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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Approved by CJZ
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Re: Trial Conviction: Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault: Arthur Ponce: Kern County Superior Court case #BF181930A

District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer announced a significant domestic violence and sexual assault conviction today. In a case presented by Deputy District Attorney Brad Taconi, on March 23, 2022 a Kern County jury found defendant Arthur Ponce guilty of 7 felony counts including Kidnap for the Purpose of Rape, Rape by Force or Fear, Oral Copulation by Force or Fear, Sexual Penetration by Force or Fear, Assault with a Deadly Weapon, Criminal Threats, and Domestic Violence. The jury additionally found true several enhancements including Kidnap during a Sexual Assault and the Personal Use of a Deadly Weapon during a Sexual Assault The jury also found Ponce guilty of one misdemeanor count of Child Endangerment.

On July 28, 2020, the victim contacted 9-1-1 and stated that Ponce had taken their two-month-old baby from the house and would not bring him back. Ponce told the victim he would only bring the child back if she did what he said and if she would make him happy. The victim stated that she did not want to go with Ponce. When Ponce arrived back at the house, the victim went to check on her baby, at which point Ponce forcefully shoved the victim into the car and drove away.

Ponce took the victim to a different residential neighborhood where he began striking her in the face, neck and leg. He pulled out a large knife and held it to the victim's face, neck and stomach and told her he would kill her, threatening to cut the victim into pieces such that her family would never find the body. Ponce then took the victim to an isolated business park the sexual assault occurred in the immediate presence of the child.

District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer commented on the conviction: “The same themes of control, manipulation and violence that are common domestic abuse cases can escalate into sexual assault crimes. The unmitigated kidnappings, threats, violence and abuse perpetrated in this case qualify for severe punishment, including a life sentence in state prison, which is what we will be seeking.”

Sentencing is set for April 21, 2022 before Superior Court Judge John Somers. Defendant Arthur Ponce faces a maximum sentence of 79 years to life and mandatory sex offender registration.

Arthur Ponce:

