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For Immediate Release  
Friday, May 31, 2019

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**Jury issues life sentence in continuous sexual assault of a child case**

A Travis County jury returned a life sentence during the punishment phase of a two-week trial involving a man's sexual abuse of his stepdaughter over a seven-year period according to the Travis County District Attorney's Office.

On Wednesday, the jury found Jesus Mendez guilty of Continuous Sexual Abuse of a Child, Aggravated Sexual Assault of a Child, Indecency with a Child by Contact, and Sexual Assault of a Child by Contact.

The jury decided on the sentence Thursday afternoon. Visiting Judge Chuck Miller tacked on another 20 years to be served after the life sentence.

On February 3, 2017, Austin Police Department officers were called to Crockett High School and were told by the 15-year-old victim that her stepfather had sexually abused her since she was eight. Police were able to obtain DNA evidence from an assault the previous day.

During the trial, the victim testified in great detail about the variety of ways Mendez had abused her over the years. After the verdict, she repeatedly thanked the jury for believing her and freeing her from Mendez.

District Attorney Margaret Moore praised the work of Assistant District Attorneys Christy May and Devin Falck, "I am extremely pleased with our work and the outcome," Moore said. "This brave girl deserved justice, and the jury and the judge delivered it."

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