



Office of the District Attorney Stanislaus County

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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: May 27, 2021
Re: Jeremy Don Fennell
Murder sentencing

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Modesto, California - Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Jeremy Don Fennell, age 38, of Modesto, was sentenced to state prison for 40 years to life for the murder of Lawrence Gregory Walker. Chief Deputy District Attorney Jeffrey Laugero prosecuted the case for the People.

On the morning of March 15, 2019, Walker and his wife were sitting on the sidewalk near Fennell's business with their belongings. Fennell arrived to open his tattoo and smoke shop and parked his car directly in front of Walker. Fennell got out of his car with a holstered handgun in his left hand and told the couple to leave. Walker, who was unarmed, remained seated and refused to move. Fennell, still holding his handgun, turned towards and advanced on Walker. In response, Walker stood up and began arguing with Fennell. Fennell immediately drew his handgun from the holster and pointed it at Walker. During the confrontation, Fennell fired one shot that killed Walker.

Video of the homicide was captured on the surveillance system Fennell had installed at his business. Fennell's statement about what happened was inconsistent with the video. During initial interviews, Fennell was unable to tell officers his reason for shooting Walker, other than being concerned that Walker might give him an incurable disease. Fennell was never able to verbalize or identify any reasonable threat of great bodily injury or death that justified shooting Walker. Police located previous statements by Fennell including a social media post where he spoke negatively of homeless people and demonstrated a growing hatred for those he believed were homeless and addicted to drugs.

On December 18, 2020, after a four-week trial presided over by Judge Linda McFadden, a Stanislaus County Superior Court jury convicted Fennell of second degree murder and personal use of a firearm.

At a sentencing hearing held on May 19, 2021, Judge McFadden rejected a defense motion for a new trial and refused to exercise her discretion to strike the gun enhancement, commenting that the facts of the case revealed just how dangerous Fennell was to the community. After hearing

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victim impact statements from Walker's family, McFadden sentenced Fennell to 15 years to life for second degree murder and imposed an additional 25 years to life for the use of a firearm causing death.

Fennell was remanded to the custody of the Sheriff pending delivery to state prison.

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