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## Woman allegedly raped by bondsman files lawsuit

By Anika Myers Palm and Bianca Prieto, Orlando Sentinel  
12:23 p.m. EST, February 1, 2010

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Allen Robert Burns

A woman who accuses her bail bondsman of sexual battery announced today that she is suing the man and his agency.

The woman, who is remaining anonymous because of the nature of the incident, filed the lawsuit today against Allen Robert Burns Jr., the man she said coerced her into sex, asking for unspecified damages. Burns was an employee of the Michael C. Snapp Bonding Agency on John Young Parkway.

"I felt like he violated my privacy," the 20-year-old Ocoee woman.

The woman's lawyer, Richard Schwamm of Halicer, Pettis & Schwamm, said the suit was filed, in part, to generate public awareness about the case.

"She does not want this to happen to others," Schwamm said. "She is a victim of sexual assault. She feels victimized, she feels violated and hurt."

The Orange County Sheriff's Office is investigating the incident and asks other victims to come forward.

Attempts to contact Burns, 36, of Apopka, about the woman's claims were unsuccessful.

The woman, who is using the initials S.B. in the lawsuit, said her troubles began about 4 p.m. Jan. 19, when she called Burns about \$250 she owed the bonding agency related to her October arrest on theft charges.

She told him that she didn't have the \$250, but he told her to come to the office anyway.

He said to come alone, but she instead arrived about an hour later with her husband, who remained in their vehicle with their infant while she went inside to sign paperwork.

Burns again demanded money, but said he would accept the title to her vehicle. When the woman asked to leave the agency to ask her husband to go home to collect the truck's title, Burns told her to call him from the agency's phone, she said. She did, and her husband left.

That was when it happened: He placed a sign on the front door, locked it, and told her to follow him to another room and remove her clothes.

"He told me 'either this or you're going to get arrested,'" the woman said, adding that she felt she had no choice but to comply.

An Orange County Sheriff's Office report details a graphic encounter between the two. In the lawsuit to be filed today, she claims she has suffered physical pain, mental anguish and humiliation as a result of the incident.

The theft charge filed against the woman was dropped Jan. 25.

Since the incident, she said she's had trouble coming to terms with what happened to her.

"I'm scared," she said. "I'm afraid of my own house, [and] when I'm driving."

She continues to be angry with Burns and conflicted about whether she wants an apology from him.

"I don't want to ever see him again," she said.

Burns has been accused of similar sex crimes in the past, the Sheriff's Office said.

In February 2005, deputies investigated a claim that Burns assaulted a woman who said she had a friendly relationship with the bail bondsman.

While the two were resting after drinking several beers, Burns had sex with the woman, who told deputies that she was frightened and neither consented to sex nor told Burns to stop, according to an incident report. No arrests were made in the case.

Sgt. Richard Mankewich of the sex-crimes unit said the Sheriff's Office had referred a 2008 sexual-battery claim involving Burns to Orlando police. Details about that case were not immediately available.

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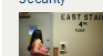
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