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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: June 2, 2011
Re: Walter Sanchez

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Juvenile Pleads “Guilty” to Gang Slaying

Sentenced to 21-years to life for 2010 Westley drive-by.

Modesto, California - Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Walter Sanchez, aka “Creeper,” age 17, of Patterson, pled “guilty” on June 2nd to charges stemming from a drive-by shooting in Westley, California on August 11th of last year that left one man dead. Deputy District Attorney Robert J. Taro prosecuted the case on behalf of the People of the State of California. The Stanislaus County District Attorney’s Office elected to prosecute Sanchez as an adult.

On August 11th, 2010, Sanchez, then 16 years-old, shot and killed Anthony Bueno of Patterson. Sanchez, a member of a Sureno street gang from Patterson known as “GPC” for “Garza Park Cholos,” was driving a Chevrolet Suburban in Westley when he spotted Bueno, a suspected Norteno gang member, standing with a known Norteno female. Sanchez fired several rounds from a 9mm handgun at the pair, one of which struck Bueno in the throat, and fatally wounded him. The Norteno female escaped without injury.

The female was able to identify Sanchez as the person who fired the shots that killed Bueno. Stanislaus County Sheriff’s investigators searched Sanchez’s home and found several items of gang evidence linking him to “GPC.” Based on additional tips, the same investigators searched the home of another juvenile “GPC” gang member and located the murder weapon hidden under the mattress of his bed. That juvenile (whose name is being withheld because he is a juvenile) admitted to authorities that Sanchez gave him the gun to keep.

Judge Marie Silveira presided over today’s hearing. Based upon Sanchez’s guilty pleas to second degree murder and an additional charge of assault with a firearm on a separate victim, Judge Silveira sentenced Sanchez to 21-years to life which he will serve in adult prison.

D.D.A. Taro stated after the plea, “We prosecuted Sanchez as an adult to send him to state prison, not the California Youth Authority. 21-life is an extremely long term for anyone, especially someone who just turned 17. There is no guarantee he will ever be paroled.”

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