

## Union County State's Attorney

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### Press Release - For Immediate Release

Elk Point, S.D. – State's Attorney Jerry A. Miller said today that Taras James Michels, 41, North Sioux City, SD, plead guilty today in the 1<sup>st</sup> Circuit Court during his scheduled arraignment hearing to one count of first degree rape, a class C felony, and to one count of aggravated incest, a class 3 felony. The maximum sentence on a class C felony charge is life imprisonment without the possibility of parole and / or a fine of \$50,000 with a mandatory minimum sentence of 15 years. The maximum sentence on a class 3 felony is an additional 15 years in the penitentiary and / or a fine of \$30,000.

Michels was indicted on January 25, 2011 on the above listed charges. Today's plea stems from the rape of a child under the age of thirteen and an act of incest with a 16 year old child. Michels remains in the custody of the Union County Jail without bond.

A sentencing date has not been set at this time. This case was investigated by Chief Deputy Mike Bucholz with the Union County Sheriff's Office.