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Repeat Drunk Driver Who Killed Passenger in Impaired Crash Receives 15 to Life Sentence

Today, on February 26, 2025, Lizbeth Resendez Romero (30, of Parlier) was sentenced today to 15 years to life in state prison for the murder of her passenger during an impaired driving crash. Romero was convicted of second-degree murder, gross vehicular manslaughter while impaired, and hit and run following her plea to the charges in January. The sentence was handed down by the Honorable William J. Terrence of the Fresno County Superior Court.

Romero was driving her Honda Accord in the City of Selma just after midnight on March 30, 2021, when she crashed into the back of a parked SUV near the intersection of Floral and McCall Avenues. As a result of the crash, her rear passenger, Luis Rodriguez (28, of Reedley), suffered fatal injuries. A second passenger in Romero's vehicle was also injured and required medical treatment at a local hospital.

After the crash, Romero fled the scene, stopping several blocks away and running to hide behind garbage cans in front of a nearby residence. She left Rodriguez alone inside the vehicle, where he was later found by responding officers and pronounced deceased. Toxicological testing revealed that Romero was driving under the influence of alcohol, cocaine, and marijuana, with the alcohol concentration nearly double the legal limit to operate a vehicle in California.

Romero had a prior DUI conviction from 2019, for which she pled guilty and was placed on court probation just over two months before the crash in this case. She was on DUI probation at the time of the fatal crash. Additionally, Romero is facing charges in Madera County for driving under the influence on March 11, 2021—19 days prior to the crash in this case.

Romero was advised by the court during her prior DUI conviction in Fresno, as well as by officers of the Oakhurst office of the California Highway Patrol upon her arrest in Madera, that driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs is dangerous to human life, and that if she continued to drive while impaired and took someone's life, she could face murder charges. Romero was undeterred by these prior warnings.

The Fresno County District Attorney's Office would like to thank the Selma Police Department as the primary investigative agency, as well as the Fresno Police Department and Fresno County Sheriff's Office for their support.

This case was successfully prosecuted by Senior Deputy District Attorney Steven Ueltzen, with assistance from Senior District Attorney Investigator Julie Skamel. The case was prosecuted as part of the Alcohol and Drug Impaired Driver Vertical Prosecution Program, which is funded by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

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