

August 31, 2026

Geneva, Illinois.

Today, in the Circuit Court of Kane County, Judge David Kliment sentenced Melissa J. Hill to 8 years in prison for her conviction of aggravated DUI. Her defense attorney, Stephen Komie, argued putting her in prison for 18 to 28 years was a waste of State resources at \$59,000 per year, and not appropriate for the offense she committed. He said a sentence of 18 to 28 years would be a life sentence and not justified by Hill's history of community service and involvement.

Melissa J. Hill, 58, formerly of Sugar Grove, pleaded guilty in June to two felony counts of aggravated driving under the influence of alcohol — causing two deaths. She agreed to let a judge determine the sentence.

The crash happened around 11:09 p.m. July 21, 2023, on Bliss Road near Seavey Road. Hill was driving a BMW X5 south on Bliss, crossed a double-yellow no-passing line, and hit a Chevrolet Silverado driven by Jonathan Couch, 54, of Sugar Grove. Their vehicles then struck others. Couch died the next day. His passenger, 56-year-old Teresa Haidl, died a day after that.

Hill had a blood alcohol content of .235, nearly three times the legal limit, a Kane County deputy testified Friday.

Kane County Judge David Kliment cited the severity of the crash; the fact Hill sped up to 97 mph a second before the crash; that it involved four vehicles, and that injured several people.

But Kliment also noted that Hill had no history of committing crimes.

Hill told the judge, "The fault is all mine, and I accept full responsibility. There are no words that can make it right ... the words 'I'm sorry' are just too small."

Assistant State's Attorney, Katy Flannagan, argued for a long sentence between 18 and 28 years.

Hill's attorney, Stephen Komie, presented witnesses, including Melissa Hill's ex-husband, Mickey Hill, who testified that Melissa Hill, as a therapist, saved many lives by helping people overcome the worst experiences of their lives. Mia Hunt testified that Hill's therapy gave her the strength to save herself from a domestically abusive marriage. Attorney Komie introduced evidence

showing Melissa Hill's participation in the community and her involvement in healing the community with interfaith services previously reported by Kane County news in November 2025.

After a two-day sentencing hearing, the Court said the appropriate sentence for Melissa Hill was 8 years in prison for the harm caused by impaired driving and passing on the left at 97 mph resulting in the head-on collision that killed two persons.

