



ELLIS COUNTY & DISTRICT ATTORNEY

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Child Predator Receives Three Consecutive Life Sentences

Ellis County and District Attorney Ann Montgomery announced that Wilbert James Jones, Jr. 57, of Ennis Texas, was sentenced to life in prison for three offenses of sexual assault of a child on November 8, 2023.

In 2011, Jones was released from prison after serving a sentence for aggravated assault with a deadly weapon. At a homecoming party, Jones met his victim; she was 15 years old. As he began grooming the child, he made sexualized comments to her, saying, “I like your shape,” and “when will you let [me] have you” while he touched her. Jones’s actions escalated as he sexually assaulted the child on multiple occasions. At the beginning of the school year, the child went to the school nurse because her stomach hurt. Her family took her to the doctor, and they learned she was pregnant. In the fifth or sixth month of the child’s pregnancy, Jones sexually assaulted the child again. The baby was born in 2012.

In 2020, the child’s family member decided she could not live with the guilt of the secret. She reported the sexual assaults to the Ellis County and District Attorney’s Office and the case was referred to the Ennis Police Department for investigation. The child victim was 25 years old when the criminal investigation began, and she was cooperative. Lt. Brian Shahan with the Ennis Police Department interviewed Jones who said he had some sexual contact with the child, but not intercourse. DNA results showed Jones was the father of the baby. During the trial, Jones attempted to flee detention officers, but he was not successful.

After three days of testimony, the jury delivered three guilty verdicts for sexual assault of a child and a not guilty verdict for indecency with a child. Sexual assault of a child is a second-degree felony, with a punishment range of 2-20 years in prison. The jury considered his prior conviction for aggravated assault with a deadly weapon, which enhances the punishment range to 5-99 years, or life in prison. The jury sentenced Jones to life in prison for the three sexual assaults. 443rd District Court Judge Cindy Ermatinger, who presided over the trial, pronounced the sentences and ordered that they be served consecutively.

“It took courage for a family member to come forward and speak the truth and support the child victim; she opened the door that the child victim walked through on her journey to justice” stated Montgomery. “Child sexual abuse is a crime of secrecy, and it takes all of us to

protect our children. As a community we are charged to say something when we see something.”

Assistant County and District Attorney Sherry Roeder and Assistant County and District Attorney Lisa Turner prosecuted the case, assisted by County and District Attorney Investigator Joseph Aguilar, and Victim Assistance Coordinator Jamie Morales. The case was investigated by Lt. Brian Shanahan and the Ennis Police Department.

