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Parole Denied to Man Who Murdered Wife When She Asked for Divorce
CDCR #B51448; Kern County Court Case #BF105088A

Kern County District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer announced that the California Board of Parole Hearings (BPH) denied release to 65-year-old convicted murderer Jose Mota-Rivera. On July 9, 2024, BPH found that Mota-Rivera continues to pose a current and unreasonable risk to public safety. Representing the District Attorney's Office was Supervising Deputy District Attorney David McKillop.

By January of 2004, victim Rosa Padilla Mota and Jose Mota-Rivera had been together for over 25 years and shared multiple children together. Throughout the entire relationship, Mota-Rivera physically, verbally, and mentally abused the victim to control her. In December 2003, Rosa asked Mota-Rivera for a divorce. He was agreeable to her face, but internally made the decision to kill her. Unable to control Rosa any longer, he immediately purchased an illegal firearm for the sole reason of killing Rosa. On January 25, 2004, Mota-Rivera confronted Rosa at her home where their minor son was present. Mota-Rivera beat the victim, dragged her by her hair, and shot Rosa Maria Padilla in front of their son, who was attempting to stop him. Mota-Rivera said he did not care about his son's pain.

On July 23, 2004, Mota-Rivera pled guilty to murder in the first degree. On September 9, 2004, a Kern County Judge sentenced him to 25 years to life in prison.

On July 9, 2024, the BPH conducted Mota-Rivera's initial parole hearing. At the hearing, the commissioners found that Mota-Rivera was participating in rehabilitative programs but had not yet internalized sufficient insight and understanding of how to deal with stressors and triggers. The Kern County District Attorney's Office and several members of victim Rosa Padilla Mota's family asked the BPH to deny parole. The BPH found that Mota-Rivera was not suitable for parole and posed a current unreasonable risk of danger to society. The Board of Parole denied parole for three years. As such, Mota-Rivera's next parole hearing could be as soon as 18 months.

District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer commented; “Mota-Rivera not only ended a life but also irreversibly harmed his children who witnessed the murder and must cope with the absence of their mother. For that, he must live the consequences.”

Jose Mota-Rivera:

