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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Re: Trial Child Molestation Conviction: Joel Thomas Worley: BF175740A

Kern County District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer announced a significant child molestation conviction today. In a case presented by Deputy District Attorney Esther Schlaerth, a Kern County jury found defendant Joel Thomas Worley guilty of 3 counts of child molestation, including a lewd and lascivious act with a child under the age of 14 years and continuous sexual abuse of a child.

Between 2014 and 2015, the defendant Joel Thomas Worley sexually molested an 8 year old extended family member, perpetrated the crimes in secluded areas where he believed he could “carry out the deed.” Worley engaged in acts of touching and sexual assault of the victim. The offenses were discovered in 2018, when the victim came forward to report the sexual abuse after the defendant had also sexually molested two children, aged nine and twelve years old, in the state of Washington.

The jury also found the defendant not guilty of 2 counts of sodomy of a child 10 years old or younger after finding insufficient evidence for those two counts.

Sentencing is set for August 26, 2021 before Superior Court Judge Brian McNamara. Worley faces a maximum sentence of 16 years in prison and mandatory sex offender registration.

District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer commented on the conviction: “Those who commit sexual crimes against children seldom stop after one offense, or even one victim. Sexual abuse of children can go unreported and undetected for years, and if left unchecked, a predator can victimize even more children. Reporting such predators and bringing them to justice requires courage but is the best and only way to prevent further victimization.”