



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF TULARE

Tim Ward, *District Attorney*

PRESS RELEASE

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**ABUSIVE SEXUAL PREDATOR SENTENCED TO 401 YEARS-TO-LIFE
FOR RAPE, KIDNAPPING, AND CHILD MOLESTATION**

On January 17, 2019, in Tulare County Superior Court, Visalia Division, Judge Kathryn Montejano sentenced Macario Cerda, age 39, to 401 years-to-life in prison for numerous violent sex crimes. On December 4, 2018, Cerda was convicted by a jury of crimes against two victims consisting of three counts of forcible rape, one count of kidnapping to commit rape, one count of criminal threats, and seven counts of lewd acts upon a child under the age of fourteen.

According to court records, Cerda has prior convictions for felony domestic violence and criminal threats against the victims' mother. Behind the closed doors of this family, the women and girls suffered greatly from the ongoing and horrific violence at the hands of Cerda. On February 26, 2013, Cerda, while in a relationship with the victim's mother, forced one of the victims into his van and drove her to a remote location. He raped her while threatening to harm other members of her family. During the rape, the victim's mother called her cell phone and overheard yelling. She immediately called the police. When Cerda temporarily exited the van, the victim seized her opportunity to escape by jumping into the driver's seat and driving away.

Cerda was later arrested by Tulare County Sheriff's deputies. During the investigation it was revealed that the victim had been raped by Cerda when she was minor in 2010, resulting in a pregnancy and birth of a baby. The victim's younger sister also disclosed that Cerda had raped and abused her beginning in 2009 when she was also a child.

During the heartfelt and passionate victim's impact statement, the youngest victim spoke about Cerda's many crimes against the women and children in her family. She bravely described his actions, such as holding a knife to her sister's throat and all the ramifications of his sex crimes by starting every description of each act with the words "I forgive you for..."

Her capacity to find forgiveness for a man who so terrorized a family is nothing short of remarkable, but she also cautioned the judge to "never grant him any possibility at being deported because he has crawled his way back into the States illegally way too many times." The record did reflect that after his prior conviction, Macario Cerda had been deported and returned within five months. Soon after that, these crimes were committed.

"This family will never have to live in fear of Cerda returning to terrorize them again. He will be serving his remaining days in a California prison," stated District Attorney Tim Ward. "Criminals can, and will, find their way back to hurt the vulnerable. The courage of these women to stand up and rally back against this heartless predator is what gives all of us strength to battle for justice. *This time*, he is not coming back."

This case was prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Erica Gonzalez and investigated by Detective Esmeralda Ramos of the Tulare County Sheriff's Office.

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