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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Approved by_____

Kern County District Attorney Lisa Green announced a conviction in a significant gang case today.

On February 15, 2013, in a case prosecuted by Supervising Deputy District Attorney Cynthia Zimmer and Deputy District Attorney Joseph Kinzel, a Kern County jury convicted Charles Lawton and Dupree Langston of multiple counts of robbery with firearm and gang enhancements. The charges included the October 30, 2011 robbery of the Max Muscle Store in Bakersfield, in which the victim of that robbery defended himself by using a firearm.

Charles Lawton, age 31, and Dupree Langston, age 19, were members of the West Side Crips criminal street gang. From September 30, 2011 through November 2, 2011, Lawton and Langston committed eight armed robberies of jewelry stores and check advance stores in Bakersfield, Delano, and Visalia. During this five week crime spree, Lawton and Langston robbed employees at Gold Buyers on Ming Avenue, Dollars for Gold on Niles Street, Advance America in Delano, Gold Rush Jewelers on Brundage Avenue, Auto Zone on Niles Street, Check Into Cash in Visalia, Max Muscle on McNair Lane, and Allied Cash Advance in Delano. Lawton and Langston brutalized the victims during the robberies by pointing firearms at them and threatening to kill them. Some of the victims were beaten and some were forced to disrobe at gunpoint. Lawton and Langston escaped with approximately \$40,000 from the victim businesses.

The Kern County Regional Crime Lab employed the use of groundbreaking advancements in DNA analysis techniques to assist in solving these robberies; most notably in the use of the TrueAllele Casework System. Dr. Mark Perlin, a world renowned scientist in the field of DNA analysis, and the inventor of the TrueAllele Casework System, travelled across the country in order to testify to his analysis of the DNA evidence collected in this case. The Crime Lab anticipates increased use of the TrueAllele System to help solve similar cases in the future, and considers the use of TrueAllele an

investment in the future safety of our community.

The sentencing date for Charles Lawton and Dupree Langston is set for April 5, 2013. They face a sentence of approximately 70 years in state prison.