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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Approved by _____

District Attorney Lisa S. Green announced the sentencing in a significant case today. The Honorable Michael Dellostritto sentenced Rodolfo Alberto Contreras to prison for 20 years to life. On, June 23, 2016, a jury convicted Rodolfo Alberto Contreras of second degree murder, gross vehicular manslaughter while impaired by marijuana, and DUI by marijuana causing injury. In the almost six years that the District Attorney has had a DUI focused specialized unit, this is the first conviction for murder by someone impaired by marijuana.

On March 8, 2014, at approximately 11:50 in the morning, Contreras ran the red light at the intersection of Gosford Road and Stockdale Highway. He was going close to 80 mph, when he lost control of his Honda, crossed over the center divider, and struck an on-coming Ford Explorer in the northbound lane of Gosford, south of the intersection. The driver of the Explorer, David Aggio, was killed on impact; his wife was seriously injured. After hitting the Explorer, Contreras' Honda split in two and struck two other vehicles. Fortunately, no one else was injured. The collision scene covered 400 yards of the northbound lane of Gosford Road and was described during the trial as looking like an "airplane crash site." Contreras had smoked marijuana that morning, and when his blood was tested after the collision he had 16 nanograms of THC, the component of marijuana that impairs an individual. It was the only drug that he had used. When confronted at the scene by good Samaritans that he had killed someone, he responded "I want my weed."

At the time of the conviction, District Attorney Lisa Green had noted the dangers of driving impaired, even by marijuana. She again observed that this crime was 100% preventable. District Attorney Green stated, "As we begin the state-wide discussion about legalization of marijuana, we cannot ignore the potential consequences of making it more accessible. I hope that our legislature will take the appropriate actions to ensure law enforcement has the tools to cope with the increase of cases similar to this one. My thoughts today are with the surviving victim and the deceased's family as this case finally comes to a close."

Michael Yraceburn is a Supervising Deputy District Attorney and the supervisor of the District Attorney's Office of Traffic Safety. He prosecuted this case from its inception. Funding for the program comes from a grant by the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.