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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Approved by JAK
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RE: Murder Trial Conviction: People v. Kaleb Kessinger: BF172058A

Kern County District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer announced a significant conviction in a murder case. On September 1, 2020, in a case prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Courtney Lewis, a Kern County jury found defendant Kaleb Kessinger guilty of First Degree Murder for the killing of 2-year-old Ramon Chavez, Assault on a Child Under Age 8 Causing Death, Recklessly Evading a Peace Officer, and Resisting Arrest.

On April 25, 2018, Ayled Chavez called 911 to report that her 2-year-old son Ramon Chavez had been kidnapped by an unknown Hispanic male. Ms. Chavez ultimately admitted to officers that she made the story up, and that Kaleb Kessinger killed Ramon. She revealed that Kessinger buried her son near the mountains.

Officers went to Kessinger's residence. As they were waiting near the house, Kessinger's vehicle approached and then quickly turned around and accelerated at a high rate of speed. Several patrol units pursued Kessinger as he fled the area. Kessinger lost control of his vehicle and crashed on Olive Drive. Kessinger got out of the vehicle and fled before officers could apprehend him.

Personnel from the Bakersfield Police Department found Ramon's body buried near Democrat Hot Springs along the Kern River. A pathologist opined Ramon's cause of death was blunt force trauma to the head.

Officers found Kessinger hiding out at the Travelodge Motel on Oak Street. Kessinger resisted arrest.

Ms. Chavez pled no contest to one count of PC 273(a), willful cruelty to a child. She was released from prison in April 2019.

Sentencing is scheduled for September 30, 2020 at 8:30 in Department 3 of the Kern County Superior Court. Kessinger faces a sentence of up to 43 years to life in prison.

Kaleb Kessinger:

