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Ex-Campbell County Judge Timothy Nolan to serve 20 years, pay \$100K fine after plea

 cincinnati.com/story/news/crime/2018/02/09/ex-campbell-county-judge-timothy-nolan-serve-20-years-pay-100-k-fine-sex-trafficking-plea/323187002/
Scott Wartman

Former judge Tim Nolan pleads guilty to sex charges. Will spend 20 years in prison Scott Wartman

Former Judge Tim Nolan on Friday agreed to spend 20 years in prison for human trafficking.

He used drugs, threats of arrest and threats of eviction to force women and girls under the age of 18 into sex acts, according to the charges read in court by Judge Kathleen Lape.



Nolan pleaded guilty to 21 counts dating back to 2004. In addition to human trafficking and attempted human trafficking, the charges included giving drugs and alcohol to minors.

Under the plea agreement, Nolan will serve 20 years in prison and pay a \$100,000 fine. He would be eligible for parole in four years, his attorney said. The judge will sentence him on March 29.

The case has shocked the region. Nolan served as a district judge in the late 1970s and early 1980s and had become a well-known political figure. He campaigned locally for President Donald Trump, was vocal on many conservative/tea party issues, and was elected to the Campbell County School Board in 2016.

Nolan, 71, entered the courtroom in Newport in a gray suit with a calm expression as he surveyed the few people in the gallery, mostly media. No family from either side were in the courtroom.

After pleading guilty, Nolan thank his attorneys, the judge and a doctor who was involved in his case "who made me realize things."

"Thank you, judge, for your tolerance in this case," Nolan said.

For 10 minutes, Lape read the counts to Nolan, who pleaded guilty to each one.

The counts provided terse descriptions of what Nolan was alleged to have done. In some instances, he asked a minor to give her a backrub and engage in sexual conduct for money, according to the charges.

Here is what the charges read by Lape revealed:

- Nolan paid some victims with heroin and painkillers in exchange for sex.
- At least one victim lived on his property in southern Campbell County. He threatened eviction unless sex acts were performed.
- He threatened some victims with arrest, including telling one victim he'd call friends in the FBI and other law enforcement to arrest her.

Nolan faced more than 100 years in prison on 28 felony charges, including four counts of human trafficking of a minor. The total number of victims covered by the 21 charges he pleaded to is 19, including some juveniles.

"The punishment in this case does not undo the trauma inflicted on the victims, but it brings closure and some justice," said Attorney General Andy Beshear in a statement. "I want to thank the Campbell County Police Department and our special prosecutions team for working this case."

How did this former judge and community leader end up pleading to human trafficking?

It wasn't clear on Friday.

His attorney, Margo Grubbs, initially made Nolan available for an interview in the courtroom before bailiffs stopped it.

Grubbs said Nolan took responsibility for his actions. She made a cryptic reference to generational differences in how sex is viewed.

"He took full personal responsibility for these acts that in his potential day and generation would not necessarily be considered to rise to the level of human trafficking," Grubbs said.

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What is the change? The power differential between men and women, she said. She hinted that there was more to the story but would not elaborate.

"I'm saying the underlying facts as alleged by victims do not necessarily equate to what really happened, because we all know in life there are two sides to every story," Grubbs said. "The sad part of it is, often times the criminal defendant finds themselves at an insurmountable obstacle in order to prove complete innocence."

Nine victims alleged in sex charges against Tim Nolan, who was a district judge in Campbell County in the 1970s and 1980s. The Enquirer/Cara Owsley The Enquirer/Cara Owsley

Some of Nolan's pleas were Alford pleas, which means he doesn't admit to the behavior but believes there's overwhelming evidence to convict him. It means Nolan can appeal some of the charges.

"Mr. Nolan has been a public servant to the people of Campbell County for a majority of his life, and at some point there has to be a redemption for those who committed offenses but has to be balanced by what they have given," Grubbs said.

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