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**PRESS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release**

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Date: March 6, 2015  
Re: People v. Andrew Joseph Melendez

Carol Shipley, Assistant District Attorney  
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Modesto, California - Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Andrew Joseph Melendez, age 24, of Modesto, was convicted on February 24, 2015 of assault with a semiautomatic firearm, allowing another to discharge a firearm from a vehicle, and recklessly evading a police officer. Melendez also admitted that these crimes were committed to benefit a criminal street gang. Deputy District Attorney Jeff Laugero prosecuted the case for the People.

The Modesto Police Department investigated four calls of "shots fired" between May 1, 2010 and May 8, 2010 which appeared to be targeting locations associated with the sureno criminal street gang. On May 8, 2010, Modesto Police officers responded to Jennifer Drive regarding a drive-by shooting at a house associated with the sureno criminal street gang. Officers recovered several .25 caliber spent casings at the scene. After officers left, a second call of shots fired at the same house was received. While responding to the area, Officer Graham noticed a car matching the description of the suspect vehicle parked on Rumble Road. As Officer Graham made a u-turn, the vehicle sped off. The pursuit ended when the driver, Melendez, failed to negotiate a left turn and collided into a sound wall. Melendez ran from the car but was apprehended after a short foot pursuit. Officers found an unfired .25 caliber round, red clothing and a red phone with gang photos in the vehicle. Melendez was also wearing clothing associated with the norteno criminal street gang. A .25 caliber semi-auto handgun was found on the opposite side of the sound wall. Fired .25 caliber casings and bullets found at three of the earlier crime scenes were determined to have been fired from the .25 caliber handgun.

Judge Nancy Ashley sentenced Melendez to 15 years and 4 months in state prison.

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