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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JURY FINDS MATTHEW EXTON GUILTY OF ATTEMPTED MURDER

TOLEDO, Ohio – Lucas County Prosecuting Attorney Julia R. Bates announced that on Sept. 4, 2026, a Lucas County jury found Matthew Exton, 43, guilty of attempted murder and two counts of felonious assault, with two firearm specifications attached to each of the three counts. The jury found Exton not guilty on the remaining count of felonious assault. The charges stem from case CR2025-00540.

On April 11, 2025, Exton ordered a drink at the bar inside Souk restaurant in Toledo. After leaving the restaurant, he saw his ex-wife and her family at Sabira restaurant next door, which was celebrating its opening night.

Exton entered Sabira, ordered a drink at the bar to be sent to their table and, as he left the restaurant, spit toward their table. He later returned with a gun, walked into the restaurant and headed directly toward their table, where he tried to fire the weapon. The gun's safety was still engaged, and a waiter tackled Exton before he could make a second attempt to fire the weapon. The gun had one round in the chamber and seven others in the magazine.

"Nothing in their training and soft openings at the restaurant could have prepared the staff for what walked through that door," Bates said. "The defendant did not come with the intention of having a meal. He came with anger in him and with the intention to commit a public execution of his ex-wife at the restaurant that day. We appreciate the jury's service this week and we hope its decision provides some sense of closure for those seated at the table as well as the Sabira employees who were also victimized that day. The employees and patrons who stepped in to stop the defendant that day are heroes."

Sentencing is set for Monday, Sept. 21, 2026, at 9 a.m. at the Lucas County Courthouse in Courtroom 1.

Assistant Prosecutor Rose Mary Mock, Chief of Special Units Michael J. Loisel and Assistant Prosecutor Mark N. Petiya led the prosecution.

About the Lucas County Prosecutor's Office

The Lucas County Prosecutor's Office pursues justice, safeguards our community and advocates for victims. We balance accountability with individual rights, partnering with law enforcement to ensure public safety and fair governance. We are committed to integrity, outreach and justice for all.