

*** NEWS RELEASE ***

SALINAS MAN ADMITS TO FALSELY IMPRISONING HIS MOM BY VIOLENCE AND DISARMING OFFICER WHO CAME TO HER AID

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 15, 2017:

CONTACT: Sulaiman Tokhi

Deputy District Attorney

(831) 759-6610

Monterey County District Attorney Dean D. Flippo announced today that Jose Alberto Velasco, age 30, and a resident of Salinas, pled guilty to false imprisonment by violence or menace against his mother and resisting arrest while disarming an officer.

On June 5, 2015, Salinas Police Department Officers Pritt and Barboza were finishing their lunch break when a nearby citizen told the officers about a male beating a woman across the street. Officers ran towards the location and observed defendant, Jose Alberto Velasco, dragging his mother by her neck through the street as she resisted. Multiple drivers and passersby called police and reported Velasco assaulting his mother.

Officer Pritt ordered Velasco to stop and get onto his stomach. Velasco began to comply but once officers attempted to handcuff him he resisted violently. Officer Pritt tased Velasco in order to get him to comply but the taser had no effect. Both officers attempted to control Velasco's arms only to have him do a push-up off the ground with both officers on his back.

Seeing that the tasers deployed by both officers had no effect, Officer Pritt deployed his collapsible baton and ordered Velasco to lay on the ground. Velasco refused to comply with verbal orders, warnings that he would be hit with the baton if he didn't comply or strikes from the baton directed towards his forearms and legs.

Velasco lunged at Officer Pritt in an apparent attempt to tackle the officer by grabbing him around his legs. Velasco then tore Officer Pritt's taser from his duty belt. Velasco continued to struggle with the officers by rolling, thrashing around and kicking at them. The struggle spanned 50 to 60 feet from the location where officers had initially contacted Velasco.

Velasco was taken into custody with the help of Salinas Police Department officers who arrived after hearing the dispatch regarding Velasco attacking his mother and police officers. During transport of Velasco in an ambulance, he continued to act out violently, including grabbing Salinas Fire Department firefighter Colin Mitchell and attempting to either bite or head butt him.

The case was investigated by Salinas Police Department Detectives Bryan McKinley and Robert Zuniga. Monterey County District Attorney's Office Investigator John Ferreria conducted additional follow-up investigation regarding use of force by the officers and Velasco's continuing agitation while receiving medical care.

Judge Carrie Panetta will sentence Velasco to 4 years in state prison on July 13, 2017 at 8:45a.m. Velasco will be sentenced pursuant to California Three Strikes Law due to a prior conviction for Criminal Street Gang Activity.