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Doctor appears in court to answer Ohio sex charge

- The Gazette Staff
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A Billings Clinic physician appeared in an Ohio courtroom Friday and pleaded not guilty to a felony sex offense.

Dr. Patrick Muffley appeared in the Gallia County Court of Common Pleas on a charge of gross sexual imposition. According to court records, Muffley was released on a \$10,000 bond. A status conference was scheduled for Nov. 19, and trial was set for Feb. 7.

Muffley, 37, an obstetrician/gynecologist, was arrested at Billings Clinic on Sept. 20 on a warrant issued in Ohio as the result of an April 20 grand jury indictment.

Billings Clinic officials said Muffley began work at that hospital on May 15 and had previously passed a background check. Muffley was placed on administrative leave following his arrest, hospital officials said.

Court records in the Ohio criminal case allege that Muffley compelled a female victim to have sexual contact by force or threat of force between April 17 and April 24, 2006.

Court documents provide no further details.

Brad Arndorfer, a Billings attorney who represented Muffley after his arrest, said the doctor was surprised by the allegation and denied that it involved a patient.

Muffley was released from the Yellowstone County jail three days after his arrest when Ohio authorities agreed to permit him to return to that state voluntarily.

Before joining Billings Clinic, Muffley worked at a hospital in Gallipolis, Ohio.