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**Jessie Ezell receives 31 year prison sentence for sexually abusing a child**

Today, Multnomah County District Attorney Rod Underhill announced that 45-year-old Jessie Ezell received a 31 year prison sentence for repeatedly sexually abusing a female child.

A jury convicted Ezell on August 30, 2019 of two counts of sodomy in the first degree and four counts of sexual abuse in the first degree.

The two sodomy convictions fall under "Jessica's Law," which went into effect in 2006 and requires a 25 year mandatory minimum sentence for adults convicted of raping, sodomizing or sexually penetrating a child younger than 12 years old.

"Jessie Ezell repeatedly sexually abused this child for the sole purpose of satisfying his own sexual gratification," said Multnomah County Deputy District Attorney Amber Kinney, who litigated this case. "Only Mr. Ezell knows the true scope of this abuse. The crimes reflected in the indictment are only a fraction of the amount of exploitation that he is likely responsible for. He has shown no remorse or empathy. He betrayed this child in every possible way and used his position of trust to give this girl a true life sentence."

The state sought a 37 year prison sentence based on the child's age and the amount of harm both physically and emotionally done to her as a result of the repeated abuse.

This investigation started in February 2017 when the Oregon Department of Human Services received a child abuse tip. The caller expressed welfare concerns about the child victim because she was reportedly being exposed to abuse and neglect. During the investigation, DHS received information that Ezell was using methamphetamine, impairing his judgement and impulse control, likely contributing to the sexual abuse of the victim, according to trial testimony.

The child victim was evaluated at CARES Northwest on two occasions – once in 2017 and again the next year – and disclosed the sexual abuse during the 2018 evaluation.

Ezell was arrested on September 21, 2018 after law enforcement located him in Gresham, Oregon.

It was through the coordination, communication and collaboration of the Multnomah County District Attorney's Office Multidisciplinary Child Abuse Team that this case was investigated and prosecuted.

The Multidisciplinary Child Abuse Team includes representatives from local law enforcement, public schools, hospitals, courts, health departments, the Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS), and the Oregon Department of Employment Child Care Division.

The Multnomah County District Attorney's Multidisciplinary Child Abuse Team is responsible for reviewing and managing child abuse and neglect cases in Multnomah County. The team also handles all child homicides, felony child physical abuse cases, felony child abandonment cases, custodial interference cases, and felony sex crimes where the victim is currently under the age of 18 and where the perpetrator is determined not to be a stranger to the child.

The Multnomah County District Attorney's Office recognizes the Multnomah County Multidisciplinary Child Abuse Team, the Portland Police Bureau, PPB Detective Stephen Gandy and the staff at CARES Northwest in Multnomah County for their dedicated

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efforts investigating this matter. The District Attorney's Office also recognizes Victim Advocate Malia Bruni for commitment to supporting the victim and her family throughout the criminal justice process.

CARES Northwest, Multnomah County's child abuse assessment center, is a community-based medical program for the assessment, treatment and prevention of child abuse. The organization is one of the largest child abuse assessment centers in the nation and serves more than 5,000 children annually.

Ezell will be on lifetime post-prison supervision and will have to register as a sex offender.

The jury acquitted Ezell on one count of rape in the first degree and one count of sexual abuse in the first degree.

#MCDA#

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