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**April 27, 2023**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
Approved by CJZ  
Press Release #23-11

**Re: Attempted Murder Trial Verdict: *People v. Michael Cornejo*: Kern County Superior Court Case # LF014049A**

Bakersfield – Kern County District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer announced a verdict in a significant attempted murder case today.

On April 26, 2023, In a case prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Pedro Naveiras, a Kern County jury found defendant Michael Cornejo guilty of the attempted murder of three victims, two of whom were Kern County Sheriff's Deputies. The jury also found Cornejo guilty of multiple counts of assault with a firearm, possession of a firearm by a convicted felon, and resisting arrest with force. The jury also made separate factual findings that Cornejo had discharged a firearm during the commission of several of the offenses. Cornejo not guilty of attempted robbery. In total, Cornejo was convicted of ten offenses, six of which are violent strike offenses perpetrated against the three separate victims.

On August 6, 2022, just after 3:00 a.m., Cornejo had been given a ride by the victim after attending a small get together in Lamont. While still inside the victim's vehicle and outside of the victim's residence, Cornejo was alleged to have attempted to rob the victim of his money. When the victim refused to give him money, Cornejo allegedly struck the victim in the face with a firearm and attempted to shoot the victim while both men were inside the car, but his firearm malfunctioned. The victim was able to escape, and Cornejo fled the area. The victim contacted law enforcement and deputies from the Kern County Sheriff's Office responded to his residence. While the victim was providing a statement to Sheriff's deputies, Cornejo returned to the scene with a firearm and opened fire upon the victim and the two deputies. Fortunately, the shots missed all three victims. Deputies pursued and captured Cornejo, who resisted arrest and tried to run away both before and after he was placed in custody. When arrested, Cornejo was in possession of a loaded semi-automatic handgun.

In totality, the jury's verdict reflects that Cornejo may not have realized that two of the people he fired at were peace officers, which would account for guilty verdicts for attempted murder and assault with a firearm on charges related to the primary victim and the deputies, but acquittals or non-unanimous verdicts on separate assault charges that specifically required proof that Cornejo knew the people he was targeting were peace officers.

Cornejo was also found to have two qualifying prior “strike” convictions.

District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer commented on the verdict, stating; “Cornejo returned to the scene of his first alleged crime and opened fire upon his victim and the Deputies that were investigating the case. In doing so, he sought to indiscriminately kill anyone in the area. This level of indiscriminate gun violence by a multiple-strike offender put innocent lives in grave danger and is a reminder of the importance three-strike laws play in keeping communities safe.”

Sentencing is scheduled in Department 3 on June 1, 2023 before the Honorable John D. Oglesby, where Cornejo faces multiple life sentences as a result of the convictions.

Defendant: Michael Cornejo

