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**\*\*\*MEDIA ALERT\*\*\***

**For Immediate Release**  
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## **DEFENDANT SENTENCED TO 30 YEARS** **IN INFANT CO-SLEEPING DEATH CASE**

Evansville, IN – Prosecutor Diana Moers announces that on August 26, 2024, Taylor Alexis Smith was sentenced to 30 years in the Indiana Department of Correction following a guilty verdict in July on Neglect of a Dependent Resulting in Death, a Level 1 Felony; Possession of Methamphetamine, a Level 6 Felony; Unlawful Possession of Syringe, a Level 6 Felony; and Possession of Paraphernalia; a Class C Misdemeanor. The Honorable Magistrate Judge Celia M. Pauli of the Vanderburgh County Circuit Court presided.

On June 8, 2022, Officers were dispatched to 27 W. Oregon Street in reference to an unresponsive infant. First responders made several attempts to resuscitate the infant, but the 13-day-old baby was declared deceased on-scene. The home was extremely unsanitary, lacking running water and appropriate sleeping space for the infant. Taylor Smith, the infant’s mother, admitted to recent methamphetamine use and co-sleeping with her baby which ultimately led to the infant’s death.

Infant Wade Wilson was born on May 27, 2024, and tested positive on drug screens for methamphetamine at birth. The Department of Child Services and Vanderburgh County Juvenile Court ordered the Defendant, Taylor Smith, not to have contact with her son. Despite this order, Smith continued to have contact with Wade Wilson and actively use methamphetamine. Smith was consistently warned against the risks of her drug use to her newborn child’s life and was also warned of the dangers of co-sleeping with her child. Despite the persistent warnings, the Defendant continued to engage in these behaviors.

Prosecutor Moers comments: “Every infant death case that ends up in criminal court is preventable. We must be diligent as a society to assist and hold parents who are struggling with addiction accountable and get them the resources they need - their child’s life often depends on it. Unfortunately, some parents are a danger to their own children and their disregard of that fact can have a tragic end. Our community has a plethora of resources to help parents who are struggling for any reason - any with concerns can start by contacting my office for a list of these resources.

Our job is to hold folks accountable. This mother is responsible for the death of her child, despite the community’s efforts to help her. She disobeyed the orders of the court to stay away from her infant and was also given access to her by others. Now, she will

spend 30 years of her life in a prison hours away from Vanderburgh County knowing that she is responsible for the death of her own innocent baby. This should serve as a warning to all in the community to take dangerous parental behavior seriously - in yourself and others.

I should never have to prosecute one of these cases. Parents have a duty to keep their homes clean, feed and nurture their children properly, and do their most basic responsibility of keeping them alive and parenting them while free from drugs. If they do not, we will ask that they be sent to prison.

Baby Wade will continue to be in our hearts and his precious, short time here on earth will inspire us to continue working to ensure we keep babies safe and hold any who do not uphold this duty accountable.”

Prosecutor Moers thanks Detective Karin Montgomery and Officer John Pieszchalski for their response and thorough investigation in this case, the American Medical Response and Evansville Fire Department for their efforts to save the infant and daily efforts to serve citizens of Vanderburgh County, the Department of Child Services, Deaconess Hospital, and the Indiana State Police for their efforts in this case. Prosecutor Moers extends a special thank you to her Deputy Ian Blair whose specialization in prosecuting child abuse and neglect cases led to success in this case, and all her office staff including Winston Lin, Kiersten Butler, Morgan Richardville, Tony Carden, and Jessica Pollock who assisted in this case to bring justice to Vanderburgh for the reckless death of a baby.

The infant’s father, Timothy Allen Wilson, is also charged with a series of crimes in connection with this case and is awaiting trial in October.

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