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On January 30, 2023, Steven Jay Friedman, 40, of Forest Hill, Maryland was convicted of Second Degree Rape, Sexual Offense in the Third Degree, Second Degree Assault, and Furnishing for or Allowing Underage Consumption following a bench trial in the Circuit Court for Harford County. The charges are the result of a Harford County Sheriff's Office investigation, which found that Friedman lured a sixteen-year-old neighbor into his home and sexually assaulted her after providing her alcohol on February 18, 2022.

The victim testified during the trial before the Honorable Judge Yolanda L. Curtin that she regularly takes walks in the neighborhood and a resident, identified as Friedman, approached her at approximately 5:00 p.m., stating that he had been watching her take her walks and thought she was very attractive. Friedman invited the victim into his residence to provide her alcohol. While in the residence, Friedman reached under her shirt and bra and touched her breast. The victim testified that she was too intoxicated to say no. Friedman overcame her attempts to resist and performed oral sex on her while digitally penetrating her without her consent. During the incident, Friedman's family came home, and Friedman interacted with them before escorting the victim out of the residence undetected. The victim preserved video evidence of Friedman providing her alcohol and confirming the sexual contact. Friedman was interviewed by members of the Harford County Sheriff's Office's Criminal Investigative Division and admitted to providing the victim alcohol and to the sexual contact.

The Honorable Judge Curtin remanded Friedman to the custody of the Harford County Detention Center following his convictions. Friedman faces up to 20 years of incarceration. Sentencing will be scheduled following the completion of a Pre-Sentence Investigation.

State's Attorney Alison M. Healey stated after the verdict was pronounced by the Court: "The conviction of Steven Friedman for this heinous and predatory crime gives the victim of this case closure to a difficult chapter that no individual deserves, and especially not a child. We will be seeking a maximum sentence to ensure this sexual predator is removed from our community for the protection of other children and our citizens. I commend the victim and her family for reporting the assault and for the bravery she exhibited by testifying at trial."

Ms. Healey thanks Assistant State's Attorney Matthew George for his hard work on this case for the last year and for taking the matter to trial to seek justice for this victim. Ms. Healey further thanks Deputy First Class Mansell, Detective Sergeant, and the Harford County Sheriff's Office's Criminal Investigative Division for their efforts in thoroughly investigating the case.

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