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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: March 3, 2025

Re: State v. Douglas Grazuties

On Wednesday, February 26, 2025, Douglas Grazuties, 36, of Middle River, was found guilty of Second Degree Child Abuse, two counts of Second Degree Assault, and two counts of Reckless Endangerment following a three-day jury trial before the Honorable Diane Adkins-Tobin in the Circuit Court for Harford County.

Evidence presented in trial proved that on January 10, 2024, Child Protective Services was dispatched to a residence in Abingdon, Maryland regarding a safety concern pertaining to two minor children. Upon arrival, both children disclosed to Child Protective Services that Douglas Grazuties, their stepfather, physically harmed them almost every day. One of the child victims disclosed that Grazuties slapped them on the side of their heads, punched them in their faces and chests, and tripped them if they ran from him. They also indicated that in the past Grazuties struck them in the face, causing their noses to bleed, including an incident on one of the victim's 7th birthday. The victim went on to advise that on January 9, 2024, the victim was playing with their sister in their bedroom when she put a toy in her mouth. Grazuties saw this and put a toy in one of the victim's mouths, pushing the toy in with his fingers while saying "how does it feel to choke on something?" The defendant did this because he was angry that the victim was not watching his little sister when she began to chew on the toy.

The victim also reported to Child Protective Services that he was bleeding out of his ear during the interview. He further advised that on January 8, 2024, Grazuties asked him about his day and proceeded to hit him in his ear when he did not answer. The victim was later taken to Express Care, followed by the Upper Chesapeake Emergency Room by Child Protective Services on January 10, 2024, and was diagnosed with perforation of the tympanic membrane of his right ear. Doctors advised that there was a high risk of hearing loss associated with the injury without treatment. The other child victim was also seen at Express Care on January 10, 2024. He was also diagnosed with marginal perforations of tympanic membrane consistent with the abuse they reported. Child Protective Services also noticed bruising and redness on both victim's faces and chests during their interviews. Following the conviction, the Defendant was taken to the Harford County Detention Center where he will remain pending sentencing which is currently scheduled for May 22, 2025.

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After the verdict, State's Attorney Healey issued the following statement: "Working with victims of child abuse is an incredibly challenging and sensitive area of the law. We are lucky to have one of the best Child Advocacy Centers in the State of Maryland, filled with professionals who have dedicated their lives to helping children. I commend these children for their bravery and honesty in coming forward and reliving their traumas, which ultimately led to the conviction in this case. I hope this verdict will result in a more peaceful future for both victims."

State's Attorney Healey also expresses her gratitude to Assistant State's Attorney Jessica Earlbeck, as well as the detectives, support staff, advocates, and social workers of the Harford County Child Advocacy Center that work tirelessly everyday to ensure the safety of Harford County's most vulnerable victims.