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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: June 17, 2009 **Contact:** Ann Hurd, Chief Deputy District Attorney
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Winters Husband to Stand Trial for Murder in “No-Body” Homicide

(Woodland, CA) – District Attorney Jeff Reisig announced that on June 16, at the conclusion of a preliminary hearing that lasted more than a day, Judge Paul K. Richardson of the Yolo County Superior Court found sufficient evidence for Felipe Cruz Hernandez to stand trial for the murder of his wife, Leticia Barrales Ramos. Ms. Barrales Ramos, a 28-year-old mother, has been missing from her home in Winters since April 12, 2009. The last person known to have seen and talked to her was her husband, Felipe Cruz Hernandez.

Judge Richardson found that Mr. Hernandez had a motive to kill his wife because she had filed for divorce and was requesting custody of their daughter, who turned ten on May 6. Furthermore, some evidence suggested that Mr. Hernandez showed signs of jealousy—following his wife in a borrowed vehicle, confronting her and her boyfriend, and eventually borrowing a firearm from his brother.

Despite the fact that a body has yet to be found, FBI Special Investigator Christopher Hopkins described the apartment shared by Mr. Hernandez and his wife and daughter as “a homicide scene.” Apparent blood was discovered throughout the apartment, most notably on some of the living room furniture and in large areas of the carpet. Hopkins testified that there was also some attempt at a “clean up,” noting that a rental receipt for a carpet steam cleaner was found during the search and that some of that furniture had been situated to cover some of the bloodstains on the carpet.

Mr. Hernandez had claimed that his wife went to Mexico for a family emergency. The defense introduced evidence that relatives of Mr. Hernandez received phone calls from someone who claimed to have seen Leticia at the Mexican border and that she had encountered deportation difficulties with US Immigration and Customs Enforcement. However, investigators found no evidence that she had any contact with ICE officials.

Instead, during the search of the apartment, they found her purse, passport, Mexican Voter Registration Card, and a credit card in her name. In addition, her niece produced her wallet, which contained her Driver's License, her Mexican Consulate card, and over \$1000 in cash.

Judge Richardson also noted that Leticia left no notice with anyone else that she was leaving or how to contact her, even though she had two jobs, where she was described as a responsible employee who always kept them up to date on her work schedule.

Felipe Cruz Hernandez is scheduled for Arraignment on the sole count of Murder in the First Degree on July 1, 2009, at 10:30 in Department 6 of the Yolo County Superior Court.

The search for the body of Leticia Barrales Ramos continues. Anyone with information concerning the whereabouts of her remains is encouraged to contact the Winters Police Department.

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