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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: October 16, 2018
Re: Natalie Jaspas
Governor's clemency grant leads to murderer
receiving parole

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Modesto, California - Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Natalie Jaspas, age 51, of Riverbank, was granted parole during an October 4th hearing of the State Board of Parole Hearings held at the Central California Women's Facility in Chowchilla.

On October 3, 1998, Jaspas shot her boyfriend, Thomas Hines, in the back of the head as he was walking away. Jaspas was upset because Hines was leaving her. At the time, she stated that she "could not comprehend why her boyfriend was leaving her" after she stood by his side when he needed her to and how she had "greatly sacrificed for the sake of the relationship."

After the shooting, a witness who had been helping the victim move his belongings out of the house screamed that she had hit the victim, to which Jaspas replied, "Good."

Two weeks earlier, Jaspas shot at Hines as he rode away on his motorcycle, striking the fender.

During the murder trial in 1999, Jaspas presented the defense of "battered woman syndrome" which the jury rejected, returning a guilty verdict for murder with use of a firearm. The trial judge also rejected the defense's theory and sentenced Jaspas to serve 40 years-to-life in state prison. The California Supreme Court upheld the conviction and sentence on appeal. This past year, a Stanislaus County Superior Court judge again upheld the conviction and sentence during a post-conviction motion.

Jaspas then applied to Governor Jerry Brown for clemency. On March 30, 2018, Governor Brown granted that request and cut Jaspas's 40 years-to-life prison sentence in half, making her immediately eligible for a parole hearing. Brown felt Jaspas's good behavior in prison justified granting her request for a reduced sentence.

Deputy District Attorney Jeff Mangar went to Chowchilla to appear at the October 4th parole hearing and argued against Jaspas's release, citing her lack of any employment plans and failure to complete any education while in custody. The two commissioners disagreed and found her suitable for parole.

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