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Herrera-Gonzalez Found Guilty of the Violent Sexual Assault and Murder of Elderly Woman
People v. Sergio Gonzalez Herrera: Kern County Superior Court Case BF194929A

(Bakersfield) – Kern County District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer announced a significant conviction today. On September 19, 2024, a Kern County jury found Sergio Gonzalez Herrera guilty of the First-Degree murder of 85-year-old Maria Garcia, during the commission of a brutal sexual assault. The jury also found Gonzalez Herrera guilty of forcible rape and oral copulation, residential burglary, elder abuse, assault with intent to commit sodomy, resisting arrest by force, and special circumstances for committing the murder during the commission of sex crimes. The case was prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Cole Sherman.

At about 4:30 a.m. on November 24, 2021, Gonzalez Herrera entered the victim's home, located near the Valley Paza mall, through the back door. After retrieving a knife from the kitchen, Gonzalez Herrera went to the back bedroom, where Ms. Garcia was sleeping. Upon entering, Gonzalez Herrera barricaded the closed door with furniture. He undressed himself and then forcibly took Ms. Garcia's clothing off. Gonzalez Herrera proceeded to sexually assault 85-year-old Maria Garcia, committing multiple separate sex acts by force.

Ms. Garcia's grandson, who had fled the residence right after Gonzalez Herrera grabbed the knife from the kitchen, called 9-1-1. Officers from the Bakersfield Police Department responded and heard Garcia calling out for help. Officers entered the residence and had to kick down the barricaded bedroom door. The officers rescued Ms. Garcia, who was on the bedroom floor and arrested Gonzalez Herrera, despite him physically resisting them.

Later that day when she was back at home, Ms. Garcia was complaining of pain to her legs, knees, and saying that her entire body ached. Shortly after, Ms. Garcia fell to the floor inside her house, striking her left hip on the ground. She underwent surgery, however, her condition deteriorated due to natural complications from her injuries and the surgery. On December 6, 2021, while still at the hospital, she

passed away. Ms. Garcia's cause of death was determined to be complications of blunt force trauma stemming from the sexual assault and the subsequent fall inside her house, causing the hip fracture.

District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer commented: "Gonzalez Herrera committed unspeakable acts on an elderly woman inside her own home, a place where she should have been the safest. The law reserves the most severe punishment for murderers such as Gonzalez Herrera, who kill during the commission of heinous sex crimes. The District Attorney's Office and its prosecutors are committed to seeking justice against men like Gonzalez Herrera who prey on our society's most vulnerable victims."

Sentencing is scheduled for October 18, 2024, before the Honorable John W. Lua in Department 5 of the Kern County Superior Court. Gonzalez Herrera faces life in prison without the possibility of parole.

Sergio Gonzalez Herrera:

