

# Two Massachusetts brothers sentenced for multiple child rapes and sexual assaults

"Two brothers were sentenced to life in state prison after they were convicted on numerous child rape and sexual assault charges. On February 23, 2022, after 4 days of trial, a jury convicted Gilberto Candelario, 49, and Heroildo Candelario, 47, on all but three of the 44 charges.

After all five of the victims provided impact statements to the court, Judge Janice Howe imposed multiple consecutive sentences on Gilberto Candelario resulting in a life sentence with parole eligibility after 91 years. Heroildo Candelario will be eligible for parole after 74 years.

"The courage of these young women to report the abuse and testify at trial cannot be overstated," Essex District Attorney Jonathan Blodgett said. "They suffered unspeakable and long-lasting harm at the hands of despicable men. I hope that the guilty verdicts and these lengthy sentences help these young women heal and fully understand that none of this is their fault."

Gilberto was found guilty of 18 counts: Aggravated Rape of A Child (10 year age difference) (4 counts); Rape of a Child (2 counts), Rape (2 counts), Indecent Assault & Battery on a Child under 14 (6 counts), Witness Intimidation (3 counts), Indecent Assault & Battery (1 count). He was acquitted of one count of Aggravated Rape of a Child (5 year age difference).

Heroildo was found guilty of 23 counts: Aggravated Rape of a Child (4 counts – 10 year age difference/4 counts 5 year age difference), Rape (1 count), Indecent Assault & Battery on a Child under 14 (4 counts), Dissemination of Harmful Matter to a Minor (4 counts), Assault with Intent to Rape (4 counts),

Witness Intimidation (2 counts). He was acquitted of one count of Aggravated Rape of a Child and Assault with Intent to Rape.

Essex Assistant District Attorney Jessica Strasnick introduced evidence at trial that proved that the brothers repeatedly raped four sisters from 2009 to 2016. The abuse started when the girls were age 9 to 12. A fifth girl was raped by Gilberto when she was 11. The abuse followed a similar pattern with the men threatening the girls not to tell anyone as well as offers of money, alcohol and marijuana to keep quiet.

In her sentencing statement, ADA Strasnick said, "These girls did nothing wrong. They were innocent children and the defendants' actions essentially gave them each a life sentence. A life full of fear. A life full trauma. A life with emotional and mental baggage that they are forced to carry with them every day."

Essex ADA Strasnick was assisted at trial by Essex Victim Advocates Amy Snow and Mikki DeFeo. She thanked Lawrence Police Detective Jay Heggarty for his work on the investigation." -Essex District Attorney's Office.