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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: April 21, 2010
Re: Joan Ochoa – 15 Years-to-Life for
Second Degree Murder

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Modesto, California - Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Joan Ochoa, age 21 of Modesto, was sentenced on April 13, 2010 by the Honorable Ricardo Cordova to 15 years-to-life in state prison for murder. Ochoa pled guilty to a second degree murder charge on February 23, 2010 just before the start of evidence in his scheduled jury trial. Deputy District Attorney Shawn D. Bessey prosecuted the case for the People.

On March 23, 2006 in Modesto, Ochoa encountered a young Hispanic male adult in front of a Smoke Shop located at 1661 Crows Landing Road. They exchanged hard looks as Ochoa drove by in a mustang convertible. It was reported that Ochoa was wearing a red hat and the victim was dressed in blue. A short time later the two engaged in a verbal dispute that culminated in Ochoa pulling out a gun and shooting the victim several times killing him on the spot. Ochoa then got into the Mustang and drove quickly out of the area.

Although Ochoa was a juvenile at the time of the shooting, the District Attorney's Office prosecuted him as an adult because of the seriousness of the offense.

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