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**PERMENTER FOUND GUILTY OF DUI MANSLAUGHTER
IN DEATH OF 12-YEAR-OLD HUNTER COPE**

State Attorney Melissa Nelson announces that Kelley Permenter, of Jacksonville, was found guilty by a jury of Driving Under the Influence Manslaughter, Driving Under the Influence with Damage, and Leaving the Scene of an Accident Involving Attended Property. Permenter now faces a maximum of 15 years in Florida State Prison. A sentencing hearing is scheduled before the Honorable Bruce Anderson on Nov. 25, 2019.

In the morning hours of March 6, 2017, Permenter was driving a black SUV north on State Road A1A when she struck 12-year-old Hunter Cope at the intersection of Wonderwood Drive and State Road A1A. Hope was transported to UF Health and died from his injures. An investigation by the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office revealed Permenter was driving over the speed limit, made no attempts to brake or avoid Cope, and had signs of impairment. Surveillance footage from a food store less than 1,000 feet away from the accident showed Permenter driving her SUV and rear-ending another vehicle before driving off. Shortly after this occurred, Permenter struck Cope with her vehicle. A blood draw sent to and tested by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement showed Permenter had a blood alcohol level above the legal limit and other substances in her system at the time of the fatal accident.

The case was investigated by Jacksonville Sheriff's Office and is being prosecuted by Assistant State Attorneys John Kalinowski and Jacqueline Hutchins.