



OFFICE OF THE VANDERBURGH COUNTY PROSECUTOR

**DIANA L. MOERS**

ADMINISTRATION BLDG. - ROOM 108  
1 NW MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. BLVD  
EVANSVILLE, IN 47708  
(812) 435-5150 | prosecutorinfo@vanderburghgov.org

**\*\*\*MEDIA ALERT\*\*\***

**For Immediate Release**

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*CONTACT: Winston Lin  
Phone: 219-242-2417*

## **CHILD MOLESTER FOUND GUILTY**

Evansville, IN – Prosecutor Diana Moers announces that on June 27, 2024, a jury found Elmer Salazer-Hernandez guilty of two counts of Child Molesting, a Level 2 and Level 3 Felony. Deputy Prosecutors Susan Wilkie and Kimberly Otilie represented the State in this case. The Honorable Magistrate Judge Celia M. Pauli of the Vanderburgh County Circuit Court presided.

In February of 2022, Holly's House conducted a forensic interview on a juvenile who disclosed their mother's boyfriend's brother, Elmer Salazer-Hernandez, had sexually abused them when they were the age of 4-5 years old. Elmer Salazer-Hernandez was living in a trailer with the child, their mother and mother's boyfriend at the time of the molestations. The victim disclosed in the forensic interview they would call the Defendant "Elmo", and "Elmo" would wake them up and take them to his room. Inside the Defendant's room, Salazer-Hernandez would sexually abuse the victim. The abuse occurred on multiple occasions, starting as "touching" and progressing into sexual intercourse.

The victim bravely testified at the trial, as well as Detective Jackie Juncker. Prosecutor Moers stated: "While another case got most of the media attention this week, I consider every child molestation and abuse case to be high-profile and of the utmost importance. As a community, we must rally around victims and report any signs of disclosure of abuse by our children. We are fortunate to have Holly's House in our community who is trained in forensic interviewing and uses national best practices to ensure we have successful prosecutions. We are also grateful for the work of Detective Jucker in this case to ensure we got a conviction."

Moers went on to say: "I will continue to pour resources and training into prosecutions of child molesters. This brave victim was able to report their molestation which happened 9 years prior, and because of this testimony the Defendant will no longer have access to children. Aside from testimony, Detectives have many tools at their disposal to help corroborate victim disclosure. We will leave no stone unturned in these cases. I pray for the survivor's healing and hope their testimony inspires others who want to come forward. If you are a victim, please be assured you have a fighter in your corner."

Prosecutor Moers thanks her Deputy Prosecutors Susan Wilkie and Kimberly Otilie as well her investigations and legal staff for their countless hours preparing for this trial and bringing justice for this victim. Prosecutor Moers also thanks Vanderburgh

County Sheriff's Office Detectives Troops and Juncker who worked ardently to investigate this case.

Sentencing is scheduled for July 18, 2024, in front of the Honorable Magistrate Judge Celia M. Pauli of the Vanderburgh County Circuit Court.

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