

# After positive drug test during miscarriage, woman sentenced to prison

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A Geneva County judge sentenced a woman to prison Wednesday after she pleaded guilty to a felony charge involving a positive test for two illegal drugs during a miscarriage of her child.

District Attorney Kirke Adams said Circuit Court Judge William Filmore denied a probation request made by 22-year-old Kayla Braden. She pleaded guilty last month to felony chemical endangerment of a child, felony second-degree assault and misdemeanor public intoxication.

Braden received a 54-month sentence for both the chemical endangerment and felony assault charges, to be

served concurrently for one four-and-a-half year sentence. She also received a 12-month sentence for the public intoxication charge, which was ordered to



Braden

be served concurrently, or at the same time, as the 54-month sentence.

Braden will now serve out her sentence within the state Department of Corrections.

Adams said the charges stemmed from Geneva police arresting Braden on Feb. 19, 2015, for felony unlawful possession of a controlled substance and public intoxication.

"She then admitted she was pregnant and using

drugs," Adams said.

Adams said two days later police were called by officials at a local hospital. He said police learned Braden had a miscarriage. He said police obtained a search warrant and sent the fetus to the state Department of Forensic Sciences, which later showed positive tests for amphetamine and marijuana.

Adams said a Geneva County grand jury returned an indictment in August 2015 charging Braden with felony chemical endangerment of a child. He said another grand jury indicted Braden in October 2015 for felony second-degree assault, charging her with punching a female corrections officer at the Geneva County Jail.

Adams said he believes some of the comments Braden made to police during questioning at the hospital after the miscarriage made an impact at her probation hearing. Geneva Police Capt. Ricky Morgan testified at Braden's probation hearing of what Braden told him about her unborn child.

"Morgan's testimony caught the attention of the judge, in my opinion," Adams said. "Ricky Morgan testified at her probation hearing that she told him 'I don't know why you're (expletive) with me; it's just a piece of trash; just go on and throw it away.'"

Adams said the victim of the felony assault charge also testified, describing Braden as a less than

model inmate at the county jail.

"There's a fine line under the chemical endangerment charge of putting somebody in jail or getting them help," Adams said. "But it appeared from Ms. Braden's attitude that she did not want any help, and her attitude about the miscarriage was appalling to law enforcement, my office and obviously Judge Filmore."

Court records show Braden to have had a prior conviction for felony neglect and abuse of a disabled adult in Henry County. Records show Braden was sentenced in November 2015 to 12 months in the county jail, which was suspended for 24 months on good behavior.