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MAN CONVICTED OF TWO COUNTS OF ASSAULT ON A POLICE OFFICER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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On Tuesday, March 14, 2017, a Victoria County jury convicted Mark Brandon Hudson of two counts of Assault on a Public Servant. At trial, the State presented evidence showing that on or about March 19, 2016, the Defendant placed Victoria Police Officer Matthew Hayles in a chokehold and struck Victoria Police Officer Russell Copeland in the face or neck with a closed fist. Officers Hayles and Copeland were responding to a reported disturbance and were in the process of placing the Defendant under arrest for public intoxication when the assaults occurred. In the course of resisting arrest, the Defendant and two officers ended up on the ground, where the Defendant choked Officer Hayles hard enough to impede his breathing and prevent him from calling out. As Officer Copeland assisted, the Defendant struck him with a closed fist, which Officer Hayles testified was “a solid strike.”

A Victoria County grand jury indicted the Defendant in April of 2016. The Defendant’s trial lasted one day, as only Officer Hayles testified for the State. Officer Copeland is currently on military leave from the Victoria Police Department with the United States Army and was unavailable for trial. The Defendant was nonetheless convicted for assaulting both Officer Hayles and Officer Copeland. At closing argument, ACDA Thomas Dillard argued that victims should not sacrifice the protection of the law merely because they are unavailable for court and charged the jury to protect Victoria’s police officers. The jury returned the next day and sentenced the Defendant to five years in prison plus a \$5,000 fine. ACDA Jacquelyn Johnson assisted in the prosecution of the Defendant.

