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Former Sheriff's Deputy Sentenced for Molesting Daughter

Man pleaded guilty to three counts of child molestation in exchange for a three year sentence.

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NBCSanDiego

John Eric Freeman, 53, of Concord, was sentenced Friday.

A Concord man and former Alameda County sheriff's deputy was sentenced Friday to three years in prison for molesting one of his daughters throughout her childhood.

John Eric Freeman, 53, of Concord, pleaded guilty earlier this year to three counts of child molestation in exchange for the three year sentence handed down in Contra Costa County Superior Court this afternoon after hearing emotional statements from his four daughters and ex-wife.

Judge Brian Haynes said Freeman would be paroled for five years after his release from prison an required to register as a lifetime sex offender for the repeated sexual abuse of his daughter, which was initially reported in 2002.

Freeman, wearing a plaid shirt and black jeans, faced his family members as they addressed him from across the courtroom today.

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"You could have been such a better person, a better father, a better man, but you chose to be a coward and give in to your sexual perversions," said Freeman's ex-wife and mother of the victim, who said she first learned of the abuse in 2002. "The damage you have caused will last our lifetime."

She and others who spoke during today's sentencing noted that Freeman had been molested by his own father as a boy.

"I was forced to grow up when I was a child - I

was forced to think of how I could protect my baby sister from a monster when I was nine years old," said the victim, addressing her father today. "I could've chosen to be like you, I could've chosen to be a monster, I could've chosen to be the victim of my situation, but I didn't, and it's a choice that you could've made."

After handing down the sentence, Haynes shared some words of encouragement with the defendant's family members, including the victim and her step-sister, who said she was

also raped by Freeman as a child.

The judge condemned Freeman's acts as "disgusting" and "downright creepy" and said he had dishonored his former role as a law enforcement officer.

"You spent many years as a police officer investigating theft offenses...what you did, you tried to steal someone's humanity - how dare you do that!" Haynes said, pointing at the defendant.

Freeman did not look at his ex-wife or daughters as he was handcuffed and led out of the courtroom.

Deputy District Attorney Paul Graves, who prosecuted the case, said in 2008, Freeman was charged in a police sting for attempting to make sexual contact with a minor, for which he served three months in jail.

The same year, Freeman was investigated but never charged for the reported statutory rape of a 16-year-old while he was on duty as a sheriff's deputy, Graves said.

Bay City News contributed to this report.

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