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**PERMENTER SENTENCED TO 10+ YEARS IN PRISON
FOR DUI MANSLAUGHTER DEATH OF 12-YEAR-OLD HUNTER COPE**

State Attorney Melissa Nelson announces that Kelley Permenter, of Jacksonville, was sentenced by the Honorable Bruce Anderson to more than 10 years in Florida State Prison for the death of Hunter Cope. In all, Permenter was sentenced to 10 years and four months in prison followed by a year of community control and three years of probation.

On Oct. 25, 2019, a jury found Permenter guilty of Driving Under the Influence Manslaughter, Driving Under the Influence with Damage, and Leaving the Scene of an Accident Involving Attended Property.

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 injuries. 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 was prosecuted by Assistant State Attorneys John Kalinowski and Jacqueline Hutchins.