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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: January 15, 2019
Re: Gerardo Aparisi Zamora
Convicted killer granted parole

For More Information Contact:

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Modesto, California - Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Gerardo Aparisi Zamora, age 60, of Modesto, was found suitable for parole during a January 9, 2019, hearing of the State Board of Parole Hearings held at the California Medical Facility in Vacaville, California. Deputy District Attorney Merrill Hoult appeared on behalf of the People.

On July 15, 1986, Zamora fought with the victim, Ignacio Leon, while drinking at a bar in Modesto. Zamora went home, retrieved a rifle, came back to the bar and opened fire, killing the victim and injuring two other patrons. Zamora then fled to Mexico. In 1988, he was shot seven times and suffered a traumatic brain injury while on the run. In March of 1994, he surrendered to authorities and made a full confession.

Zamora was convicted of one count of first degree murder and two counts of assault with a firearm along with personally using a firearm to commit all three offenses and inflicting great bodily injury. He was sentenced to serve 35 years to life in state prison in September of 1994.

Since being sentenced to prison in California, Zamora's health has significantly declined. He suffers from hallucinations, delusions and has been diagnosed with a neurocognitive disorder that causes him to spend most of his time in bed requiring special nursing care.

Zamora has been denied parole twice before, in 2015 and 2018, but is now eligible for early release due to his age, the length of time already served in prison and his declining health. At the hearing, Deputy District Attorney Hoult argued against Zamora's release based on the viciousness of the crime, his history of mental instability, and the high risk of danger that he posed to the community. Even though Zamora refused to appear before the parole board or participate in a comprehensive risk assessment with a prison psychologist, the Commissioners found that there was no evidence Zamora has the physical capacity to be a danger to others or pose any risk to society.

Zamora has an active immigration hold and may be deported to Mexico upon his release from prison. If he is not returned home, the California Division of Adult Parole Operations will be required to find and pay for Zamora's placement in a skilled nursing facility.

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