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November 13, 2024

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**James Edwin Cowan Pleads Guilty to Three Counts of Rape, Sentenced to 50 Years in Prison**

Ashdown, Arkansas – November 12, 2024 – James Edwin Cowan, 46, has pleaded guilty to three counts of rape involving his minor children, resulting in a 50-year prison sentence. As part of a negotiated plea agreement, Cowan was sentenced to 50 years in prison plus 30 years of a suspended sentence upon release. Under Arkansas sentencing guidelines, Cowan will be required to serve at least 70% of his 50-year sentence—35 years—before being considered for parole. By that time, Cowan will be roughly 81 years old, effectively making this sentence a life term.

The decision to offer a plea deal was made after significant consideration of the victims' wishes, as well as the severe emotional and psychological toll that a trial would have placed on them. This plea agreement was reached with careful attention to the needs of the victims, ensuring they would not have to endure the further trauma of testifying in a court trial.

"The safety and well-being of children is always a top priority for our office, and the resolution of this case reflects that commitment." Jana C. Bradford, 9 West Judicial District Prosecuting Attorney. "While no sentence can undo the harm done to these young victims, we hope this will provide a measure of justice and allow them to begin the long process of healing."

In addition to his sentence, Cowan will be required to register as a sex offender should he ever be granted parole.

This case underscores the critical importance of protecting vulnerable children from abuse and holding those who commit such heinous crimes fully accountable. The commitment to justice in this case, though it cannot undo the damage done to the victims, serves as a step toward their recovery and a message that such crimes will not be tolerated.

With any questions, please reach out directly to the 9 West Judicial District Attorney's Office at (870) 356-2900.