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For Immediate Release

EMERGENCY SERVICES OPERATOR FOUND GUILTY

Today a 36th District Court jury found 911 operator Sharon Nichols guilty of Willful Neglect of Duty, MCL 750.478, a misdemeanor punishable by up to one year in jail. She will be sentenced on March 11, 2008 before Judge Paula Humphries.

On February 20, 2006, five-year old Robert Turner called 911 from his home in the 1900 block of Spruce in Detroit, Michigan because his mother needed emergency medical care. Two Emergency Services Operators, Sharon Nichols, 43 and Terri Sutton, 47 of Detroit took calls from Robert.

Ms. Nichols took the five-year old child's call at approximately 5:59 p.m. on February 26, 2006, and spoke with him for approximately 43 seconds. She failed to adhere to the pattern of questioning designed to evaluate a call and she failed to treat the call as an emergency. No police car was sent to the Spruce Street address.

"We are thrilled that the jury found Ms. Nichols' defense to be without merit," said Assistant Prosecutor Lora Weingarten. "Her defense was that she could not hear the child. If that were true how could she tell it was a prank call? "

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