



**ERIK NASARENKO**  
VENTURA COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
**NEWS RELEASE**



Follow us @VenturaCountyDA  
[vcdistrictattorney.com](http://vcdistrictattorney.com)

Contact: Joey Buttitta  
Title: Communications Manager/PIO  
Phone: (805) 767-3400  
Email: [Joey.Buttitta@ventura.org](mailto:Joey.Buttitta@ventura.org)

Approved: SW  
Date: May 15, 2024  
Release No.: 24-050

### Judge Rules Sufficient Evidence in Alnaji Case to Merit Trial

VENTURA, Calif. – The Ventura County District Attorney's Office announced today that Loay Abdel Fattah Alnaji (DOB 05/06/73), of Moorpark, has been held to answer for the involuntary manslaughter death of Paul Kessler. Ventura County Superior Court Judge Ryan Wright made the decision today after a two-day preliminary hearing where evidence was presented, and 18 witnesses testified.

Alnaji is accused of engaging in a physical confrontation with the victim, Mr. Kessler, on November 5, 2023, while both were protesting on the corner of Thousand Oaks Blvd. and Westlake Blvd., in Thousand Oaks. Mr. Kessler subsequently died from injuries sustained during the incident.

During the preliminary hearing, Senior Deputy District Attorney Courtney Lewis presented the evidence, including DNA analysis of blood found on the rim of the megaphone, which Alnaji is accused of striking Mr. Kessler with. That blood evidence was located on the front end of the megaphone horn and is a match to Mr. Kessler. Video evidence was also presented, which included video and audio from Mr. Kessler's cell phone showing the moments directly before he was struck by Alnaji. Dr. Othon Mena, a Ventura County Medical Examiner, testified that Mr. Kessler died from blunt force trauma caused by the blow from the megaphone and the subsequent fall to the pavement.

The District Attorney's Office continues to translate and review messages, social media postings, files, and documents belonging to Alnaji. This evaluation is ongoing and comprehensive, but to date it has not revealed evidence to support a hate crime. While antisemitic hate speech was heard at the November 5, 2023, rally, there is no evidence those words were said by Alnaji.

Alnaji remains out of custody on \$50,000 bail. He faces a maximum of four years prison if convicted on all charges. An arraignment on information is scheduled for June 10, 2024, at 8:30 a.m. in courtroom 22 of the Ventura County Superior Court.

**Case: 2023030461**

**Defendant Information:**

Loay Abdel Fattah Alnaji (DOB 05/06/73)  
Moorpark

**Charges:**

- PC192(b) – Involuntary manslaughter
- PC 243(d) – Battery causing serious bodily injury  
Special Allegations:
- PC 1192.7(c)(8) – Personally inflicted great bodily injury