



PRESS RELEASE

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**LARRY LUJAN SENTENCED TO LIFE IN PRISON FOR KIDNAPPING THAT
RESULTED IN THE DEATH OF 16-YEAR-OLD VICTIM**

***Teenaged Victim was Kidnapped, Tortured, Murdered and Left in
Irrigation Ditch for Failing to Pay \$600 “Drug Tax”***

ALBUQUERQUE – **Larry Lujan**, 33, was sentenced today to life in prison for a kidnapping that resulted in the death of a 16-year-old, announced U.S. Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales for the District of New Mexico and Assistant Attorney General Lanny A. Breuer of the Justice Department’s Criminal Division.

Lujan, originally from Chamberino, N.M., was found guilty on Aug. 9, 2011, of kidnapping and fatally stabbing Dana Joseph “Joe” Grauke Jr. The jury was unable to reach a unanimous verdict on whether Lujan should be sentenced to death, and thus he was sentenced to life in prison by U.S. District Judge Robert C. Brack.

According to the evidence and testimony presented at trial, Lujan targeted 16-year-old Grauke for attack because he failed to pay a \$600 “tax” to Lujan for selling marijuana in a neighborhood in San Antonio that Lujan considered his “turf.” The evidence established that on March 7, 2005, Lujan led a group of teenagers in breaking into Grauke’s home in San Antonio, where they ransacked the residence; beat and tortured Grauke for several hours; and then transported Grauke, who was bound, gagged and blindfolded, in the luggage compartment of a sport utility vehicle to Anthony, N.M. Approximately 36 hours after kidnapping Grauke, Lujan stabbed the teenager nine times in the back and cut his throat so deeply that his head was almost severed from his body. Grauke’s body was found on March 20, 2005, in an irrigation ditch.

During the penalty phase of the trial, the jury heard testimony about Lujan’s role in the stabbing deaths of a Chamberino couple in 1998. The double homicides also were related to a drug dealing dispute. In Dec. 2011, Lujan pleaded “no contest” to first degree murder charges for that double homicide in a separate state case and was sentenced to two consecutive life sentences.

The case was investigated by the FBI; the Dona Ana County, N.M., Sheriff's Office and the San Antonio Police Department. It was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Maria Y. Armijo and Mark A. Saltman for the District of New Mexico, and Trial Attorney Michael S. Warbel of the Criminal Division's Capital Case Unit.

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