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**NEWS RELEASE**  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**MAN SENTENCED TO DEATH FOR THE 2016  
MURDERS OF TWO PALM SPRINGS POLICE OFFICERS**

**INDIO** – A Riverside County judge sentenced a man to death today, Aug. 30, 2019, for the murders of Palm Springs police Officers Jose Gilbert “Gil” Vega and Lesley Zerebny.

The sentence was rendered in a packed Larson Justice Center courtroom by Judge Anthony Villalobos after about a dozen victim impact statements were heard from loved ones of the two fallen officers.

Among those in the courtroom to hear the sentence were several members of the jury that convicted John Hernandez Felix, DOB: 7-24-90, of Palm Springs, on May 20, 2019, of all counts, including first-degree murder of the two officers and the attempted murders of six other officers.

The seven-woman, five-man jury also found true special circumstances of multiple murders and murder of a peace officer, which made Felix eligible for the death penalty -- the sentence sought by District Attorney Mike Hestrin. The same jury then recommended 10 days later, on May 30, 2019, that Felix receive a sentence of death.

Prior to his rendering the death sentence on counts 1 and 2, Judge Villalobos sentenced Felix to 368 years to life on counts 3 to 11.

On Oct. 8, 2016, Palm Springs police received a 911 call regarding a domestic disturbance at a residence on Cypress Avenue. Within minutes after officers arrived and contacted family members inside the home, they were fired upon by Felix, who was using an AR-15 rifle.

Officer Jose Gilbert “Gil” Vega and Officer Lesley Zerebny were killed by gunfire and six other Palm Springs police officers were injured by shots fired by Felix in the subsequent exchange of gunfire. Four of the Palm Springs police officers had to medically retire after the fatal gun battle.

The DA’s Office filed two counts of murder with special circumstance allegations of the murder of a peace officer and multiple murders, six counts of attempted murder of a peace officer, and one count each of possession of an assault weapon, possession of a prohibited firearm and ammunition, and being a convicted felon in possession of a firearm.

The case, INF1601497, was prosecuted by Assistant DA Michelle Paradise and Deputy DA Manny Bustamante.

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