

FILED

MAY 24 2023

Ravalli County, MT  
Justice of the Peace  
By \_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk

1 RAVALLI COUNTY ATTORNEY  
2 Bill Fulbright, County Attorney  
3 Ravalli County Courthouse  
4 205 Bedford Street, Suite C  
Hamilton, Montana 59840-2853  
(406) 375-6750  
Attorneys for Plaintiff

COPY

5 **IN THE JUSTICE COURT OF RAVALLI COUNTY, STATE OF MONTANA**

6 STATE OF MONTANA,

7 Plaintiff,

8 vs.

9 JANETTE VIOLA SESSIONS,

10 Defendant

) Cause No.: CR 23- 107

) Dept. No. 1/2

) **FELONY COMPLAINT**

) 76 years old  
) Stevensville  
) DC - 6-14-23 or 6-15-23  
) Bond \$5,000

11 Bill Fulbright, Ravalli County Attorney, for the State of Montana, accuses JANETTE

12 VIOLA SESSIONS of the following crimes committed in Ravalli County, Montana:

13 CHARGE 1 – CRIMINAL CHILD ENDANGERMENT, a Felony, in violation of § 45-5-628,  
14 MCA:

15 On or about May 23, 2023, Defendant JANETTE VIOLA SESSIONS purposely,  
16 knowingly, or negligently caused a substantial risk of death or serious bodily injury to Youth  
17 1, a child under 14 years of age by operating a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol or  
18 dangerous drugs, in violation of § 61-8-1002, M.C.A., with a child in the vehicle, in violation  
19 of the above statute.

20 CHARGE 2 – CRIMINAL CHILD ENDANGERMENT, a Felony, in violation of § 45-5-628,  
MCA:

21 On or about May 23, 2023, Defendant JANETTE VIOLA SESSIONS purposely,  
22 knowingly, or negligently caused a substantial risk of death or serious bodily injury to Youth  
23 2, a child under 14 years of age by operating a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol or  
24 dangerous drugs, in violation of § 61-8-1002, M.C.A., with a child in the vehicle, in violation  
25 of the above statute.

1 CHARGE 3 – CRIMINAL CHILD ENDANGERMENT, a Felony, in violation of § 45-5-628,  
2 MCA:

3 On or about May 23, 2023, Defendant JANETTE VIOLA SESSIONS purposely,  
4 knowingly, or negligently caused a substantial risk of death or serious bodily injury to Youth  
5 3, a child under 14 years of age by operating a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol or  
6 dangerous drugs, in violation of § 61-8-1002, M.C.A., with a child in the vehicle, in violation  
7 of the above statute.

8 CHARGE 4 – CRIMINAL CHILD ENDANGERMENT, a Felony, in violation of § 45-5-628,  
9 MCA:

10 On or about May 23, 2023, Defendant JANETTE VIOLA SESSIONS purposely,  
11 knowingly, or negligently caused a substantial risk of death or serious bodily injury to Youth  
12 4, a child under 14 years of age by operating a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol or  
13 dangerous drugs, in violation of § 61-8-1002, M.C.A., with a child in the vehicle, in violation  
14 of the above statute.

15 CHARGE 5 – CRIMINAL CHILD ENDANGERMENT, a Felony, in violation of § 45-5-628,  
16 MCA:

17 On or about May 23, 2023, Defendant JANETTE VIOLA SESSIONS purposely,  
18 knowingly, or negligently caused a substantial risk of death or serious bodily injury to Youth  
19 5, a child under 14 years of age by operating a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol or  
20 dangerous drugs, in violation of § 61-8-1002, M.C.A., with a child in the vehicle, in violation  
21 of the above statute.

22 CHARGE 6 – CRIMINAL CHILD ENDANGERMENT, a Felony, in violation of § 45-5-628,  
23 MCA:

24 On or about May 23, 2023, Defendant JANETTE VIOLA SESSIONS purposely,  
25 knowingly, or negligently caused a substantial risk of death or serious bodily injury to Youth  
6, a child under 14 years of age by operating a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol or  
dangerous drugs, in violation of § 61-8-1002, M.C.A., with a child in the vehicle, in violation  
of the above statute.

1 CHARGE 7 – CRIMINAL CHILD ENDANGERMENT, a Felony, in violation of § 45-5-628,  
2 MCA:

3 On or about May 23, 2023, Defendant JANETTE VIOLA SESSIONS purposely,  
4 knowingly, or negligently caused a substantial risk of death or serious bodily injury to Youth  
5 7, a child under 14 years of age by operating a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol or  
6 dangerous drugs, in violation of § 61-8-1002, M.C.A., with a child in the vehicle, in violation  
7 of the above statute.

8 CHARGE 8 – CRIMINAL CHILD ENDANGERMENT, a Felony, in violation of § 45-5-628,  
9 MCA:

10 On or about May 23, 2023, Defendant JANETTE VIOLA SESSIONS purposely,  
11 knowingly, or negligently caused a substantial risk of death or serious bodily injury to Youth  
12 8, a child under 14 years of age by operating a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol or  
13 dangerous drugs, in violation of § 61-8-1002, M.C.A., with a child in the vehicle, in violation  
14 of the above statute.

15 CHARGE 9 – CRIMINAL CHILD ENDANGERMENT, a Felony, in violation of § 45-5-628,  
16 MCA:

17 On or about May 23, 2023, Defendant JANETTE VIOLA SESSIONS purposely,  
18 knowingly, or negligently caused a substantial risk of death or serious bodily injury to Youth  
19 9, a child under 14 years of age by operating a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol or  
20 dangerous drugs, in violation of § 61-8-1002, M.C.A., with a child in the vehicle, in violation  
21 of the above statute.

22 CHARGE 10 – CRIMINAL ENDANGERMENT, a Felony, in violation of § 45-5-207, MCA:

23 On or about May 23, 2023, Defendant JANETTE VIOLA SESSIONS knowingly  
24 engaged in conduct that created a substantial risk of death or serious bodily injury to others by  
25 driving erratically while under the influence of drugs, in violation of the above statute.

1 CHARGE 11- DRIVING WHILE UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF ALCOHOL AND/OR  
2 DRUGS, a Misdemeanor, in violation of § 61-8-1002, MCA:

3 On or about May 23, 2023, Defendant JANETTE VIOLA SESSIONS drove or was in  
4 actual physical control of a motor vehicle upon a way of this State open to the public, while  
5 under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, with one or more passengers under 16 years of age  
6 in the vehicle, in violation of the above statute.

7 CHARGE 12 – FAILURE TO GIVE NOTICE OF CRASH, a Misdemeanor, in violation of §  
8 61-7-108, MCA:

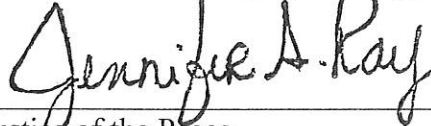
9 On or about May 23, 2023, Defendant JANETTE VIOLA SESSIONS was the driver of  
10 a vehicle involved in a crash, resulting in property damage of more than \$1,000, and failed to  
11 immediately give notice thereof as required by the above statute.

12 DATED: May 24, 2023.



13 Bill Fulbright, Ravalli County Attorney

14 SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN before me this 24 day of May, 2023.



15 Justice of the Peace

FILED

MAY 24 2023

Ravalli County, MT  
Justice of the Peace  
By \_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk

1 RAVALLI COUNTY ATTORNEY  
Bill Fulbright, County Attorney  
2 Ravalli County Courthouse  
205 Bedford Street, Suite C  
3 Hamilton, Montana 59840-2853  
(406) 375-6750

COPY

4 Attorneys for Plaintiff

6 **IN THE JUSTICE COURT OF RAVALLI COUNTY, STATE OF MONTANA**

7	STATE OF MONTANA,	)	Cause No.: CR 23- 1167
8	Plaintiff,	)	Dept. No. 12
9	vs.	)	<b>AFFIDAVIT OF PROBABLE CAUSE</b>
10	JANETTE VIOLA SESSIONS,	)	
11	Defendant	)	

12 STATE OF MONTANA )  
: ss  
13 County of Ravalli )

14 Bill Fulbright, being first duly sworn, hereby states:

15 I am the County Attorney for Ravalli County, Montana, and have reviewed an  
16 investigation by Montana Highway Patrol Troopers Taylor Gagnon and Ryan Janes. The State  
17 of Montana now seeks to charge Defendant with certain criminal offenses set forth in the  
18 *Felony Complaint* filed contemporaneously herewith. The facts which support the charging of  
19 the offenses are as follows:

20 On May 23, 2023, at approximately 8:00 a.m., the Ravalli County 911 Center received  
21 multiple reports of a school bus being involved in hit and run crashes with fences. Ravalli  
22 County Sheriff's deputies located and stopped the school bus on Eastside Highway,  
23 approximately three (3) miles north of Stevensville, in Ravalli County, Montana.

24 The investigation determined that the driver of the school bus was Defendant, and that  
25 at the time of the initial crashes, Defendant's passengers on the bus included two (2) children



1 under the age of 14 years, and ten (10) children 14 years of age and older. The investigation  
2 further determined that Defendant had been traveling on Three Mile Creek Road, making a left  
3 turn onto Ridge Lane, when Defendant accelerated so quickly through the left turn that she left  
4 tire marks, went off the right side of the road, and struck a fence. Children on the bus reported  
5 that the collision with the fence caused Defendant to fall out of her driver's seat, but Defendant  
6 continued driving. Defendant then reentered the roadway and crossed the middle of Ridge  
7 Lane, continuing off the left side of the road, colliding with another fence. Defendant then  
8 unsuccessfully attempted to reverse the bus back onto the road, eventually driving forward into  
9 the field to turn around, get back on the roadway, and flee the scene of the crashes. Defendant  
10 then picked up an additional 11 children, seven (7) of whom were under the age of 14 years,  
11 and continued driving in a similar manner until the traffic stop.

12 Trooper Janes made the initial contact with Defendant, noting that she appeared  
13 unsteady. Defendant reported that she hit a fence and three (3) fence posts "just fell over."  
14 Defendant reported that she "didn't know" that she had to stop, and had kept going. Defendant  
15 further admitted that children on the bus were yelling at her, but that she told them to sit down  
16 and shut up. When asked, Defendant denied the use of any alcohol or drugs, but reported that  
17 she had taken a "water pill," an anti-anxiety medication, and an aspirin. Defendant claimed to  
18 not know the identity of the anti-anxiety medication.

19 After the possibility of a medical emergency was ruled out, Trooper Janes conducted  
20 Standardized Field Sobriety tests and a Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) Evaluation.  
21 Throughout, Defendant exhibited difficulties with balance and coordination, confusion, and  
22 significant struggles with divided attention tasks. Trooper Janes, a trained DRE, observed that  
23 Defendant had no horizontal gaze nystagmus in her eyes, but was unable to maintain focus,  
24 visibly swayed, and struggled with complying with the tests. These observations were  
25 consistent with an impairment from drugs as opposed to alcohol. Further, Defendant struggled

1 with balance and confusion during the walk and turn (seven (7) of eight (8) clues of  
2 impairment), including taking 25 steps each direction instead of nine (9) steps. Trooper Janes  
3 also observed Defendant have similar struggles during the one-leg stand (three (3) of four (4)  
4 clues of impairment) and during the DRE-specific tests.

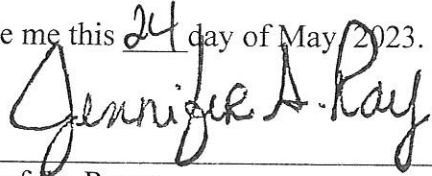
5 Blood samples were obtained from Defendant, which will be analyzed at the State  
6 Crime Lab. The investigation is currently ongoing, and the above will be updated if  
7 appropriate as further witness information is gathered.

8 DATED: May 24, 2023.

9 

10 Bill Fulbright, Ravalli County Attorney

11 SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN before me this 24 day of May 2023.

12 

13 Justice of the Peace