



PRESS RELEASE

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**SHIPROCK, N.M., MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO
FEDERAL CHILD SEX ABUSE CHARGES**

ALBUQUERQUE – Yesterday in Albuquerque federal court, Delbert Begaye, 56, a member of the Navajo Nation who resides in Shiprock, N.M., pled guilty to an information charging him with two counts of aggravated sexual abuse of a child under the age of 12.

Under the terms of his plea agreement, Begaye will be sentenced to ten years of imprisonment to be followed by not more than five years of supervised release. Begaye also will be required to register as a sex offender. Begaye is detained pending his sentencing hearing, which has yet to be scheduled.

As to the first count of the information, Begaye's plea agreement states that between March 1989 and Oct. 1989, Begaye engaged in sexual acts with a child who was approximately ten years of age on approximately six occasions. Begaye admitted that, on each of the six occasions, he forcibly grabbed and carried the child victim into her home where he sexually assaulted her. The child victim did not disclose the assaults because Begaye threatened to physically harm the victim's sibling. The assaults occurred in Hogsback, N.M., which is located within the Navajo Indian Reservation.

As to the second count, Begaye's plea agreement states that between Jan. 1991 and Dec. 1995, he engaged in sexual acts with a child who had not attained the age of 12. Begaye admitted that he sexually assaulted the child victim on multiple occasions during this five year period. The assaults occurred in Indian Village, N.M., which is located within the Navajo Indian Reservation.

U.S. Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales said that Begaye's criminal conduct first came to light on Feb. 13, 2012, when a 32-year-old Navajo woman reported to the FBI and Navajo Nation Department of Public Safety that Begaye had sexually assaulted her in 1989, when she was a child. Subsequent investigation revealed that Begaye also had sexually assaulted the child victim referred to in the second count of the information. Begaye was arrested on a criminal complaint on Feb. 22, 2012; he has been in federal custody since that time.

The case was investigated by the FBI and the Shiprock Division of the Navajo Nation Department of Public Safety, and is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Niki Tapia-Brito.

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