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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Board of Parole Denies Release to Convicted Child Molester
CDCR #BF8671; Court Case #BF166402A

Kern County District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer announced that the California Board of Parole Hearings (BPH) denied release to convicted child molester Juan Mendoza. On May 7, 2026, BPH found that Mendoza continues to pose a current and unreasonable risk to public safety. Representing the District Attorney's Office was Deputy District Attorney Gina Nargie.

In November 2016, the eight-year-old victim informed her mother that Mendoza committed a sexual offense against her. The incident occurred at a family party where Mendoza approached the child, playing inside a bounce house, and told her they should go look for another adult female family member. The victim got out of the bounce house and went with Mendoza. Mendoza took her behind an unattached garage that was in a dimly lit area. Mendoza then sexually assaulted the victim despite the child crying and telling him to stop. When Mendoza finally stopped, he gave the victim 10 dollars and told her not to tell. After the family party, Mendoza drove the victim home. Witnesses testified that the victim was crying when she returned home.

On February 22, 2018, a Kern County Jury found Mendoza guilty of lewd and lascivious acts with a minor under the age of 14 and oral copulation of a child under the age of 10. On March 27, 2018, a Kern County Judge sentenced Mendoza to 15 years to life in prison.

Mendoza is currently 50 years old and has served approximately nine years in state prison. On May 7, 2026, the BPH conducted Mendoza's first parole hearing. In 2026, prior to the hearing, a psychologist determined that Mendoza was low risk. However, at the hearing, Mendoza changed statements he made to the psychologist and provided more information. He admitted he had touched a second minor female with the intention of sexually abusing her but decided not to go further. In addition, his testimony strongly indicated that he likely continued to have deviant sexual fantasies. The Kern County District Attorney's

Office not only asked the board to deny parole, but to have Mendoza reevaluated by a psychologist given the new statements. The BPH found that Mendoza was not suitable for parole because he continued to pose a current unreasonable risk of danger to society. However, the board denied the District Attorney's Office request for a new psychological evaluation. The BPH has the option of denying an inmate parole for a period of 15, 10, 7, 5 or 3 years. Mendoza's commissioners issued a three-year denial. Mendoza's next hearing could be as soon as 18 months, meaning he may face a parole hearing before undergoing another routine psychological evaluation.

District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer commented; "Although the Board denied Mendoza's release, our concerns remain significant, as he will be eligible for another hearing in as little as 18 months. By denying our request for an additional psychological evaluation after Mendoza provided new and inconsistent statements during the hearing, the board is failing to address critical factors necessary to determine an inmate's suitability for release."

Juan Diego Mendoza:

