



Attorney General Doug Peterson

News Release

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Today in Hitchcock County District Court, John R. Leahy, age 25, was sentenced to 8-10 years for Possession with Intent to Deliver Methamphetamine; 24-30 years for kidnapping; and 18-20 years for manslaughter, resulting in a total sentence of 50-60 years.

The charges against Leahy resulted from an investigation by the Hitchcock County Sheriff's Office into the disappearance of Austin Wright, age 22, who was reported missing on March 9, 2014 by his mother. The body of Wright was found by deputies in a small oil well injection site A-frame on April 11, 2014. The cause of death was determined to be hypothermia. Wright was taken to a remote area in rural Hitchcock County by Leahy and told to get out of Leahy's vehicle in the late night or early morning hours of March 6 or 7th, 2014.

Wright had been staying at the Leahy residence for several days prior to being taken out into the country. Leahy maintained that Wright owed him money and also admitted to punching Wright before taking Wright out into the country. A sweatshirt was wrapped around Wright's head during the trip in order to confuse Wright so he would not know where he was at.

During the execution of a search warrant at the Leahy residence on April 9, 2014, Leahy was found in possession of 26 grams of methamphetamine.

Assistant Attorney General Doug Warner prosecuted the case, with the assistance of Hitchcock County Attorney, D. Eugene Garner.

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