

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – Charles Fitzgerald Harris was sentenced today to spend the rest of his life in prison after a jury found this violent habitual felon guilty of sexually assaulting a woman in front of her child. The trial, which began on March 19, 2018, was held in courtroom 5370 before The Honorable Nathaniel J. Poovey, Superior Court Judge.

The Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Special Victims Team tried Harris, 45, for 1) three counts of first-degree rape, 2) two counts of first-degree kidnapping, 3) seven counts of first-degree sex offense and 4) being a violent habitual felon. On March 27, 2018, the jury found Harris *guilty* of two counts of first-degree rape, one count of the lesser-included offense of second-degree rape, two counts of first-degree kidnapping, five counts of first-degree sex offense and two counts of the lesser-included offense of second-degree sex offense.



Charles Harris

Upon conviction of these offenses, the State proceeded to the next phase of the trial. Today, the jury found Harris *guilty* of being a violent habitual felon. Judge Poovey sentenced Harris to 12 consecutive sentences of *life in prison without the possibility of parole*.

In May 2016, Harris offered to drive the victim and her 11-year-old son to the airport. On the way, Harris pulled over and sexually assaulted the victim in the bed of his truck while her son was in the vehicle. Harris brandished a knife and then drove the victim and her son to his Charlotte home, where he continued to sexually assault the victim. Throughout the assault, Harris threatened to kill both the woman and her child and bury them together.

The victim's son managed to escape the home and call 911. When police arrived, the boy met officers outside. When officers entered the home, they found Harris holding down the victim. Police then took him into custody.

The victim and her son, now age 13, showed incredible strength and bravery at trial. Both took the stand to testify, and their testimony ensured that no one will ever be victimized by this violent offender.

The District Attorney's Office would also like to thank three additional women who were previously victimized by Harris and agreed to testify against him. Their testimony helped establish Harris' pattern of violent behavior toward women.

Note: For more information about the District Attorney's Office, visit www.charmeckda.com. For updates and other information, "like" the DA's Office on Facebook at www.facebook.com/charmeckda and follow us on Twitter: @CharMeckDA.

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