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MEDIA ADVISORY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Approved by: CJZ
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Re: First Degree Murder Trial Conviction: People v. John Hardison, BF180686A

Kern County District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer announced a significant conviction in a homicide case today. In a case prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Stephanie Zigler, on October 26, 2022 a Kern County jury found defendant John Hardison guilty of all alleged felony charges, including First-Degree Murder, Possession of Cocaine With Intent to Sell, and Unlawful Possession of a Firearm by a Convicted Felon.

On April 10, 2020 at about 10:45 p.m. John Hardison confronted the victim, Brian Dickerson, at the La Mirage motel on the 500 block of Union Avenue. Hardison had learned and believed that Dickerson was involved as a lookout during a burglary to Hardison's motel room the day prior, in which a bucket of change had been stolen. The burglary was not reported to police. At the time, both Hardison and Dickerson stayed in different rooms of the motel. On the night of the murder, Hardison waited for the victim to exit his room, at which point Hardison confronted the victim, instigating a verbal argument during which Hardison produced a handgun and pointed it at the victim. Ultimately, the confrontation ended with Hardison firing one round into the victim's chest, killing Dickerson in the motel parking lot.

After shooting the victim, Hardison moved his personal vehicle near Dickerson's lifeless body, and opened a rear passenger door in preparation to load Dickerson's body into the vehicle. At least one witness present at the motel declined Hardison's request to help him load Dickerson's body into his vehicle, and Hardison ultimately abandoned the effort and left the motel on foot, passing by officers that were first responding to the scene.

Despite the presence of several people in the area, neither the shooting nor the death of Dickerson was reported to police via 9-11 calls. Police did respond to the area in response to a ShotSpotter alert, which alerts officers of the Bakersfield Police Department to the sound of gunfire in areas of the city. Video surveillance in the area captured the offense and confirmed that Hardison was responsible for the murder. Once officers identified Hardison as the shooter, a search was conducted on Hardison's motel room which resulted in the recovery of a firearm and more than 30 grams of cocaine, \$2,000 in cash, multiple drug-weighing scales and other paraphernalia related to the unlawful sales of cocaine.

Hardison was arrested five days after the shooting by the Bakersfield Police Department.

District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer commented on the conviction, stating; “Hardison, a cocaine drug dealer, took revenge against the victim whose alleged crime was acting as a lookout during a burglary in which a bucket of change was stolen from Hardison’s motel room. For this alleged crime, Hardison appointed himself judge, jury and executioner, and Hardison gunned down an unarmed man in retaliation. This case is a reminder that convicted felons that ignore felony laws against drug sales and unlawful firearms possession remain a threat to commit violent crimes.”

Hardison faces more than 50 years to life in prison at his sentencing, which is currently scheduled for November 29th in Department 7 before the Honorable Judge Brian McNamara.

John Hardison:

