

# **\* NEWS RELEASE \***

## **SOLEDAD MAN SENTENCED TO 51 YEARS TO LIFE FOR KILLING COUSIN IN FAMILY DISPUTE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
March 9, 2017  
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Monterey County District Attorney Dean D. Flippo announced today that Jose Carlos Romero, age 31, of Soledad, was sentenced by Judge Carrie Panetta to 51 years-to-life in prison. This sentence included 25 years for use of a firearm, and one year for a prior prison term. On January 25, 2017, Romero was found guilty of first degree murder of his cousin, Eric Shackelford, age 35, also of Soledad. The jury also found that Romero used a firearm in the commission of this murder.

On September 24, 2015, Romero got into a heated argument at Shackelford's residence. Shackelford was interceding on behalf of his sister-in-law who was being threatened by Romero over child visitation issues. The argument ended with Romero leaving to go to his house across town in order to retrieve a .45 caliber semi-auto handgun. Romero returned approximately 30 minutes later, saw Shackelford in the residence parking lot and shot him once in the face, killing him instantly. The shooting was witnessed by a bystander who was working on a car in that same parking lot.

The sentence of 51 years-to-life means that Romero will spend at least 51 years in prison before he can apply for a parole date.

The investigation was led by Detective Mollie Enriquez of the Soledad Police Department. District Attorney Investigator Christina Gunter completed the investigation and assisted during the jury trial.