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NEWS RELEASE

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Man Sentenced to LWOP for Long Beach Killing

A 28-year-old man was sentenced today to life in state prison without the possibility of parole for a 2013 killing during a drug transaction, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office announced.

On March 24, a jury found Mark Cooper guilty of nine counts in case NA094945: four counts of first-degree robbery, two counts of attempted murder and one count each of first-degree murder, assault with a firearm and first-degree burglary, person present.

Jurors also found true a special circumstance allegation that the murder was committed in the commission of a robbery. Additionally, jurors found true a gun allegation.

Deputy District Attorney Rachel Hardiman, who prosecuted the case, said at the time of the crime victim Jose Vidal possessed large amounts of marijuana that he was intending to sell.

On Jan. 19, 2013, Vidal was in a Long Beach home with a male and female friend when Cooper and two unknown assailants arrived to purchase the marijuana, the prosecutor said. A fourth armed assailant also arrived at the location and forced a neighbor into the home, according to the prosecutor.

During the drug transaction, the female friend pushed the armed assailant, which knocked his gun magazine to the ground, the prosecutor said.

At that point, Cooper threw his own gun to the armed man, who then fired multiple shots in the home. Vidal and the neighbor were struck by the gunfire, according to the prosecutor. Following the shooting, Cooper and the three other assailants took the marijuana and fled the scene, the prosecutor said.

Authorities were called and the two injured men were taken to the hospital for medical treatment. Vidal, 24, ultimately succumbed to his injuries at the hospital, according to the prosecutor.

The case was investigated by the Long Beach Police Department.

About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to protecting our community through the fair and ethical pursuit of justice and the safeguarding of crime victims' rights.