

Zuni man faces charges of aggravated sexual abuse of a child

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ALBUQUERQUE – A Zuni man allegedly sexually assaulted an underage girl for four years.

Phillip Lahi Sr., 70, an enrolled member of the Zun Pueblo, allegedly engaged in and attempted to engage in sexual conduct with the victim since she was five or six-years-old. According to the criminal complaint, Lahi's alleged conduct included exposing himself to the child, who is an enrolled member of the Zuni Pueblo, and performing sexual acts in front of her.

In October of 2021, when the victim was nine-years-old, Lahi allegedly forcibly engaged in sex with her. Lahi allegedly committed the offenses on the Pueblo of Zuni.

Lahi's initial appearance in federal court was on April 29. He faced charges of aggravated sexual abuse of a child in Indian Country. He remained in custody on conditions of release pending a detention hearing that was scheduled for May 3.

A complaint is only an allegation. A defendant is considered innocent unless and until proven guilty. If convicted, Lahi faces a minimum of 30 years and up to life in prison.

The Gallup Resident Agency of the FBI Albuquerque Field Office investigated this case with assistance from the Zuni Police Department. Assistant United States Attorney Brittany DuChaussee is prosecuting the case.

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