



Andrew A. Bain
STATE ATTORNEY
NINTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
ORANGE AND OSCEOLA COUNTY, FLORIDA

M. Ryan Williams
CHIEF ASSISTANT STATE ATTORNEY

Jamie McManus
DEPUTY CHIEF ASSISTANT STATE ATTORNEY

Kamilah Perry
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, GENERAL COUNSEL

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 12, 2024

Contact:

Public Information Office
415 N. Orange Ave
Orlando, Fla. 32801
PIO@sao9.org
SAO9th.com

Repeat Offender Gets Nearly a Year in Jail for DUI

ORANGE COUNTY, Fla. – An Orange County jury convicted a repeat DUI offender after his latest Driving Under the Influence charge resulted in injuries to two kids in a crash at an Orange County gas station.

On Oct. 5, 2023, Juan Jacinto Cruz, 44, backed his pickup truck into the passenger door of another vehicle causing the door to collide with two children, ages 7-years-old and 12-years-old. The 7-year-old was trying to get into the vehicle and became pinned between the door and the vehicle.

When Orange County sheriff's deputies arrived on scene, Mr. Jacinto Cruz was unable to maintain his balance, smelled of alcohol and had watery, glassy eyes. Florida Highway Patrol troopers were called to investigate the accident, and Mr. Jacinto Cruz agreed to perform standardized field sobriety exercises, during which, he showed multiple signs of impairment.

The trooper subsequently arrested Mr. Jacinto Cruz for Driving Under the Influence Causing Property Damage or Personal Injury. Jacinto Cruz was taken to the Orange County Breath Testing Center where his blood alcohol content level was still two times over the legal limit five hours after his arrest.

This was Jacinto Cruz's fourth DUI arrest in just three years. At the time of his October arrest, he was out on bond for an earlier 2023 DUI arrest. He also had a previous 2021 conviction for DUI Causing Property Damage or Personal Injury. He was also arrested for DUI in 2022.

During the trial, The State called nine witnesses, including one of the children who was injured. A Florida Department of Law Enforcement department inspector traveled from Tallahassee to testify to the breath results.

After a two-day trial, the jury found Jacinto Cruz guilty as charged for DUI Causing Property Damage or Personal Injury. The State recommended a maximum sentence of 365 days in jail due to the defendant's prior criminal history and the facts of this case. The judge sentenced him to 360 days in jail, followed by an order to complete DUI Counterattack School, any recommended counseling, a \$4,000 fine, a five-year driver's license suspension, a D6 suspension of his license, restitution to the victims and restitution to the State.

###