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### Jehovah's Witnesses Hit With Another Lawsuit Alleging Child Sexual Abuse; Organization Has Paid Over \$13 Million in Damages



(Photo: The Christian Post/Nicola A. Menzie)

A group of Jehovah's Witnesses stand by their table displaying religious literature on Friday, Jan. 10, 2014, at the Atlantic Terminal subway station in New York City.

By [Sami K. Martin](#)

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A new case of child sexual abuse was filed earlier today against a Jehovah's Witnesses congregation in Hillsboro, Oregon.

The lawsuit, filed against the North Hillsboro Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, alleges that Velicia Alston and an unnamed plaintiff known only as John Roe, were sexually abused and molested by Daniel Castellanos, a Baptized Publisher and Elder or Ministerial Servant in the congregation. Alston and Roe were reportedly between the ages of 11 and 8-10, respectively.

"We will show that these innocent children had their lives ruined by this congregational leader and this religious organization, who suppressed its knowledge of a child predator within the congregation by following the policies imposed by the governing body of the Jehovah's Witnesses to keep such information secret at all costs to avoid scandal and public scrutiny," Irwin M. Zalkin of The Zalkin Law Firm, said in the press release.

The Zalkin Law Firm has represented numerous victims of sexual assault at the hands of the Jehovah's Witnesses organization. The governing body has had to pay several million dollars to victims and has been accused of purposely covering up charges of abuse as well as protecting known abusers.

In Oct., Jose Lopez was awarded \$13.5 million in damages for the abuse he suffered when he was seven years old. Lopez went public with his allegation of abuse at the hands of church leader Gonzalo Campos and was represented by The Zalkin Law Firm. The religious organization flatly denied all of the charges.

"Jehovah's Witnesses abhor child abuse and strive to protect children from such acts," Mario Moreno, associate general counsel for Watchtower, told [UT San Diego](#). "The trial judge's decision is a drastic action for any judge to take given the circumstances of this case. We will seek a full review of this case on appeal."

However, Zalkin has stated that there is an international problem of child sexual abuse within the organization that must not be denied.

"These guys will deny and deny. They are belligerent, they are arrogant, they treat victims as adversaries," Zalkin told [UT San Diego](#). "This is not an organization that is ready to accept the reality of what they have been doing."

Last month alone, three siblings in Connecticut filed a lawsuit alleging they were abused by a ministerial servant from the group. They claimed that the group protected a known and registered sex offender, Orlando Afandor, which left them vulnerable to abuse.

Jehovah's Witnesses have remained silent on the matter, leading to further belief that there is a conspiracy or cover-up. When called for comment, the organization did not reply.

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