



# BUTTE COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY



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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **CHILD MOLESTER SENTENCED TO 45 YEARS TO LIFE**

Following his jury conviction last April for serial molesting of children under the ages of 14 and 10, an Oroville man today was sentenced to 45 years to life in prison today in Butte County Superior Court.

Robert Donovan, 36, of Oroville, was convicted of multiple counts of molesting the young girls. Donovan started molesting the girls in 2013 until he was arrested in 2018. Donovan had been in custody since his arrest in 2018 pending his conviction and sentencing on charges in his case.

Three young children, (now ages 10, 13, and 15) testified against Donovan and described in detail to the jury what happened to them.

Butte County Superior Court Judge Corrie Caraway, who presided over the jury trial, rejected arguments from Donovan's attorney to sentence him to a lower term of only 16 years in prison. The judge instead agreed with the trial prosecutor, JJ Stark-Modlin, that Donovan should be punished commiserate with his culpability – and sentenced him to the maximum life term.

Butte County District Attorney Mike Ramsey said despite that justice, in this case, was slowed due to numerous defense continuances, followed by the difficulties of prosecuting cases during the COVID-19 pandemic, justice was finally served when the judge ordered the maximum sentence.

However, Ramsey noted, “despite Donovan's sentence of 45 years to life, the California Legislature's new ‘Elder Parole program’ passed last year will allow inmates to seek parole after only 20 years of custody as long as they are also 50 years old – regardless of how many years a judge orders.” Therefore, despite the statutory minimum sentence of 45 years before parole, Ramsey said Donovan will be eligible for parole in 2038.

