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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Re: Shannon Case's murderer sentenced to
life term in prison

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Modesto, California - Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Joseph Leroy Dixon, age 40, of Modesto, was sentenced on August 6, 2015 for the cold-blooded murder of Shannon Case. Additional time was added to the sentence for using a gun as well as a "strike" prior. The sentence imposed on this case was 75 years to life. In a separate case, Dixon was sentenced on August 3, 2015 to four years for an assault on another jail inmate last year. That sentence must be served prior to the life sentence, so Dixon's total sentence on the two cases is 79 years to life. Deputy District Attorney Brad Nix prosecuted both cases for the People. Judge Scott Steffen presided over the cases. A number of Ms. Case's family members appeared at the sentencing and five spoke to the court telling of the great loss to them.

On Saturday, April 4, 2009 around 1:30 a.m., victim Shannon Case (28 years old and the mother of two children) was parked next to Robertson Road Park in Modesto with two friends. They were waiting for another friend, Desiree Mills, who had asked to meet them there. Dixon and his girlfriend Madeline Lopez obtained a rifle and Dixon dropped off Ms. Lopez at Ms. Mills's home. He then drove to Robertson Road Park in Modesto with the .22 rifle. Dixon approached Ms. Case's car with his headlights turned off and fired five shots as he passed Ms. Case's car. All of his shots were aimed at the driver, Ms. Case. Two of the shots struck Ms. Case, causing her death from blood loss within minutes. Neither of the friends with her were wounded. Texts, phone calls on the victim's phone, and witness information led MPD to Ms. Mills. Further investigation led to the defendant and his girlfriend, Ms. Lopez. Thereafter a series of calls to MPD's Tip line gave Lead Detective Dale Lingerfelt and other detectives additional information which led to the arrests Dixon, Lopez and Mills on June 9, 2009. Detectives determined that the motive for the shooting was that Ms. Lopez's underage daughter had sex with a male of a different race a few days prior to the shooting and Dixon and Lopez believed that Ms. Case was somehow involved with that. Dixon admitted to two witnesses that he was the killer and that was the reason for the murder.

Ms. Lopez pled guilty to shooting at an occupied vehicle for a 5-year sentence and testified against Dixon. Ms. Mills pled guilty to being an accessory and served three years.

The jury verdict against Dixon was returned on April 15, 2014. Legal proceedings in this case were lengthy and extended, due to Dixon going through three attorneys over the years, twice suspending proceedings for mental competency determinations, and numerous legal motions.