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June 16, 2017

## Press Release - For Immediate Release

Defendant's Name: Travis Brownell  
Age: 38  
City and State of residence: North City, SD  
Criminal File Number: 16-388  
Incident Date: August 24, 2016  
Date of Sentencing: March 29, 2017  
Convicted of: Ct. 1: Violation of No Contact Order (Domestic), 25-10-23, (M1)  
Defense Attorney: Andrew Twinamatsiko & Sabrina Sayler  
Prosecution Attorney: Jerry Miller

### Overall Synopsis:

On November 11, 2015, the file of 15-417 was created when law enforcement from the North Sioux City Police Department responded to a report of an aggravated assault at the Brownell residence (an apartment in Union County). Brownell is separated from his wife and has been for years. The victim in this case is the women that Brownell is currently dating, and the victim in this case and Travis Brownell are arguing about him seeing other women outside of this current relationship. The victim audio recorded part of this conversation with Brownell. Brownell became upset about the argument being recorded and the incident and a scuffle can be heard as Brownell attempts to gain control of the recording device. The victim provided the recording to law enforcement.

The victim in file 15-417 stated that she had been assaulted; then strangled; and then pushed in manner in which she fell backwards and struck her back on the corner of a bathroom counter top. Throughout the investigation that evening, the victim stayed consistent in her story. The next day, when interviewed by law enforcement, the victim remained consistent however, wavering only slightly. Thereafter, the victim engaged in an all-out campaign to recant and smear her own credibility to benefit Travis Brownell. The victim stated that she and Brownell enjoyed engaging in strangulation activities during sex and that as Brownell was a doctor, who has researched how to "safely" strangle someone for the purpose of enhancing sexual relations, and as such, the victim claimed that she had not been assaulted.

Here is the problem with the victim's new position involving strangulation during sex. The victim's original claim did not deal with strangulation during the throws of sexual relations. The victim's report to law enforcement was about Brownell's temper and the argument about him with other women. The Grand Jury saw through victim's attempt to sink the state's case and indicted Brownell anyway. As we progress further with this case, it appears that the victim was twisted up with the manipulations of the abuser reaching out to her to change her story for his benefit.

Before 15-417 was completed, Travis Brownell was charged in file 15-455 dealing with the offense that occurred on April 11, 2016, when Travis Brownell was accused by same victim in 15-417 of another altercation in which she claimed to have been hit with a dumbbell weight while at Brownell's apartment. Brownell was charged with simple assault (domestic) and with violating the terms and condition of his no contact order bond on a domestic abuse case. This time the

victim had visual swelling which was able to be photographed. Brownell plead guilty to the violation of the no contact order in file 15-455 and was sentenced to a suspended thirty-day sentence on the term and condition that he not have any like offenses in the next three-hundred and sixty days. This sentencing took place on April 21, 2016. Brownell was also fined \$1,000.00; court costs of \$84.00; and a \$25.00 domestic abuse fee.

Before 15-417 was completed, Travis Brownell was charged on December 9, 2015, in file 16-174 with a violation of a no contact order, a class 1 misdemeanor. Law enforcement identified specific evidence to show that Brownell was in contact with the same victim again as in file 15-417 while there was a no contact orders in place. This case revealed that Brownell and the victim were playing games with law enforcement. The victim conveniently could never find or provide law enforcement with her phone even when law enforcement produced a warrant for her phone. Law Enforcement had the same issues with Brownell's phone even though we had a warrant for his cell phone. This case revealed contact on multiple occasions back and forth between Brownell and the victim as well as the use of cell phone apps that allow a person to create a different phone number to avoid obvious detection of contact. Brownell plead guilty to the violation of the no contact order in file 15-174 and was sentenced to a suspended thirty-day sentence on the term and condition that he not have any like offenses in the next three-hundred and sixty days. This sentencing took place on April 21, 2016. Brownell was also fined \$1,000.00; court costs of \$84.00; and a \$25.00 domestic abuse fee.

On March 28, 2016, the Circuit Court sentenced Travis Brownell on file 15-417 on the charge of Simple Assault (Domestic) offense that occurred back on November 11, 2015. Brownell was sentenced to serve a sixty-day sentence in the Union County Jail with fifty-eight days suspended on the term and condition that Brownell not have any like violation for the following three-hundred and sixty days. Brownell was ordered to pay the following: \$84.00 in court costs; \$1000.00 in fines; and \$25.00 for the required domestic violence fee.

On June 11, 2016, Travis Brownell was charged with Failure to Vacate and Intentional Damage to property, which started File 16-237. This time, the victim in this case was Travis Brownell's estranged wife. Her statement to the court was very compelling and very detailed in the description of the events of June 11, 2016. There have been signed agreements between estranged couple that clearly sets out that marital home to be for the exclusive use of the wife and children without interference by Travis in which this has been the standard for nearly 5 years. Yet on June 11, 2016, Travis Brownell exerted his power and control over the calm status quo of his estranged wife and their children. The estranged wife to seek the aid of her brother-in-law. She came home to see Travis inside her house. Previously, She had changed the locks in the house further asserting her sense of security over the residence, however on this day of June 11, 2016, she finds that a crowbar was used to gain access to the residence. Two doors were damaged, the garage door leading into the residence and the sliding door. In this case, Travis wanted to store items inside the garage, and his estranged wife felt that she had to agree to convince him to leave. However, after she gave permission, Travis Brownell, never did come back to store a single item in the garage. The State believes that this is because this incident was not about him storing items in the garage, it was about disrupting the victim's life and exerting Travis' power and control over the women in his life. It was not until law enforcement was called that Travis fled his wife's house.

On this file, 16-237, Brownell plead guilty to ENTERING OR REFUSING TO LEAVE PROPERTY AFTER NOTICE (SDCL 22-35-6 (M1)). and was sentenced to a suspended thirty-

day sentence on the term and condition that he not have any like offenses in the next three-hundred and sixty days. This sentencing took place on December 1, 2016. Brownell was also fined \$300.00; court costs of \$84.00.

This brings us to file 16-388 in which Brownell is called on August 24, 2016 by law enforcement in an effort to serve a protection order on Travis Brownell. The Deputy calls Brownell at about 6:47 p.m. and talks to him for 2 minutes and 20 seconds. Another call at 7:00 p.m. for 3 minutes and 13 seconds; and another phone call at 7:07 p.m. for 59 seconds. During these phone calls, Brownell was first informed that the deputy was attempting to serve papers on him. Brownell said he was not in town and that he would give him a call when he could meet him. Brownell asked if the papers were for the divorce, the deputy said he didn't know what they were for. Brownell wanted to know what they were for and that if they were for a restraining order he would not cooperate. Brownell started to become upset wanting to know if estranged wife had filed a restraining order. Brownell eventually told the officer that he could shove the papers up his ass. Travis further stated that he has a family member in law enforcement and knows that the deputy knows what the papers are for. The Deputy then tells Brownell that the papers are in fact a protection order and told Brownell that he could not contact his estranged wife or his daughters or come within 300 feet of them now that he knows of the existence of the temporary protection order. The Deputy could tell that Brownell was upset and stated in his report that he thought Brownell was crying. Again the Deputy told Brownell that he could not contact them or he would go to jail. **Travis Brownell told the deputy that he can do whatever he wants because he had not been served the papers.**

At 7:23 p.m. on August 24, 2016, Travis Brownell did what he wanted to do even though he was advised of the protection order, Brownell began to harass his estranged wife by texting her. This was reported to law enforcement. Brownell's phone number also called his estranged wife numerous times during this time frame but his calls were ignored.

At 10:00 p.m. on August 24, 2016, a deputy was sitting near the Brownell residence waiting to make contact with Brownell. Both Brownell and his current girlfriend's vehicle were seen leaving the Dakota Dunes at the same time. When the officer attempted to get in behind the vehicles to determine who was driving which vehicle, both vehicles sped off at a high rate of speed onto the interstate and quickly into Iowa. The deputy stayed in the Brownell's neighborhood waiting for him to return until 2:20 a.m. on August 25, 2016.

At 8:40 a.m. on August 25, 2016, Travis Brownell continued his harassment of estranged wife by continuing to text her and telling her that he was going to go the children's school. Protective measure had to be implemented.

On March 21, 2017, law enforcement was called by the first victim indicated above, Brownell's girlfriend, by and through a 911 call which resulted in another law enforcement event. This event did not result in charges. The victim can be heard on the recording even before 911 answers the call saying to Brownell, "You're going to jail not me". Muffled voices are heard in the background prior to the 911 call ending. Law Enforcement responded, and over the course of 33 minutes with law enforcement on scene trying to determine if there was a crime that had occurred, the victim and Travis Brownell, stand behind a door and refuse to let law enforcement in to the apartment to assess if there has been a crime committed. The door was opened only when officers were about to kick the door in.

**Sentencing Synopsis:**

On the charge of Violation of a No Contact Order, a class 1 misdemeanor, the Court took into account all the aggravating issues in Brownell's recent issues in front of the court, as well as the issues with Travis Brownell's life and the statements from the victim and weighed that with the mitigating statements brought up by his counsel and handed down the following sentence.

Travis Brownell was sentenced to serve 120 days in the Union County Jail with 60 days suspended on the terms and condition that Brownell not have any like offences for the next 360 days; and that he not have any contact with the victim in file 16-338 that does not have a legitimate purpose; and that Brownell pay all of his monetary obligations ordered by this court, which include \$84 in Court Costs; \$69 in Prosecution Costs and a fine in the amount of \$350. Brownell is to report to the Union County Jail on Tuesday, May 2, 2017 to begin serving his 60-day sentence.

**Criminal History Synopsis:**

See above