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DISTRICT I

July 14, 2026

To:

Hon. Jean M. Kies
Circuit Court Judge
Electronic Notice

Timothy C. Drewa
Electronic Notice

Anna Hodges
Clerk of Circuit Court
Milwaukee County Safety Building
Electronic Notice

William Stone 293357
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500 E. Parrish St.
Prairie Du Chien, WI 53821-2730

John Blimling
Electronic Notice

You are hereby notified that the Court has entered the following opinion and order:

2024AP2071-CRNM State of Wisconsin v. William Stone (L.C. # 2020CF2494)

Before Donald, C.J., Colón, P.J., and Geenen, J.

Summary disposition orders may not be cited in any court of this state as precedent or authority, except for the limited purposes specified in WIS. STAT. RULE 809.23(3).

William Stone appeals from his judgment of conviction for soliciting prostitutes. Stone's appellate counsel has filed a no-merit report pursuant to *Anders v. California*, 386 U.S. 738 (1967) and WIS. STAT. RULE 809.32 (2023-24).¹ Stone received a copy of the report and filed

¹ The no-merit report was filed by Attorney Douglas C. McIntosh, who has been replaced by Attorney Timothy C. Drewa as Stone's appellate counsel.

several responses.² Counsel filed a supplemental no-merit report, and Stone filed an additional response. Upon this court's independent review of the record as mandated by **Anders**, counsel's reports, and Stone's responses, we conclude there are no issues of arguable merit that could be pursued on appeal. We therefore summarily affirm.

In July 2020, S.J.W. reported to police that Stone had been forcing her to engage in prostitution since April. She also stated that Stone had been physically violent toward her. Stone was arrested and charged with receiving compensation from human trafficking and soliciting prostitutes.

Stone opted to resolve these charges with a plea. He pled guilty to the charge of soliciting prostitutes, with the receiving compensation for human trafficking charge dismissed but read in for sentencing purposes. The circuit court imposed an evenly bifurcated six-year sentence. This no-merit appeal follows.

In the no-merit report, appellate counsel addresses two issues: whether there would be arguable merit to appealing the validity of Stone's plea; and whether there would be arguable merit to a claim that the circuit court erroneously exercised its discretion in sentencing Stone. We agree with appellate counsel's analysis that there would be no arguable merit to an appeal of either of these issues.

A plea is invalid if it is not knowingly, voluntarily, and intelligently entered. **State v. Bangert**, 131 Wis. 2d 246, 257, 389 N.W.2d 12 (1986). This may be established if the

² Stone filed his initial response approximately five months after the filing deadline. See WIS. STAT. RULE 809.32(1)(e). He filed another response shortly after that, as well as an additional response in July 2026.

requirements set forth in WIS. STAT. § 971.08 and **Bangert** are not met during the plea colloquy by the circuit court. **State v. Brown**, 2006 WI 100, ¶¶23, 34-35, 293 Wis. 2d 594, 716 N.W.2d 906.

The record here reflects that the plea colloquy by the circuit court complied with these requirements. Furthermore, the circuit court confirmed that Stone signed and understood the plea questionnaire and waiver of rights form, which further demonstrates that Stone's plea was knowingly, voluntarily, and intelligently entered. See **State v. Moederndorfer**, 141 Wis. 2d 823, 827, 416 N.W.2d 627 (Ct. App. 1987). We therefore agree with appellate counsel's assessment that there would be no arguable merit to a challenge of the validity of Stone's plea.

With regard to sentencing, the record reflects that the circuit court properly exercised its discretion in considering relevant sentencing objectives and factors. See **State v. Gallion**, 2004 WI 42, ¶17, 270 Wis. 2d 535, 678 N.W.2d 197; **State v. Ziegler**, 2006 WI App 49, ¶23, 289 Wis. 2d 594, 712 N.W.2d 76. In its analysis, the court considered S.J.W.'s statement at sentencing, where she described being forced by Stone to engage in prostitution, as well as her account of the physical violence she endured. The court found her to be very credible. The court also considered Stone's extensive criminal history, spanning twenty-five years.

Furthermore, Stone's sentence, while at the statutory maximum for this offense, is presumed not to be unduly harsh or unconscionable. See **State v. Grindemann**, 2002 WI App 106, ¶32, 255 Wis. 2d 632, 648 N.W.2d 507. Therefore, we agree with appellate counsel's conclusion that there would be no arguable merit to a challenge of Stone's sentence.

In his responses, Stone alleges that he did not agree to the filing of a no-merit report. However, the supplemental no-merit report states that counsel's case file demonstrates that all

requirements were followed. Attorney McIntosh filed a motion to withdraw from representation with the circuit court at Stone's request, but the motion was denied when Stone failed to respond to the court's order to demonstrate his understanding of the risks and consequences of proceeding pro se. Attorney McIntosh subsequently attempted to contact Stone to determine whether he would consent to closing his file without further representation, explaining that a no-merit report would otherwise be filed. Stone did not respond, and the no-merit report was filed.

Stone also makes allegations of misconduct by his trial counsel in his responses. However, the allegations are speculative, as Stone provides no factual basis to support them.

Our independent review of the record discloses no other potential issues for appeal. Accordingly, this court accepts the no-merit report, affirms the conviction, and discharges appellate counsel of the obligation to represent Stone further in this appeal.

Therefore,

IT IS ORDERED that the judgment is summarily affirmed. *See* WIS. STAT. RULE 809.21.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Attorney Timothy C. Drewa is relieved of further representation of William Stone in this matter. *See* WIS. STAT. RULE 809.32(3).

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this summary disposition order will not be published.

Samuel A. Christensen
Clerk of Court of Appeals