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NEWS RELEASE
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**JURORS DECIDE DEATH FOR MAN WHO MURDERED
17-YEAR-OLD NORMA LOPEZ IN MORENO VALLEY**

RIVERSIDE – Jurors today, March 20, 2019, decided that the man they found guilty of the 2010 murder of 17-year-old Norma Lopez in Moreno Valley should be sentenced to death.

On March 13, 2019, the seven-man, five-woman jury found Jesse Perez Torres, DOB: 5-10-76, of Long Beach guilty of one count of first-degree murder and jurors found the special circumstance of murder during the commission of a felony, in this case kidnapping, to be true.

After hearing testimony in the penalty phase of the death penalty trial, the same jurors have now decided that Torres should be sentenced to death. They deliberated about an hour today before coming to a verdict.

Judge Bernard Schwartz scheduled a hearing for April 12, 2019, to litigate whether there will be an Atkins hearing as requested by the defense. An Atkins hearing, which can be heard by either a judge or a jury, is held when the defense alleges that a defendant has a mental or intellectual disability that disqualifies the defendant from receiving a sentence of death. A date for the sentencing will be set later.

Norma Lopez was kidnapped on July 15, 2010, as she walked from summer school at Valley View High School in Moreno Valley to a friend's house. Five days later, her body was found in a dirt field about three miles away. Jesse Perez Torres was later identified as the suspect and was charged in October 2011 by our office with Norma's murder. Torres lived in the Moreno Valley neighborhood where the kidnapping happened at the time of the crime.

The case, RIF1105550, is being prosecuted by Deputy DAs Michael Kersse and Kevin Beecham.

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