

Judge allows public viewing of tape in R. Kelly case

CHICAGO (AP) — A judge will allow the public and the media to view a videotape in court that prosecutors allege shows singer R. Kelly having sex with an underage girl.

In his ruling Thursday, Judge Vincent Gaughan said he saw no “overarching interest” in banning the tape from public view.

“This is the whole crux and linchpin of the case,” Gaughan said. “If there was no tape, we wouldn’t have a case.”

Kelly has pleaded not guilty to 14 counts of child pornography. Prosecutors claim the videotape was made sometime during a nearly three-year span between January 1998 and October 2000, when the girl may have been as young as 13.

Prosecutors and defense attorneys had asked Gaughan to limit the viewing of the video to only jurors, attorneys and the judge himself. They argued that the video is so lewd it would embarrass the girl, who is now 21.

Assistant Cook County State’s Attorney Shauna Boliker said prosecutors do not plan to call the girl as a witness.

A trial date has not been set.