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***** PRESS RELEASE *****

Santa Barbara Man Sentenced to 5 Years in State Prison for DUI Crash Causing Great Bodily Injury

Re: *People v. Luis Gerardo Ruiz Sanchez,*
Santa Barbara Superior Court Case No. 24CR09893

SANTA BARBARA, Calif.— Santa Barbara County District Attorney John T. Savrnoch announced today that Luis Ruiz Sanchez, a 24-year-old resident of Santa Barbara, California was sentenced to 5 years in State Prison for Driving under the Influence of Alcohol causing a collision that resulted in the Personal Infliction of Great Bodily Injury.

The charges stemmed from an incident on December 13, 2024, where the defendant drove on Hollister Avenue at at 8:00pm, traveling at approximately 80-90mph, before colliding with multiple vehicles. The defendant was under the influence of alcohol, with a blood alcohol concentration of .16, when he rear-ended one vehicle and collided head-on with another vehicle containing multiple victims who all suffered injuries. One of the victims suffered great bodily injury including a broken sternum as a result of the collision. Victims and family members came forth during the sentencing hearing to give statements highlighting the significant impact caused by the defendant’s conduct.

Mr. Sanchez Ruiz pled guilty as charged to all offenses including driving under the influence causing injury, driving with a blood alcohol over the .08 legal limit, driving with a suspended license, and admitted allegations for driving with a high BAC over .15, personal infliciton of great bodily injury, and causing injury to multiple vicitms. The sentence was imposed by Judge Martinez who noted that Mr. Ruiz Sanchez had suffered a previous conviction for reckless driving while under the influence of alcohol for similar conduct.

District Attorney John T. Savrnoch stated, “Impaired drivers continue to put the safety of all Santa Barbara County citizens at risk. The sentence in this case demonstrates that those who make the criminal decision to drive impaired face significant consequences as a result of their illegal actions. The Court clearly heard the victims who have faced suffering and trauma due to the decision of another to commit a completely preventable crime.”
