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LIFE WITHOUT PAROLE FOR SEXUAL PREDATOR WITH CHILD VICTIMS SPANNING THREE GENERATIONS

Name: Timothy Jarvis Cooley
Age: 63
Court: 435th District Court, The Honorable Judge Patty Maginnis presiding
Charge: Continuous Sexual Abuse of a Child, 1st Degree Felony
Plea: Not Guilty
Verdict: By jury, Guilty, April 25, 2023
Jury Sentence: By jury: Life, April 25, 2023



On April 27, 2023, Timothy Jarvis Cooley of Magnolia, Texas, was sentenced to life in prison for the continuous sexual abuse of a young child from 2014-2018. Cooley must serve the life sentence day-for-day, with no eligibility for parole. The Honorable Judge Patty Maginnis presided over the six-day trial in the 435th District Court.

During the trial, the jury heard from a young child how Cooley sexually abused her while she was in elementary school during the years 2014 to 2018. The child told the jury Cooley abused her in multiple locations, that he threatened her with a knife, and that Cooley told her that he would harm her family if she reported the abuse.

From the witness stand, the child detailed multiple incidents and the circumstances surrounding Cooley's abuse and faced cross-examination with Cooley in the courtroom. The child described how she slowly began to disclose over time, and the jury heard evidence of the child experiencing symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder. In January 2019, a forensic interviewer at Children's Safe Harbor questioned the child about the abuse. The Montgomery County Sheriff's Office assigned Detective Michael Lee to the investigation. Det. Lee interviewed dozens of people in Cooley's life and former acquaintances and discovered that Cooley had abused two other children in the 1970s, 1980s, and 2000s. Those two victims, who did not know each other or the latest child victim, testified in the trial about Cooley's threats and use of a knife for intimidation. Following very powerful closing arguments from the prosecutors, the jury swiftly returned their guilty verdict. After the verdict, the three victims finally met one another in a tearful and emotional meeting.

The Montgomery County District Attorney's Office trial team was Special Victims Unit (SVU) ADA Leah Fiedler, SVU Chief Prosecutor Lisa Stewart, SVU Victim Assistant Coordinator Ilda Rupert, and SVU Investigator A.P. Merillat. The Montgomery County Sheriff's Office Special Victims Unit, Children's Safe Harbor, and Texas Children's Hospital provided investigative, counseling, and forensic support services for this case.

Chief Prosecutor Lisa Stewart: "This defendant manipulated, threatened, and sexually abused young girls across three generations, and campaigned against their credibility as they each spoke up over decades apart. These three brave survivors showed the jury that the truth was more powerful than any of his lies and, in doing so, they have kept the next generation of young girls safe from his abuse."

District Attorney Brett Ligon: "The cruelty and length of this defendant's abuse earned him every day of this sentence. Timothy Cooley learned that in Montgomery County, survivors of child abuse stand in the light and abusers cannot remain hidden in the darkness forever."