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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: January 3, 2018
Re: James Orlando Lucero
Prison Sentence

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Modesto, California - Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that James Orlando Lucero, age 71, of Modesto, has been sentenced to 35 years to life in state prison under California's "Three Strikes" law. Deputy District Attorney Dina Petrushenko prosecuted the case on behalf of the People.

On September 7, 2015, Lucero broke into an occupied residence in Stanislaus County. The sound of breaking glass woke the elderly resident, who walked out of her bedroom to find Lucero walking through her home. Frightened, she told him to leave and he fled. He was later identified as the perpetrator, arrested and charged with residential burglary.

A Stanislaus County Superior Court jury convicted Lucero of residential burglary on June 9th of this year. Subsequently, the court found true several serious or violent felony prior convictions that qualified him for sentencing under California's "Three Strikes" law.

Lucero's lengthy criminal career began 49 years ago in 1969. Among other things, he has been previously convicted of five residential burglaries, three in the state of Utah and two in California. Based upon his conviction history, Lucero had been sentenced to life in prison for drug possession in 2008, but that was reduced to only six years in 2012 after California voters passed Proposition 36.

It was shortly after his latest release from prison that Lucero committed this sixth residential burglary, victimizing an 80-year-old woman who was home alone taking a nap.

At today's sentencing hearing, Judge Robert Westbrook denied Lucero's motion for a new trial and denied Lucero's request to "strike" his serious or violent prior felony convictions. Westbrook then sentenced Lucero to state prison for 35 years to life.

Due to recent changes in the law, it is unclear how much time Lucero will actually serve in state prison.

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