

## **MESSAGE FROM PROSECUTOR SHERRI BEVAN WALSH**

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### **Child rapist denied parole for at least another five years**

(Akron, May 24, 2011) Summit County Prosecutor Sherri Bevan Walsh announced that yesterday, on May 23, after a hearing to the Ohio Parole Board in Columbus, Raymond Austin, 48, of Akron, was denied parole for his continuous sexual abuse of a young girl.

On April 13, 1991, an Akron Police Officer observed a parked car with two people in it. Austin noticed the officer and drove away. As the car drove away, the officer saw a little girl on the passenger side that appeared to be in distress. The police chased the car and arrested Austin on charges of willful fleeing. The little girl inside the car, age nine at the time, said that Austin had been sexually abusing her for two years.

On June 17, 1991, Austin pled guilty to five counts of rape and was sentenced to 30 to 75 years in prison. He was eligible after 15 years in prison because he was sentenced prior to the "Truth in Sentencing" changes to the law. Austin will appear before the parole board again in 2016. An initial parole hearing had recommended that Austin be released from prison when the victim requested a hearing before the full Ohio Parole Board. Referred to as a "full board hearing," testimony is presented from both victims and the prosecutor's office, and inmate representatives, about an individual's release.

The victim, who is now 29, testified to the Parole Board. Sherri Bevan Walsh said, "I want to commend this victim for having the courage to speak to the parole board today. Though a painful process, she was able to describe to the board the lasting effects Austin's abuse has had on her and her life."

Kristen Arapp, Summit County Prosecutor Sherri Bevan Walsh's Director of Victim Services, told the board that Austin should not be allowed out of prison. Arapp said, "Given the length of time he abused the victim, along with her young age and his lack of remorse, we believe Austin should remain in prison."

Austin has been denied parole before, most recently in 2007. At that time, the Ohio Parole Board had recommended that Austin be paroled when the Summit County Prosecutor's Office requested a hearing with the full Ohio Parole Board and Arapp again testified that Austin should remain in prison. On April 9, 2007, he was denied parole and was continued to April 2011.