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PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Date: July 24th, 2006

Re: SVP verdict, James Helm

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Modesto, California – Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that James Helm, age 55, of Modesto, was determined to be a Sexually Violent Predator at the conclusion of a four-day trial that ended on July 21st, 2006. Prosecutor Richard Gore presented the case on behalf of the People.

The jury deliberated less than a half-hour before finding that there was a substantial likelihood that Helm would commit sexually violent predatory acts against children if he were to be released into the community. As a result of the verdict, Helm was committed to Atascadero State Hospital where he will be confined for two years in a sexual offender treatment program. After the two years, Helm may be recommitted for an additional two years until it is determined that he no longer poses a threat to the public. Each time, he has the right to a jury determination of his sexually violent predator status before being ordered to treatment for an additional two-year period.

Helm was convicted of felony indecent exposure in 2001 and had two prior felony “strike” convictions from 1983 for child molest. In 2001, he was sentenced to six years in prison after one of his strike priors was dismissed by a judge.

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