

**Jacqueline M. Lacy**  
**State's Attorney**



**Office of the**  
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**Vermilion County, Illinois**

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\*\*\*\*\*PRESS RELEASE\*\*\*\*\*

**People v. Robert Cunningham 2021 CF 303**

Robert Cunningham, formerly of Danville, Illinois, was sentenced on August 25, 2023 to seven years in the Illinois Department of Corrections for the offense of Aggravated Battery to a Peace Officer, a Class 2 Felony, and three years concurrent for Aggravated Fleeing and Attempting to Elude, a Class 4 Felony. The sentence was ordered by Circuit Judge Thomas O'Shaughnessy.

Following a trial on June 6, 2023, a Vermilion County Jury found Robert Cunningham guilty after hearing evidence that Tilton Police Chief Phillip Bernardi attempted to conduct a traffic stop but Cunningham fled. Chief Bernardi then pursued Cunningham on a high-speed chase through the Village of Tilton that reached speeds up to eighty (80) miles per hour on Georgetown Road. Cunningham eventually went off the road and the vehicle got stuck in a ditch. After being arrested, Cunningham was able to maneuver his handcuffed hands to the front of his body and when Chief Bernardi attempted to properly re-fit the handcuffs, Cunningham attacked Chief Bernardi, at one point strangling Chief Bernardi with his legs.

State's Attorney Jacqueline Lacy expressed her gratitude to Chief Phillip Bernardi for his decades of service protecting the citizens of our community.