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**STEVEN MICHAEL KLAUS SENTENCED TO 25 YEARS IN PRISON IN CHILD SEXUAL
ABUSE CASE**

HILLSBORO, Ore- On January 5, 2024, former Hillsboro Fire Lieutenant Steven Michael Klaus, age 52, was found guilty of two counts of Unlawful Sexual Penetration in the First Degree, six counts of Sexual Abuse in the First Degree, two counts of Using a Child in Display of Sexually Explicit Conduct, and four counts of Invasion of Personal Privacy after a stipulated facts trial. Washington County Circuit Court Judge Erik Bucher then sentenced the defendant to 25 years in prison. Deputy District Attorney Rayney Meisel prosecuted the case against Mr. Klaus.

In 2019, the minor victim in this case reported that the defendant sexually abused her multiple times over the course of five years. The abuse took place in Forest Grove, Oregon, and in California. The victim was approximately 6 years old when the abuse began.

During the subsequent investigation, detectives with the Forest Grove Police Department obtained a computer the defendant used during the time of the abuse. They discovered surveillance footage from hidden cameras installed by the defendant in the victim's bedroom and bathroom. The footage captured the victim in the nude. Mr. Klaus stored the files in a folder on his computer labeled, "Monitoring My Pet." The device also contained other child sex abuse images of this victim, as well as thousands of child sex abuse images and material unrelated to this victim.

At the defendant's sentencing hearing, the victim described the anguish she felt when she learned the defendant installed those hidden cameras and the pain she felt when she had to identify herself in nude images during the investigation. Despite the pain she endured at the hands of the defendant, she said she is focused on healing and regaining her strength.

"I will forever be robbed of my girlhood, but I won't give up my right to joy," the victim said. Quoting a philosopher, she told the defendant, "No person is to be treated as a means to an end, but as an end to itself. Anything I accomplish in life will not be in spite of what you've done, it will be because of who I am."

The Washington County District Attorney's Office wishes to commend the victim and her family for their perseverance during the lengthy court process. This office also acknowledges the hard work of the Forest Grove Police Department.

Mr. Klaus will be transferred to the Oregon Department of Corrections to begin serving his sentence.