



Department of Justice

Office of Public Affairs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Former Priest and 'Shelter Home' Operator Indicted for Illicit Sexual Conduct Against Minors

A federal grand jury in Washington, D.C., returned an indictment yesterday charging a U.S. citizen and resident of Timor Leste with seven counts of engaging in illicit sexual conduct in a foreign place.

According to court documents, Richard Jude Daschbach, 84, is a former priest who is alleged to have engaged in illicit sexual conduct with minor victims in Timor Leste starting in at least 2013. As alleged, Daschbach operated a "shelter home" for children in Timor Leste. Victims disclosed that Daschbach sexually abused them when they were children and resided in the shelter home. Daschbach was defrocked by the Catholic church after some of the victims disclosed the abuse to the church. Daschbach is currently facing related child sexual exploitation charges in Timor Leste. In addition, in 2019, a grand jury in the Northern District of California returned an indictment against Daschbach for wire fraud in connection with his fundraising activity for the shelter home.

Today's indictment represents a significant step toward accountability for harms suffered by multiple vulnerable children allegedly victimized by this defendant," said Assistant Attorney General Kenneth A. Polite Jr. for the Justice Department's Criminal Division. "I'd like to thank the hardworking investigative and prosecution teams for their work today and every day to ensure that child predators face justice and children are kept safe."

"This case shows that we will use the full extent of the law to prosecute U.S. citizens who allegedly prey on children, no matter how far we must go to bring them to justice," said Acting U.S. Attorney Channing D. Phillips for the District of Columbia. "Together with our law enforcement partners, we must ensure that people placed in positions of trust do not betray their responsibilities to help the children who depend upon them."

Daschbach is charged with seven counts of engaging in illicit sexual conduct in a foreign place, Timor Leste. If convicted, he faces a maximum penalty of 30 years in prison per count. A federal district court judge will determine any sentence after considering the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

The FBI is investigating the case. The Justice Department's Office of International Affairs provided significant assistance.

Trial Attorneys Jessica Urban and Alicia A. Bove of the Justice Department's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS) and Assistant U.S. Attorney Amy Larson of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia are prosecuting the case. The Criminal Division's Office of Overseas Prosecutorial Development, Assistance and Training (OPDAT) provided assistance.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse, launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice. Led by U.S. Attorneys' Offices and CEOS, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the internet, as well as to identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.justice.gov/psc.

An indictment is merely an allegation and all defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

Attachment(s):

[Download Daschbach Filed Indictment](#)

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