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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: September 27, 2021
Re: William Thomas Schendel
Murder Conviction

For More Information Contact:

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Modesto, California - Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that William Thomas Schendel, age 58, of Modesto, was convicted on September 24, 2021 of second-degree murder. Schendel also admitted using a deadly weapon during the commission of the murder. Deputy District Attorney Samuel Luzadas prosecuted the case for the People.

On the morning of May 1, 2018, Aimee Crawford was found deceased in the shower of her Oakdale, California residence by her daughter. Ms. Crawford had been struck over 50 times in her head, face and other parts of her body with a metal candleholder. Ms. Crawford had also been strangled. During an autopsy, the tip of a thumb was located in her hair. It was later identified as belonging to Schendel who Ms. Crawford had been dating at the time.

Schendel was involved in a head-on traffic collision on State Route 120 approximately 18 miles from the homicide scene after murdering Ms. Crawford. He was missing the tip of his left thumb. During several jail calls, Schendel admitted to being in an argument with Ms. Crawford and leaving the residence after getting his thumb bitten off.

Judge Dawna Reeves took the guilty plea. Schendel will return to court on December 6, 2021 when he will be sentenced to 16 years to life in state prison.

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