



Office of the District Attorney Stanislaus County

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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: August 30, 2022
Re: Arturo Vega Lopez
Conviction for Attempted Murder

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Modesto, California. - Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Arturo Vega Lopez, age 43, of Ceres was convicted on August 16th of attempted murder along with an enhancement for premeditation and deliberation as well as several other felony crimes. Deputy District Attorney Jonathan Lee prosecuted the case on behalf of the People.

On February 1, 2021, Lopez called an associate, Brandon Freitas, and asked him to meet at a commercial complex near the 7th Street bridge in Modesto so that Lopez could pay him for some automotive repair work. Freitas's fiancée drove him to the meeting location. When Lopez arrived, Freitas got out of his fiancée's car and approached the passenger side window of Lopez's vehicle. When Freitas leaned in to collect the money he was owed, Lopez shot him once in the chest. The bullet caused a non-fatal through and through wound and ended up stuck in Lopez's passenger door panel.

Freitas immediately retreated towards his fiancée's car screaming, "Babe, he shot me." She immediately put her car into reverse and rammed Lopez's car with her own in order to prevent Lopez from firing additional shots. She then drove Freitas to the hospital for treatment and called 911.

Lopez fled the scene and called 911 as well, claiming to be the victim of a hit and run by several subjects in a green SUV. Responding deputies determined the two calls were related and that Lopez was the primary suspect. After a search warrant was obtained for Lopez's vehicle, deputies found a portable gun safe under the driver's seat, a single shell casing in the backseat, a bullet hole in the passenger-side door panel, a bullet in the passenger-side door, the victim's cell phone and a license plate from the victim's vehicle.

Lopez, who had previously been convicted of attempted murder in Stanislaus County in 2002, was arrested and charged with premeditated attempted murder, being a felon in possession of a firearm and ammunition as well as an enhancement for causing great bodily injury during the crime.

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Judge Carrie Stephens presided over a two-week jury trial during which the victim, Freitas, testified how he and Lopez had been involved in a physical altercation just weeks prior to the shooting. He related how Lopez had lured him to the shooting location that day with promises of paying him for some previous mechanical work he had done on Lopez's car. Deputies also testified about the search of Lopez's vehicle and the incriminating items they recovered.

The jury deliberated for approximately three hours before reaching unanimous guilty verdicts on all of the charges on August 16, 2022.

Lopez is currently in custody without bail at the Stanislaus County Jail. He will return to court on October 26, 2022 for sentencing. He faces a potential punishment of life in prison.

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