

Sentence Review Division  
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**FILED**  
**6/1/2026**  
SENTENCE REVIEW DIVISION  
OF THE SUPREME COURT  
OF THE STATE OF MONTANA

SENTENCE REVIEW DIVISION OF THE SUPREME COURT OF MONTANA

STATE OF MONTANA, ) Cause No. DC-9-2024-0000010  
)  
Plaintiff, ) Custer County District Court  
)  
) Montana Sixteenth Judicial District  
-vs- )  
) **DECISION**  
JONATHON MATTHEW COUSINS, )  
)  
Defendant. )

On November 24, 2025, the Defendant was sentenced to Fifty (50) Years to a Montana State Prison for the offense of Count I: Sexual Assault, a Felony, in violation of §45-5-502, MCA, none suspended. Further, eligibility for release to parole was restricted to after completing Fifteen (15) Years of commitment. It was recommended that prior to parole that the Defendant successfully completed the criminal thinking, victim empathy, and sexual offender treatment program provided or approved by the Department of Corrections based on a risk and needs assessment of the Defendant. The parole restriction was to allow the Defendant sufficient time to complete and internalize the Sexual Offender Treatment, distorted thinking, and victim empathy programming available through the Department of Corrections. The evaluation's insight on the Defendant's prognosis for treatment supports a concern that the Defendant may require additional time to integrate the programing into his thinking. The term protected the community during this time of redevelopment and rehabilitation. It was recommended that upon parole that the Defendant be required to successfully complete community based sexual offender treatment programming based on a risk and needs. Based on the recommendation from the Psychosexual Evaluation authored by Christopher Quigley, LCSW, the Defendant was designated a Tier II / Moderate Risk Sexual Offender. The Defendant shall register as a sexual offender based on the designated risk level. The Defendant shall not knowingly have any contact, oral, written, electronic, or through a third party, with the victim, S.R., or with her parents, or members of S.R.'s household. The Defendant shall maintain a distance of at least 500 feet from S.R. unless such contact was voluntarily initiated and consented to by S.R. through the Montana Department of Corrections. The Defendant was credited with 98 days of pre-sentence/pre-conviction incarceration served through November 24, 2025, pursuant to §46-18-403(1), MCA. No credit was granted against the financial obligations for pre-conviction incarceration, pursuant to 46-18-403(2), MCA.

On May 7, 2026, the Defendant's Application for review of that sentence came on for hearing by Zoom videoconference before the Sentence Review Division of the Montana Supreme Court (hereafter "the Division"). The Defendant appeared from the Montana State Prison and was represented by Lane K. Bennett and Shenandoah Roath. The State was not represented. The Defendant did not give a statement.

Before hearing the Application, the Defendant was advised that the Division has the authority not only to reduce the sentence or affirm it but also increase it. The Defendant was further advised that there is no appeal from a decision of the Division. The Defendant acknowledged that he understood this and stated that he wished to proceed.

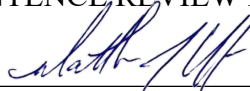
Rule 12, Rules of the Sentence Review Division of the Supreme Court of Montana, provides that, "The sentence imposed by the District Court is presumed correct. The sentence shall not be reduced or increased unless it is clearly inadequate or clearly excessive." (Section 46-18-904(3), MCA).

It is the unanimous decision of the Division that the sentence imposed is clearly excessive. Neither the written judgment and sentence nor the record provided to the Sentence Review Division adequately explains imposition of a sentence so far in excess of the recommended sentence and sentences received by comparable offenders. The Division's decision is to amend the Judgment. The Judgment in this case is **MODIFIED to a fifty (50) years commitment to the Montana State Prison, with thirty (30) years suspended. The parole restrictions, and terms and conditions imposed in the original Judgment of November 25, 2025, are not clearly excessive and are affirmed.**

Pursuant to §46-18-904(3), MCA, the District Court shall resentence the Defendant in accordance with the Sentence Review Division's Decision and file an Amended Judgment.

DATED this 1st day of June, 2026.

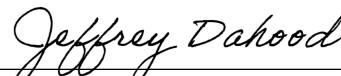
SENTENCE REVIEW DIVISION



Hon. Matthew Cuffe, Chairperson



Hon. Christopher Abbott, Member



Hon. Jeffrey Dahood, Member

Copies mailed or emailed this 1st day of June, 2026, to:

Clerk of District Court (Original)  
Jonathon Matthew Cousins #3040061, Defendant (2)  
Hon. Michael Hayworth  
Lane Bennett, Esq. Defense Counsel  
Shawn Quinlan, Esq.  
Board of Pardons and Parole  
Montana State Prison - Records Dept.



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Dia C. Lang, Office Administrator  
Sentence Review Division