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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Parole Denied for Convicted Murderer Who Killed Passenger in Street Race
CDC #AY9470; Court Case #BF154455A

Kern County District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer announced that the California Board of Parole Hearings (BPH) denied release to convicted murderer Cesar Duarte. On May 23, 2025, BPH found that Duarte continues to pose a current and unreasonable risk to public safety. Representing the District Attorney's Office was Deputy District Attorney Gina Nargie.

On November 6, 2013, Duarte killed his passenger, 17-year-old Iman "Faith" Amin, when he decided to race his friend going more than 93mph while he was intoxicated. At approximately 4:00am, a witness on Harris Road saw a white vehicle and a red Mercedes sedan traveling at an "unusually high rate of speed." The witness saw the Mercedes "chasing" or "pursuing" the white vehicle. The two cars crossed over the Old River Road and Harris Road intersection and flew up into the air. The Mercedes, driven by Duarte, lost control. As the Mercedes came down, it skidded, crashed into a block wall twice, and ended up lying on its roof. The other vehicle drove through the accident area slowly and then sped away. The witness called 911.

First responders found Duarte held in the driver's seat by his seat belt. The victim's arm was pinned underneath the vehicle. The victim died as a result of her injuries. Duarte's BAC was determined to be 0.17%, over two times the legal limit. Duarte also had a previous 2009 conviction for Driving while under the Influence where he was advised of the dangers of drunk driving.

In a separate incident, in 2015, while in-custody for murder, Duarte and four other male inmates entered a victim's cell and beat him. As part of the assault, the men stomped the victim's head repeatedly. The victim had to be taken to a nearby hospital.

On April 14, 2015, a Kern County Jury found Duarte guilty of one count of murder in the second degree and one count of gross vehicular manslaughter while intoxicated. On December 18, 2015, a Kern County Judge sentenced him to 15-years-to-life.

After Duarte was sentenced on his murder case, on December 22, 2015, Duarte pled guilty to involvement in gang activity as a result of his assault in the Kern County Jail. On January 21, 2016, a Kern County Judge sentenced Duarte to two years state prison concurrent with his murder conviction.

On May 23, 2025, the Board of Parole conducted Duarte's initial parole hearing. The commissioners focused on Duarte's lack of insight into the life crime, his gang activity in prison, substance abuse history, issues involving his credibility, and his rehabilitative programming. Duarte is currently 34 years old and has served approximately 11 years in prison.

The Kern County District Attorney's Office asked the Board of Parole to deny parole. The Board of Parole found that Duarte was not suitable for parole and posed a current unreasonable risk of danger to society. The Board of Parole has the option of denying an inmate parole for a period of 15, 10, 7, 5 or 3 years. Duarte's commissioners issued a three-year denial. As such, Duarte's next parole hearing date could potentially be in 18 months.

Assistant District Attorney Joseph Kinzel commented; "Duarte consistently made reckless and dangerous choices - driving under the influence, engaging in street racing, and even assaulting another inmate while incarcerated. Each of these decisions has not been victimless and Duarte must face the consequences by serving an appropriate prison sentence."

Cesar Duarte:

