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Jury unanimously convicts man following bias crime that occurred during Pride Month

Today, Multnomah County District Attorney Rod Underhill announced that a jury unanimously convicted 45-year-old Rodney Rodell Henry of one count of intimidation in the second degree and one count of harassment following a bias crime that happened days before the community celebrated the annual Pride festival in downtown Portland.

The jury returned its verdict on Wednesday and found that Henry unlawfully and intentionally, because of his perception of the sexual orientation of the victim, subjected the victim to offensive physical contact and that he unlawfully and intentionally harassed and annoyed the victim.

During trial, the state presented evidence to show that on June 7, 2019, Henry rode his bike up to a group of Portland Sidewalk Ambassadors assigned to the City of Portland's Clean & Safe District.

The Sidewalk Ambassador Program provides information and assistance to downtown visitors, residents and workers.

When this incident occurred, the group was at a kiosk by Pioneer Place.

One of the ambassadors had a Pride rainbow bandana hanging from his backpack.

During trial, one of the ambassadors testified that Henry yelled out "federal target" to the group, which did not immediately understand the meaning.

Henry then "flicked" the rainbow flag and said something to the effect of "we don't like that on these streets," referring to the flag.

The victim challenged Henry and told him to leave, which is when Henry abruptly tried to punch the victim with a full swing, according to court testimony. The victim was able to lean back to avoid being punched in the chest.

Officers with the Portland Police Bureau's Bike Theft Task Force responded and obtained surveillance video that showed Henry approach on the bike acting aggressively and flicking the victim's rainbow flag, according to evidence presented during trial.

Sentencing in this matter is scheduled for November 22, 2019. This case was litigated by Multnomah County Deputy District Attorney Kevin Demer.

The Multnomah County District Attorney's Office was an active participant of the Oregon Attorney General's Hate Crimes Task Force and helped draft the language that was in Senate Bill 577. The law, which went into effect on July 15, 2019, renamed the crime of "intimidation" to "bias crime," added gender identity to the list of protected categories and removed the requirement that two or more people commit the crime in order to make it a felony in certain circumstances.

This case was issued before Oregon's new bias crime law went into effect. As a result, the crime Henry was convicted of should be referred to as "intimidation in the second degree."

Sentencing is scheduled November 22, 2019.

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All potential bias crime cases, whether they are a felony or misdemeanor, are reviewed by the Violent Crimes Unit within the Multnomah County District Attorney's Office. If a case is issued, the felony-level attorney will retain the case.

Recently, Multnomah County District Attorney Rod Underhill and other members of the office attended the fourth annual Building Bridges of Understanding in Our Community event hosted by the Muslim Educational Trust in Tigard, Oregon as part of the office's efforts to combat bias crime. To read more about that event click [here](#).

If you are the victim of a bias crime assault or you are witnessing one, immediately call 9-1-1. If you are the victim of a bias crime and the suspect is no longer present or if you have information about a bias crime committed in the past, call the non-emergency line at 503-823-3333.

Like in all criminal and civil matters, electronic copies of court documents, which are not subject to a protective order, are available to the public through the Oregon eCourt Information (OECI) system.

No additional information can be released by the Multnomah County District Attorney's Office at this time pursuant to the Oregon Professional Rules of Conduct.

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