

Family Accuses Christian Ex-House Speaker Dennis Hastert of Sexual Abuse

The sister of a student at the high school where Dennis Hastert was a wrestling coach accused the former U.S. House of Representatives speaker of sexually abusing her brother, according to an interview with ABC News that aired on Friday.

In the first public identification of an alleged abuse victim, Jolene Reinboldt said she found out about the abuse eight years after her brother, Steve, graduated. Steve Reinboldt died of AIDS in 1995, ABC said.

Reinboldt alleged her brother was abused by Hastert for four years while he was equipment manager for the Yorkville High School wrestling team in rural Illinois.

"I asked him, when was your first same-sex experience. He looked at me and said, 'It was with Dennis Hastert,'" Reinboldt told ABC. "I was stunned."

Steve "just told me the basics. I believed him 100 percent. But he never went into any details—where it happened, or what the sexual experiences were like, anything like that," she said.

Hastert, 73, has been charged with trying to hide \$3.5 million in payments he was making to conceal past misconduct and is scheduled to appear in court on Tuesday. He has made no public statements since charges were filed May 28.

The Illinois Republican led the House of Representatives for eight years before leaving Congress in 2007.

According to the indictment, Hastert agreed several years ago to pay an individual the millions to compensate for and

conceal past misconduct. Several media outlets have reported the past misconduct was sexual and dated from his time at the high school.

Reinboldt said after spending the last two decades trying to expose Hastert's actions through authorities and the media, she was contacted two weeks ago by the FBI. ABC said during that time Hastert denied the claim and the news network could not corroborate her allegation.

She said her brother told her he never spoke out about the abuse because he thought no one would believe him. She added she is publicly identifying her brother now in hopes of reaching out to other victims.

Representatives for the FBI as well as Hastert declined to comment to ABC on Jolene Reinboldt's allegations.

Reuters could not immediately confirm her account.

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