

NAACP criticizes order

by UPI

ATLANTA - An NAACP leader has criticized a Georgia judge's cancellation of a bond hearing for a man convicted of child molestation.

"The NAACP is convinced that justice has taken a summer vacation in Georgia," Dr. Francys Johnson, the organization's southeast regional director, said, the Atlanta Journal-Constitution reported.

Superior Court Judge David Emerson on Wednesday issued an order canceling a July 5 bond hearing for Genarlow Wilson, 21, who is serving a 10-year prison sentence for receiving oral sex at a 2003 New Year's Eve party from a 15-year-old girl. The age of consent in Georgia is 16.

The state Legislature last year changed the crime to a misdemeanor punishable by one year in prison, the newspaper reported.

Another judge reduced Wilson's conviction to a misdemeanor and approved an appeal of his sentence.

Wednesday's order could keep Wilson in jail for months, the newspaper reported.

"As the court has no authority to grant an appeal bond in this case, there is no need for an evidentiary hearing on the defendant's eligibility for a bond," Emerson wrote.

Johnson said the order is "the latest of series of rulings that strains common sense and leave the overwhelming impression that the system is working overtime to keep Genarlow Wilson behind bars."

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