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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Bernal Found Guilty of Vehicle Theft; Bench Warrant Issued Post Trial
People v. Cindy Bernal: Kern County Superior Court Case BF191203A

(Bakersfield) - Kern County District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer announced vehicle theft conviction. On November 15, 2023, in a case prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney William Mord, a Kern County jury found Cindy Bernal guilty of Stealing a Vehicle. The Court found the additional allegations true that Bernal has been previously convicted of Vehicle Theft and that Bernal also has a prior conviction for Residential Burglary, a strike offense.

On August 1, 2022, at approximately 1:00 a.m., the victim reported their Chevrolet Silverado pickup truck stolen from outside their residence in South Bakersfield. About 9 hours later, Kern County Sheriff's Deputies located the vehicle in South Bakersfield and conducted a traffic enforcement stop. Bernal was driving the vehicle. The ignition to the vehicle had been damaged, allowing the vehicle to be turned on and off with a tool. In addition, the vehicle's catalytic converter had been removed. After being arrested, Bernal confessed to taking the vehicle and knowing the vehicle was stolen.

After the jury rendered the guilty verdict, there still remained some additional trial proceedings that were set to commence the following day. Bernal was not in custody during the trial and was present for the verdict and ordered by the court to return the next morning to conclude the trial proceedings. Bernal failed to appear as ordered the following morning for the conclusion of the trial proceedings. As a result, a warrant was issued for her arrest, and sentencing will occur after she is arrested on the warrant. If Bernal's failure to appear is intentional, she could face additional charges relating to willful failure to appear, which could add additional years to her total sentence.

District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer commented on the conviction, stating; "Felons that repeatedly steal vehicles are subject to enhanced penalties, as are criminals that have prior convictions for strike offenses. We will continue to ensure that career criminals face elevated sentences and are held accountable for their crimes, even when they refuse to obey orders of the court."

Bernal faces 8 years in prison on the auto theft conviction. When Bernal is apprehended on the arrest warrant, sentencing will be set before the Honorable Stephanie Childers in Department 11 of the Kern County Superior Court.

Anyone with information on Bernal's whereabouts is urged to contact their local law enforcement agency or Kern Secret Witness at (661) 322-4040.

Cindy Bernal:

