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## Jury finds sex offender not guilty of new charges

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A Geneva County jury recently found a convicted sex offender not guilty of sex abuse of a 6-year-old girl.

Dennis Anthony, 51, of Earl Menshew Street in Geneva, was arrested on Aug. 16, 2007, about six weeks after the alleged sexual assault was reported. He was then charged with felony first-degree sex abuse.

*"It's probably the longest trial we've had here that wasn't a murder trial. But that's what the system is for, everybody gets their day in court."*

**Stephen Smith**  
assistant district attorney

Assistant District Attorney Stephen Smith said the jury returned its verdict Friday morning on the fifth day of the trial. Anthony faced between two and 20 years in prison if he'd been convicted of the Class B felony. Smith said the victim was one of five witnesses who testified for the prosecution. Anthony was one of three people who testified for the defense.

"It's probably the longest trial we've had here that wasn't a murder trial," Smith said. "But that's what the system is for. Everybody gets their day in court."

Smith said the defense argued the child was told to report the crime because of a custody issue. Anthony's defense lawyer, Tommy Scarborough, could not be reached for comment.

Anthony had previously plead no contest to sexual contact with a 4-year-old child in Michigan in 1989. Anthony pleaded guilty in Geneva County in 2006 to failure to register as a convicted sex offender.

Smith said Anthony also has a pending felony violation of the Alabama community notification act. Smith said Anthony was charged with violation of the act for living in the same home as a 6-year-old and 12-year-old child. He could face one to 10 years in prison if convicted of the pending Class C felony charge against him.