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For Immediate Release:
November 23rd, 2026

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Douglas County Man Convicted of Child Abuse and Assault in "House of Terror" Crimes

Castle Rock CO –A 36-year-old Aurora Douglas County man has been found guilty of multiple counts of assault, child abuse, and menacing. The guilty verdicts came after a prolonged and horrific pattern of violence against his former girlfriend, their child, and the victim's three other children.

Wednesday, a Douglas County jury found Dontae Lahmar Burney guilty of 18 charges including 10 counts of assault, including strangulation and assault causing reckless bodily injury; six counts of child abuse, involving recklessly and knowingly causing bodily injury; and two counts of menacing.

Evidence presented at trial showed that between March of 2023 and June 2024, Burney repeatedly beat and strangled his girlfriend inside their Douglas County home. He also repeatedly assaulted the children. In one particularly disturbing video, shown to jurors, Burney brutally beat a two-year-old child for failing to clean his room. The video was so graphic and upsetting that jurors were brought to tears.

Chief Deputy District Attorney Danielle Jaramillo described the home as “a House of Terror.” “Children should never have to live in fear in their own home. This was a place where the father figure was supposed to protect and care for these children,” said Jaramillo. “Instead, he subjected them to unimaginable violence. The evidence in this case was heartbreaking, but the jury verdict sends a clear message that this kind of cruelty will not be tolerated.”

Senior Deputy District Attorney Lauren Raible said the jury verdict was an important step toward justice for the victims. “Burney demonstrated a sustained pattern of violence against his girlfriend and children,” said Raible. “The most dangerous time for a victim of domestic violence is when they are leaving the relationship; it took incredible bravery to ask for help and leave when she did. Thank you to the Douglas County Sheriff’s Office and our investigator for shining a light on these horrendous crimes.”

“This case is disturbing and heartbreaking,” said Douglas County Sheriff Darren Weekly. “I commend the victim for her courage and strength, and I am incredibly proud of our deputies and detectives who worked tirelessly to uncover the truth. I also want to thank the District Attorney’s Office for their commitment to prosecuting this case. The outcome sends a clear message: we will take allegations of domestic violence and child abuse seriously, we will stand with victims, and we will do everything within our power to protect the most vulnerable members of our community.”

District Attorney George Brauchler said the verdict sends a strong message that domestic violence and child abuse will not be tolerated in the 23rd Judicial District. “There is a special place in hell for men who visit violence upon- not only their girlfriend and mother of their infant child-but on that very child and three other small kids,” said Brauchler. “The videos of this monster beating on these children is haunting. Forcing these children to sit in court and testify against him…some will call it “exercising his rights.” Others will think it a gutless act of selfishness and retraumatizing his victims. Fortunately for Burney, the system can only sentence him to prison. Under a just system he will remain there until these children have forgotten about the horrors he visited upon them.”

Burney will be sentenced January 29th, 2027. He faces 10-112 years in prison.

If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic or sexual violence, confidential support and safe shelter services are available. Help is just a phone

call away. Contact the TESSA 24-hour hotline at 719-633-3819.

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