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**MEDIA RELEASE**

**MAN SENTENCED IN MURDER OF TODDLER IN EAGAN FOSTER CARE HOME**

Dakota County Attorney James Backstrom announced that **Charles Wayne Homich**, age 28 (address unknown), was sentenced today to 300 months in prison by Judge Christopher Lehmann in connection with the death of 3-year-old Zayden Lawson, a foster child in the care of Homich's girlfriend, Zeporia Fortenberry of Eagan, in June of 2017. Homich pled guilty April 23, 2019, to one count of Murder in the Second Degree (Commission of a Felony- Malicious Punishment of a Child).

**Zeporia Fortenberry**, age 32, pled guilty to one count of Manslaughter in the Second Degree. She was sentenced June 20, 2019, to 41 months in prison by Judge David Knutson.

A copy of the indictment and the previous criminal complaint can be found at [Criminal Complaint Search](#). If in custody, a mug shot can be viewed at [Inmate Search](#). Prior news releases are available at [County Attorney News Releases](#).

Backstrom commented: *"We are pleased to have brought Charles Homich to justice in connection with this tragic case that claimed the life of this little boy."*

Backstrom praised Heather Pipenhagen and Deanna Natoli, the Assistant County Attorneys who prosecuted this case. Backstrom also thanked the Eagan Police Department for their thorough investigation in this case.

If you have questions, contact James Backstrom at 651-438-4438.