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### PRESS RELEASE

#### **NAPA JURY FINDS MAN WHO ASSAULTS INFANT TO BE A SEXUALLY VIOLENT PREDATOR**

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Napa County District Attorney Allison Haley announced today:

On May 18, 2021, a Napa jury found that the petition alleging that the respondent, Thomas Clifton Turner, aged 57, is a Sexually Violent Predator, within the meaning of Welfare and Institutions Code sections 6600-6604, was true. The Honorable Judge Mark Boessenecker presided over the six-day jury trial in Napa Superior Court.

The respondent was convicted of a qualifying sexually violent offense, stemming from his horrific attack on a 3-month-old infant in 1987. The respondent entered a Vacaville home while the parents were sleeping, took a baby from her crib, and violently sexually assaulted her, including forcible digital penetration and oral copulation. He left the severely injured infant covered in ants and blood, in a field to die. When the parents awoke to discover their baby was gone, the police were called and a massive search was organized. The baby was finally found six and a half hours later, but had significant blood loss and needed immediate and follow up surgeries. The respondent was arrested, covered in the infant's blood, as he continued to prowl in the surrounding neighborhood.

After serving a 26-year sentence, the respondent was deemed a Mentally Disorder Offender and was committed to the California Department of State Hospitals for treatment. In 2011, while at Napa State Hospital, the respondent was convicted of additional crimes for criminally threatening two staff members in separate incidents. After serving a six-year prison sentence for the criminal threats, a petition alleging that respondent was a Sexually Violent Predator was filed by the Napa County District Attorney's Office.

Two psychologists testified at trial that the respondent currently suffers from multiple mental disorders that predisposed him to act in a sexually violent, predatory manner including Pedophilia, Antisocial Personality Disorder and Sexual Sadism. The doctors opined there was a substantial danger that the respondent would re-offend in a sexually violent, criminal and predatory manner if released into the community.

A Sexually Violent Predator is a person who has been convicted of a qualifying sexually violent offense against one or more victims and has a diagnosed mental disorder and is likely to engage in sexually violent criminal behavior. The vast majority of sex offenders are not Sexually Violent Predators as this is a very rare finding. In order to qualify, the Board of Parole Hearings must refer the offender to the

California Sex Offender Management Board who appoints two clinicians to perform independent, in-depth psychological evaluations. If they agree that the person is a Sexually Violent Predator, they will refer the case to the District Attorney for commitment proceedings.

Deputy District Attorney Diane Knoles who prosecuted the case stated “The law designates the most egregious sex offenders in the state of California as Sexually Violent Predators and Mr. Turner met all of the criteria. To prey upon a three-month-old infant stands out in its pure depravity. The District Attorney’s Office not only prosecutes crimes but also performs this unique function in the law to keep the community safe from the most dangerous predators.”

Napa County District Attorney Investigator Melissa Kelly, Investigative Technician Lauren Weitz, Victim Advocate Fay Hartje, Deputy District Attorney Kayla Richeson, and Legal Secretary Pamla Bryant were an invaluable part of the prosecution team.

Respondent will be committed for treatment for an indefinite period of time pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code section 6604 and 6604.1(a) to the California Department of State Hospitals at Coalinga.

Any questions regarding this case may be directed to Assistant District Attorney Paul Gero.