

October 27, 2017

Re: Sexual Assault of a Minor Case #17008532

Escondido Police Chief Craig Carter and San Diego County District Attorney
Summer Stephan,

It's now over six weeks since we wrote and asked your help in correcting your department's terrible mishandling of the case of sexual assault of a minor, a case in which the Latina girl under 14 years of age was repeatedly sexually assaulted over the course of a year by her uncle. (Our Sept. 12, 2017 letter is pasted below.)

Though you finally had a detective call the victim, he has not maintained contact, nor arranged for a pretext call, nor, at least as of a week ago, has he contacted the outcry witnesses. Those are just the beginning investigatory steps that should have been carried out long ago last July when the case was first reported. Moreover, In his one phone call to the victim following our first letter, the detective had the nerve to tell the girl that "these cases are hard to prove". Indeed, but there's nothing other than your department's deliberate indifference that makes it so.

Furthermore, since our first letter we have found another girl residing in Escondido who was sexually approached by the same suspect when she was 9 years old. This not only adds to the considerable evidence available in the extant case, it immeasurably adds to the outrage. Understand that you are fully complicit in every other sex assault likely being perpetrated by this criminal who is now in his 40s.

Given the danger of this man to so many other young girls in your community, and given the imperative of justice for the victim and her family, we are now forwarding this communication along with our original letter to others in the community. It's our hope that they will impress on you the gravity and urgency of your sworn duty to handle these cases properly. The Escondido community should be especially concerned that your police department's discriminatory denial of equal protection to girls appears to stem from the chief on down.

Sincerely,

Marie De Santis
Women's Justice Center
Santa Rosa, CA
[707-575-3150](tel:707-575-3150)

c: Escondido Mayor Sam Abed and City Council Members, John Masson, Ed Gallo, Michael Morasco, and Olga Diaz

Escondido City Attorney Michael McGuinness

Escondido City Manager Jeffrey Epp

San Diego Union Tribune

Jill Morgan, Women's Resource Center, San Diego

California Attorney General Xavier Becerra

Leslie McGill, Executive Director, California Police Chiefs' Association,

Meagan Catafi, Training Manager, California Police Chiefs Association,

Nick Turner, Director, Vera Institute of Justice

Jessica Gonzalez-Rojas, Executive Director, National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health

Sandra Henriquez, Executive Director, California Coalition Against Sexual Assault,

Retired Sergeant Anne O'Dell, San Diego Police Department

Casey Gwinn, President, Alliance for Hope International

Gail Strack, Chief Executive Officer, Alliance for Hope International

Community at large

September 12, 2017 Letter to Chief Carter and DA Stephan

From: **Marie De Santis** <mariecdesantis@gmail.com>

Date: Tue, Sep 12, 2017 at 3:18 PM

Subject: Sexual Assault of a Minor Case #17008532 (attn Chief Carter and DA Stephan)

To: ebagstad@escondido.org, patricia.ramirez@sdcda.org

Re: Sexual Assault of a Minor Case #17008532

Escondido Police Chief Craig Carter and San Diego County District Attorney Summer Stephan,

We're writing on behalf of a teen sexual assault victim and her parents to express our serious concerns with your department's handling of the case. We're asking that you immediately assign a detective to the case and that you oversee that a proper investigation is being carried out in a timely manner.

On July 24, 2017, the victim and her parents made a report to the Escondido Police Department (case #170085320). The victim reported to the officer that she had been sexually assaulted

multiple times by her uncle over the course of about a year when she was 11 years old. The victim also told the officer she wanted to go forward with the case. The officer told her an investigator would be contacting her.

It is now over a month and a half since the report was made and neither the victim nor her parents have been contacted by your department. This despite the fact that both the victim (in English) and her parents (in Spanish) have made at least 9 phone calls to your investigation unit and have left messages asking for a response to the case. In each of their messages they gave the case referral number and their individual cell phone numbers for a detective to return their calls.

In addition to failing to contact or even respond to the victim or her family, clearly an investigation of these serious crimes has never even begun.

The only conclusion is that there is a detective or multiple detectives in your department who is brazenly ditching this case, willfully ignoring the safety and justice needs of the victim as well as the safety of all the girls in your community.

The willingness of your department to ignore this case without even rudimentary investigation is all the more outrageous because it's hard to imagine a sexual assault case with circumstances easier to investigate:

- * The victim is intelligent, articulate, and eager to cooperate in the investigation.
- * The identity, whereabouts, and contact information of the suspect is fully available. This man is in his 40s. He lives and works in Escondido and is very likely right now sexually assaulting other girls in your town.
- * The victim knows the suspect well and is willing to undertake pretext calls or emails.
- * There are multiple available outcry witnesses to corroborate the crimes, a fact your detective would easily establish by a few minutes talking with the victim.
- * The victim and her family no longer live in Escondido, so your investigators don't even have to do much of the case work themselves. If they wish, they can simply ask the department where the victim lives to do a courtesy interview as is standard practice throughout law enforcement agencies.

We are asking that you immediately assign a competent caring detective who will contact the victim and her family within the next 48 hours and who will immediately begin a thorough investigation. If this doesn't occur, we will continue to seek the justice this girl and her family deserve by forwarding this letter to local and state public officials, to the press, and to women's rights and Latino rights organizations.

And though our main concern is for the victim and her family, we're also asking that you undertake an investigation of the detective or detectives responsible for their willful obstruction

of justice and their denial of equal protection to this victim and other girls in the community. We also wish to be informed of the outcome of this investigation.

Your department has the phone numbers of the victim and her family. If you have any questions for me I can be reached at [707-575-3150](tel:707-575-3150).

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Marie De Santis, Director
Women's Justice Center
Santa Rosa, CA
[707-575-3150](tel:707-575-3150)