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**Contact: Kimberlee Leach  
Director of Communications  
Dallas County District Attorney's Office  
214-653-3756 (Office)  
[Kimberlee.leach@DallasCounty.org](mailto:Kimberlee.leach@DallasCounty.org)**

**For Immediate Release: Wesley Mathews Sentenced to Life in Prison in the Death of his Adopted Daughter Sherin**

**(Dallas, Texas)** – On Wednesday, June 26, 2019, a Dallas County jury sentenced a Richardson father to life in prison for the death of his adopted daughter, 3-year old Sherin Mathews. On Monday, June 24, 2019, 39-year-old Wesley Mathews pled guilty to a charge of intentionally and knowingly causing serious bodily injury to a child. The punishment phase of the trial began immediately following Mathews admission of guilt in front of jurors.

Richardson Police found Sherin's body in October 2017, two weeks after Mathews reported her missing. He initially told police that Sherin disappeared on October 7, 2017 after he left her outside the family's home around 3 a.m., as punishment for not drinking her milk, he said. He then waited five hours to contact authorities. Mathews then led Richardson Police on a wild goose chase knowing where the child's body was the entire time.

Mathews agreed to the plea agreement late last year knowing the charge of injury to a child carried the same sentence as a murder conviction. Dallas County Criminal District Attorney John Creuzot said, "Based on the facts of the case, this was the only viable, prosecutable offense." The DAs Office presented a strong case with the evidence we had to make certain Mathews was sent to prison and to get justice for little Sherin.

Lead prosecutor Jason Fine told jurors, "Sherin's little body was so badly decomposed, due to the actions of this defendant, the medical examiner could not determine an official cause of death which could have dramatically changed the way we were able to prosecute this case." During cross-examination of Wesley Mathews, Fine told the defendant, "You told investigators Sherin's death was a mistake but by your own words, you caused the death of your daughter and put her lifeless body in a trash bag and disposed of her. I don't call that a mistake, I call it murder."

District Attorney Crimes Against Children Chief Sherre Thomas told jurors, "While multiple agencies were searching for this little girl for weeks, the defendant knew where she was the whole time and that she was rotting away in that culvert. He deserves the harshest punishment possible."

Assistant District Attorney Bryan Mitchell and Appellate ADA Brian Higginbotham assisted in prosecuting the case against Mathews.

Due to increased publicity on this case, the judge overseeing the trial put a gag order in place to prevent information and evidence from leaking to the public and possibly tainting a potential jury pool. The judge also sequestered jurors during the trial.

Our prayers continue to be with Sherin and we are glad that we were able to get justice for her.

The District Attorney's Office would like to extend our sincere appreciation and gratitude for the time and dedication of the jurors in this case.

Frank Crowley Courts Building • 133 N. Riverfront Blvd., L.B. 19 • Dallas, Texas 75207-4399 • 214/653-360