



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF TULARE

Tim Ward, *District Attorney*

PRESS RELEASE

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PAROLE DENIED IN 1994 VISALIA SEXUAL ASSAULT

On January 15, 2020, at the Correctional Training Facility in Soledad, a California parole board issued a 5-year parole denial for William Irvin, age 68, for the 1994 sexual assault of a Visalia woman.

Between the hours of 6 am and 7 am on April 5, 1994, after her husband left for work, the victim exited her shower and dried off while her 3-year-old son remained in the shower. The victim's infant daughter remained asleep in her crib. When the victim left the master bedroom Irvin, a complete stranger who had broken into the house, confronted her holding a steak knife obtained from the home's kitchen. Irvin told the victim to have her son remain in the shower, and asked about any valuables in the home. He then ordered the victim to go into her son's bedroom where he sexually assaulted her for nearly an hour. Irvin told the victim she would be harmed if the police were contacted. Prior to departing, Irvin made the victim take a shower in a different bathroom and used a cloth to wipe his fingerprints off doorknobs, countertops, and the steak knife. After he left, the victim immediately called 911 and her husband. The victim's son was estimated to have stood in the running water of the shower for 50 minutes.

Through investigation and descriptions provided by the victim and other witnesses in the neighborhood, Visalia Police Department officers arrested Irvin the next day at his home. Later that September, Irvin was convicted of penetration by a foreign object, five counts of forced oral copulation, first-degree residential burglary, assault with great bodily injury and a deadly weapon, sexual battery, and misdemeanor dissuading a witness from reporting a crime. He was sentenced to 343 years, 4 months in prison. Irvin possessed a number of prior criminal convictions, including a 1992 strike for assault with a deadly weapon (screwdriver) against another female victim.

This was Irvin's first parole hearing, which was granted under California's Elderly Parole Program passed in AB 1448 (2017). Under the law, inmates who are 60 years or older and have served 25 continuous years of their sentence are eligible for parole consideration.

The Office of the District Attorney regularly attends parole hearings and a senior deputy district attorney argued against the inmate's release in this case. The victim, her husband, and a TCDA victim advocate were also present during the hearing.

*Media inquiries can be directed to the Office of the District Attorney, County of Tulare
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