



# **PRESENTMENTS**

*October 27, 2022*

**Attorney General Josh Shapiro**  
*Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General*



## **INTRODUCTION**

We, the members of the Forty-Ninth Statewide Investigating Grand Jury, having received and reviewed evidence regarding violations of the Pennsylvania Crimes Code occurring in Berks County, Pennsylvania pursuant to Notice of Submission of Investigation No. 3, do hereby make the following findings of fact and recommendation of charges.

## **OVERVIEW**

In 2019, the Office of Attorney General received a resource referral from a District Attorney's Office pursuant to the Commonwealth's Attorneys Act. As a result, the Grand Jury undertook the investigation of allegations of sex assault involving members of the Jehovah's Witnesses and learned of several incidents of sexual assault committed by different members of the Jehovah's Witness religious organizations.

In the course of its investigation the Grand Jury learned of acts of child sexual abuse and exploitation committed by Jesse Hill ("Hill") (DOB: August 9, 1970) upon boys he groomed within the Jehovah's Witnesses ("JW") religious community. It was determined that Hill sexually molested at least 12 minors, including two victims against whom he perpetrated felony sex acts. As detailed below, the Grand Jury finds that Hill used alcohol, pornography, and his family's trusted name within their religious community to prey on vulnerable children. Hill has made statements admitting many of these crimes.

## **FINDINGS OF FACT**

Hill associated with various JW congregations in Berks County, and was a member of the Kutztown Congregation. Hill's family was a prominent participant in the Kutztown Congregation and ran JMH Machine Company Inc. ("JMH"), located at 233 Farview Road in Hamburg, where a number of congregational members and leaders were employed. Additionally, the Grand Jury

learned that Hill's family would often host "hoedowns" on a large piece of acreage that they owned in Berks County, and which had recreational areas as well as portions of the family business. For these reasons, Hill was able to build a rapport with congregational members. Ultimately, Hill gained the trust of several parents and was permitted extensive access to congregational juvenile males. This included taking unsupervised daily trips with juveniles to area movie theaters and malls, to the JMH Machine Company property, and to Hill's own residence.

The Grand Jury determined that Hill plied these children with alcohol, marijuana, and pornographic material. He regularly provided gifts to the juveniles in the form of candy, treats, small tokens, access to "R" rated movies, and other amenities that his victims would not normally have received.

#### CD

The Grand Jury heard testimony from CD (DOB: March 10, 1981). CD testified that in the 1990s, he and his family were members of the JW Kutztown Congregation, and, as a result, came to know Hill. CD disclosed that Hill repeatedly fondled his genitals, on approximately 15 occasions, from the time CD was 11 years old until he was 17 years of age in 1998. This included touching over clothing as well as skin-to-skin contact. Hill exposed his own genitals to CD and masturbated in his presence. Hill also performed oral sex on CD. CD testified, *"I remember one time I had went upstairs to use the bathroom. And when I came out to go back downstairs, he was at the top of the stairs. He came up to me, started touching me, which was not unusual. And he took my penis out and he started performing oral sex on me, put it in his mouth."* CD went on to explain, *"It did reoccur and it actually reoccurred in his truck."* CD explained that he endured the abuse for years thinking that if he kept silent, Hill would leave CD's younger brother alone. CD told the grand jury, *"I used to try to protect him. Because [Hill] would take the two of us in the*

*truck at the same time. I would usually sit in the middle. I remember being very embarrassed but I also wanted to protect my little brother.” CD explained how his isolated lifestyle made it easy for Hill to provide him with things that he desperately wanted as a child: “You might think, well, why would you even put yourself in that situation? But I guess when you’re a kid, it’s worth it for some movies and ice cream.”*

These incidents occurred at various locations within Berks County including the JMH property on Farview Road, Hill’s former residence at 188 Virginville Road in Hamburg, in area movie theaters, and, in Hill’s private vehicle while traveling through Berks County.

### **BTL**

The Grand Jury also heard testimony from BTL (DOB: February 27, 1987). BTL explained that in the 1990s, he and his family were members of the JW Reading North Congregation located in Reading, Berks County. BTL had frequent contact with Hill between 1996 and 1998, when BTL was nine to 11 years old. During that time, Hill regularly fondled BTL’s genitals with his hands. This included touching over clothing as well as skin-to-skin contact. Hill showed pornographic material to BTL and exposed his penis to BTL. Additionally, Hill performed oral sex on BTL and forced BTL to perform oral sex on him.

BTL testified that Hill told him to keep his conduct secret, stating *“He said, let’s just keep that between me and you. So when a six foot tall guy says that to you and you’re like four foot something, what do you think, especially when you’re nine or 10.”*

These incidents occurred at various locations within Berks County including the JMH property on Farview Road, Hill’s former residence on Virginville Road, in area movie theaters, and, in Hill’s private vehicle while traveling through Berks County.

### **Hill’s Admissions**

The Grand Jury obtained records that corroborated Hill's pattern of abuse. The records show that Hill has made statements to other individuals admitting to molesting numerous children and to performing oral sex on at least one victim.

### **Hill's Other Victims**

The Grand Jury identified additional victims of Hill's abuse. These cases, while not currently prosecutable due to the expiration of the statute of limitations, further serve to corroborate the other evidence presented.

CBF told the Grand Jury that in the 1990s, he and his family were members of the JW Kutztown Congregation. CBF had frequent contact with Hill. CBF disclosed that between 1992 and 1998, Hill molested him on more than 150 occasions. Hill inserted his hand into CBF's pants and also groped him on top of his clothing. These incidents occurred at various locations within Berks County including the JW Kingdom Hall at 671 Noble Street in Kutztown, a cabin located on the JMH Machine Company property on Farview Road, CBF's residence, and, in Hill's private vehicle while traveling through Berks County.

TF testified that he and his family came into regular contact with Hill in 1990 as fellow members of the JW congregation in Kutztown. He recalled that on two separate occasions, Hill fondled TF's genitals with his hands over TF's clothes. Both of these incidents occurred at the JW Kingdom Hall in Kutztown.

KAM testified that he and his family were members of the JW Reading South Congregation in Berks County. As a result, KAM had frequent contact with Hill between 1994 and 1998. KAM disclosed that he had been groped by Hill, both over clothing as well as with skin-to-skin contact. Hill showed KAM pornographic material and provided him with alcohol.

These incidents occurred at various locations within Berks County including the JMH property on Farview Road, and in an area movie theater. KAM described a particular incident that occurred when he and numerous other juveniles were engaged in a "sleepover" at the JMH Farview Road property. Hill provided alcohol to the children during this sleepover. After falling asleep, KAM awoke to find Hill actively fondling KAM's genitals. KAM immediately fled from Hill and locked himself in a bathroom.

The Grand Jury heard similar testimony from numerous additional witnesses, including JP, NJF, TD, SF and BF. Hill gained access to the boys throughout the 1990's in JW congregations. He would invite them to his residence, the JMH property, to movies, or, would ride around with them in his car. On these occasions he would grope their genitals under their clothes, on top of their clothes, or both.





## **INTRODUCTION**

We, the members of the Forty-Ninth Statewide Investigating Grand Jury, having received and reviewed evidence regarding violations of the Pennsylvania Crimes Code occurring in Cambria County, Pennsylvania pursuant to Notice of Submission of Investigation No. 3, do hereby make the following findings of fact and recommendation of charges.

## **OVERVIEW**

In 2019, the Office of Attorney General received a resource referral from a District Attorney's Office pursuant to the Commonwealth's Attorneys Act. As a result, the Grand Jury undertook the investigation of allegations of sex assault involving members of the Jehovah's Witnesses and learned of several incidents of sexual assault committed by different members of the Jehovah's Witness religious organizations.

In the course of its investigation, the Grand Jury learned of allegations of sexual abuse committed by Robert Ostrander ("Ostrander") (DOB: February 14, 1966). It was determined that Ostrander abused two minors, including his own stepdaughter.

## **FINDINGS OF FACT**

Ostrander and his family, including his step-daughter T.R. were active members of a Jehovah's Witness congregation. As a result of that membership and the relationships he and his family enjoyed, T.R. became friends with L.K. and Ostrander was given unsupervised access to L.K.

The Grand Jury obtained documents indicating that T.R. (DOB: January 30, 1989), had made reports of abuse. The Grand Jury received testimony both from T.R. and L.K. (DOB: January 15, 1990). Both revealed that they were regularly sexually assaulted by Ostrander when they were in their mid-teens. These assaults occurred in Cambria County.

T.R. stated that Ostrander had been physically abusive of her mother, leaving her with facial bruising on at least one occasion. Ostrander physically abused T.R. as well and, at one point, threw her down a flight of steps.

By age 15 the abuse of T.R. became sexual. Ostrander repeatedly groped T.R.'s genitals and breasts over a period of two and a half years. T.R. related that Ostrander would subject her and her friend to unusual forms of "discipline" by making them lie on the floor with their legs spread apart. On other occasions, Ostrander would grope the breasts and/or buttocks of T.R. and L.K., often under the ruse of wrestling or rough-housing. T.R. reported that she could recall incidents of sexual abuse where Ostrander was clearly aroused and ejaculated. T.R. told L.K. that, in addition to abuse Ostrander performed when the friends were together, he also sexually abused T.R. in private.

The Grand Jury also heard testimony from L.K. L.K. corroborated T.R.'s account. L.K. recalled that she would have been approximately 15 or 16 years old at that time of the abuse. She stated that Ostrander would often make comments about her body and how much he liked it. He used wrestling as an excuse to grope her breasts and buttocks. She recalled times playing in a pool with T.R. when Ostrander would join them and attempt to pull down L.K.'s swimsuit. L.K. confirmed that T.R. had told her that Ostrander was committing additional sexual assaults against T.R. in private. She remembered that T.R. told her that Ostrander "came" on her.



## INTRODUCTION

We, the members of the Forty-Ninth Statewide Investigating Grand Jury, having received and reviewed evidence regarding violations of the Pennsylvania Crimes Code occurring in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania pursuant to Notice of Submission of Investigation No. 3, do hereby make the following findings of fact and recommendation of charges.

## OVERVIEW

In 2019, the Office of Attorney General received a resource referral from a District Attorney's Office pursuant to the Commonwealth's Attorney's Act. As a result, the Grand Jury undertook the investigation of allegations of sexual assault involving members of the Jehovah's Witnesses and learned of several incidents of sexual assault committed by different members of the Jehovah's Witness religious organizations.

During the investigation it was determined that Jose Antonio Serrano ("Serrano") (DOB: November 5, 1953) used his influence and common faith to sexually molest at least six minors, including his own daughter. He confessed to committing many of these criminal offenses to members of his community and to this Grand Jury.

## FINDINGS OF FACT

The Grand Jury obtained documents indicating that Serrano confessed to molesting numerous children. In these documents, he identified six children and their ages at the time he assaulted them.

G.I., one of the six child victims of Serrano, appeared before the Grand Jury. G.I. testified that when she was a child, she often babysat for the same family and that Serrano was aware of this fact. He regularly visited the home when the parents were away and began groping G.I. as she

slept. The groping then escalated into forcible rape. G.I. testified that, despite the years that have passed, she still lives in fear of Serrano to this day.

The Grand Jury also heard a report involving another one of the six victims who described a period of time in the 1980s when Serrano indecently assaulted her by subjecting her to a barrage of unwanted touching and kissing. She was just 13 years old at the time. He also stalked her during that time period.

Although the above criminal offenses are no longer prosecutable due to the expiration of the statute of limitations period, they demonstrate a common plan, scheme or design that corroborates other evidence presented to the Grand Jury; in particular, the testimony of J.S., Serrano's own daughter. J.S. (DOB: February 3, 1990) testified that she lived an abnormal, isolated childhood. Serrano pulled her out of public education in order to "home-school" her in their residence in Lancaster County. He taught her that "*in the Bible you have to obey your parents and we are your parents and therefore, you have to listen to us and whatever we do.*" These controlling actions were reinforced by physical assaults.

Some assaults were not just physical; they were sexual. J.S. testified that on one occasion, she was in her father's bed and "*I remember having his penis in my hand and I don't know why and I remember him getting out of bed and changing the sheets and then he told me to go to my own bed... that was my first memory of sexual contact with my dad.*" On other occasions, Serrano came into her room as she slept. She stated, "*I would wake up in the morning and I would feel different.*" These acts began occurring as early as 1993 and continued for years. J.S. explained that once she was a married adult and having intimate contact with her husband, she realized the sensation of feeling wet or "squishy" was the aftermath of sex. She then recognized it as being the same as when her father had contact with her when he entered her room. Her mother, who knew

about Serrano's conviction for assaulting other girls as they slept, would remind her to keep her door locked at night if Serrano was around.

J.S. also explained that she suffered from a constant and inexplicable case of severe hemorrhoids while she was growing up and Serrano insisted that she not be examined regarding the condition. Similarly, Serrano would not permit her to see a gynecologist.

In May 2016, J.S. reported Serrano's abuse of her to the Lancaster City Police. Faced with the victim's dated report alone, however, the investigation stalled until the Grand Jury uncovered the evidence that corroborated her account.

Serrano himself appeared before the Grand Jury. While under oath, Serrano acknowledged that he had molested children in the past. He admitted to the conduct memorialized in criminal court records of his prior convictions, and also confirmed the admissions to child sexual abuse that he previously made. He further confirmed that his wife would warn their daughter to keep her door locked at night. He stated that this aided him in controlling his urges. Serrano testified that his deviant impulses are life-long, that he struggles to contain them, and that he must avoid tempting situations. When questioned about the alleged sexual conduct with his daughter, he admitted it was "possible" that his finger(s) had slipped into J.S.'s anus, and, perhaps, the anuses of his other daughters, as well.



## **INTRODUCTION**

We, the members of the Forty-Ninth Statewide Investigating Grand Jury, having received and reviewed evidence regarding violations of the Pennsylvania Crimes Code occurring in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania pursuant to Notice of Submission of Investigation No. 3, do hereby make the following findings of fact and recommendation of charges.

## **OVERVIEW**

In 2019, the Office of Attorney General received a resource referral from a District Attorney's Office pursuant to the Commonwealth's Attorneys Act. As a result, the Grand Jury undertook the investigation of allegations of sexual assault involving members of the Jehovah's Witnesses and learned of several incidents of sexual assault committed by different members of the Jehovah's Witness religious organizations.

In the course of its investigation, the Grand Jury learned of allegations of sexual abuse committed by Eric Eleam ("Eleam") (DOB: April 12, 1961). It was determined that Eleam sexually assaulted his own daughter.

## **FINDINGS OF FACT**

The Grand Jury learned that Eleam's daughter T.R. (DOB: June 1, 1980) was regularly sexually assaulted and raped by Eleam between 1992 and 1997, from the age of 12 to approximately age 17. T.R. recalled that during one of the earliest incidents, Eleam came to T.R. in her bed and instructed her as to how she should touch his genitals. T.R. described how Eleam would molest her under her underwear and on her bare breasts and buttocks, and how he penetrated her vagina and performed oral sex on her. T.R. stated that he also forced her to engage in mutual masturbation several times. T.R. recalled that Eleam would often drink Riunite Lambrusco red wine. These events occurred at the family home in Pittsburgh, Allegheny County.



T.R. stated that she was in fear of Eleam as he would often beat her and her siblings. She explained that Eleam was a strict disciplinarian and ruled the home with an iron fist. T.R. was homeschooled until she began attending high school. T.R. described how her activities, including her interaction with friends, her phone usage, and her ability to access the outside world, were all tightly controlled by Eleam. If she disobeyed or resisted, Eleam would incorporate sexual acts into T.R.'s "punishment." This punishment included additional oral sex and forms of sexual molestation at night. T.R. stated that if she locked the bedroom door to keep him out, Eleam would only get angrier and force more sexual acts upon her.

The Grand Jury obtained documents that corroborated this evidence and contained a summary of a meeting with T.R., her mother and community members. The documents show that T.R. reported her abuse to adults in her life, who then met with T.R. and Eleam. A summary of this meeting stated that *"Eric's daughter (T.R.), told her worldly mother that Eric had sexually abused her between the ages of 12 and 17. (T.R.) alleged that: 1) Eric had laid close to her in bed and rubbed his genitals against her buttocks 'hundreds' of times, 2) she was forced to masturbate him to orgasm 3 or 4 times and, 3) he performed oral sex on her more than once. She had no witnesses so we met with him. He claimed not to remember any of these occurrences but said that the accusations had to be true if (T.R.) said so."* During a subsequent meeting with T.R. and Eleam, he again stated that if T.R. said it happened then it "must be true."

The Grand Jury also obtained a statement from Eleam himself after agents from the Office of Attorney General interviewed Eleam at his home in Butler County. Agents asked Eleam about the meeting T.R. had described between the father, daughter, and community members concerning allegations of inappropriate contact. Asked why he indicated in that meeting that the allegations did in fact occur, Eleam responded that he had "been taught not to lie." Asked about the credibility

of his daughter, T.R., Eleam indicated that his children do not lie and that they had been taught not to lie. Eleam then expressed concern about going to jail and terminated the interview.



