



OFFICE OF THE
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
ORANGE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA
TODD SPITZER

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PRESS RELEASE

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Anaheim Man Charged with Kidnapping Junior High Student who was Walking Home from School

*Girl let go after witnesses confronted man; defendant facing
life in prison with possibility of parole if convicted.*

SANTA ANA, Calif. – A 30-year-old man is facing life in prison with the possibility of parole for kidnapping a 13-year-old junior high school student off the street while she walked home from school in Anaheim last month and sexually assaulting another teenager in Riverside County. Numerous witnesses screamed at the kidnapper that they were going to call the police.

Andrew Giovanni Pio, 30, of Anaheim, was charged today with one felony count of kidnapping to commit a sex offense, one felony count of assault of a minor with the intent to commit a sexual offense, one felony count of a lewd act on a child, one felony count of second-degree robbery, and one misdemeanor count of evading a peace officer.

He faces a maximum sentence of life in prison with the possibility of parole if convicted.

“A man grabbing an innocent girl off the street and throwing her into a truck in broad daylight is the stuff of every parent’s nightmares,” said Orange County District Attorney Todd Spitzer. “This brave little girl fought with everything she had and that will to survive combined with the bystanders who heard her screams and came to her rescue prevented this nightmare from becoming an even greater tragedy. Thankfully, this little girl escaped and got to go home to her family. The Orange County District Attorney’s Office is committed to doing everything it can to keep this predator off our streets so that he can’t victimize any more children. If he’s convicted of all charges, he has forfeited his right to live in our society.”

On March 31, 2022, at approximately 2:50 pm, the victim was walking from her junior high after school when she saw a white pick-up truck parked on Ball Road with the passenger side door open. As the victim came closer to the truck, a man later identified as Pio is accused of getting out of the truck and pushing her into the vehicle. Bystanders saw the girl kicking and screaming and confronted him.

Pio is accused of taking the girl’s cell phone and pushing her before driving away.

Officers attempted to pull over Pio on Friday, April 8, 2022 in the City of Brea after noticing the pickup truck he was driving matched the vehicle description in the Anaheim kidnapping. Instead of pulling over, Pio led officers on a pursuit for nearly an hour. Pio was arrested on Interstate 5 near the La Paz off-ramp in Laguna Hills after the California Highway Patrol deployed spike strips.

Pio is also charged with sexually assaulting a 15-year-old girl last November in Riverside County.

Senior Deputy District Attorney Karyn Stokke of the Sexual Assault Unit is prosecuting this case.

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