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Fresno Man Sentenced to Life for Killing Friend After Night of Drinking

Today, October 30th, 2025, Christian Lavin (33, of Fresno) was sentenced to 35 years to life in state prison for first-degree murder and for personal use of a firearm. The sentence was handed down by Judge Leanne Le Mon of the Fresno County Superior Court following Lavin's conviction on May 29th, 2025, after a weeks-long jury trial.

The case arose from a tragic incident in which Lavin shot and killed Roberto Roman (30, of Fresno), a friend and fellow Marine, in the backyard of Lavin's home. Earlier that evening, Roman had gone to Lavin's residence, where the two talked and drank alcohol together. As the night spilled into the early morning hours, they engaged in a friendly wrestling match, during which Roman gained the upper hand. Lavin then went back inside his residence, retrieved a firearm, and returned outside, where he shot Roman in the chest at close range.

Much of the incident was captured on the home's audio and video surveillance system.

Roberto Roman is survived by his mother, brother, loving wife, and their 3-year-old son. The loss of their beloved Roberto is a pain they will carry forever.

The Fresno County District Attorney's Office extends its gratitude to the Fresno Police Department's Homicide Unit and, particularly, Detective Mark Yee, for a thorough investigation and a high level of professional dedication to this case.

This case was prosecuted by Senior Deputy District Attorney Kaitlin Drake of the DA's Homicide Unit, with investigative support from Senior District Attorney Investigator Bernardo Verbera of the Bureau of Investigations.

Pursuant to Penal Code §3055, commonly known as Elderly Parole, Lavin will be eligible for parole when he turns 50 years old and has served 20 years of his sentence.

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