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**For Immediate Release: Dallas County District Attorney's Office Secures Life Sentence in First Trial for New Vehicular Crimes Unit**

(DALLAS) – Dallas County Criminal District Attorney John Creuzot is pleased to announce his office secured a guilty verdict and life sentence in the first trial for the newly created Vehicular Crimes Unit (VCU).

“The bar has been set. We are sending a message that this office takes vehicular crimes just as seriously as all other violent crimes. Vehicle fatalities are a major threat to the safety of people in Dallas County, and it is important we do what we can to change the behaviors of those at risk of committing these types of offenses,” Dallas County Criminal District Attorney John Creuzot said.

On September 6, 2021, defendant Bobby Lee Murphy, 38, ran a red light and drove into oncoming traffic in an attempt to evade a traffic stop in Garland. He put dozens of motorists in danger, driving at an average speed of 99 mph until he ultimately slammed into a car being driven by 28-year-old Karla Rico. Rico was killed and her 10-year-old son was left critically injured. The family's dog was also killed in the crash.

Defendant Murphy was found guilty by the jury after just 20 minutes of deliberation. They later returned a punishment of Life in Prison.

Thank you to ADA Andrew James, ADA Priscilla Pelli, DA Investigator Ron Cathcart, DA Victim Advocate Melinda Shelton, Paralegal Maria Cantrell, the Garland Police department, and all others who aided in this victory at trial on behalf of Karla Rico's family.

“This defendant's selfish choices caused the ultimate tragedy for Karla Rico and her family,” said lead prosecutor Andrew James. “I'm grateful to the Garland Police Department for their hard work and thorough investigation - we would not have been able to obtain justice for Mrs. Rico and her family without it – and I'm grateful to the jury for giving justice to Karla Rico's family and ensuring that this defendant will never have the opportunity to harm another innocent family again.”

The Dallas County District Attorney’s Office Vehicular Crimes Unit (“VCU”) handles the most serious crimes involving vehicles such as Intoxication Manslaughter and Intoxication Assault. From the moment the crash happens, the VCU is contacted by law enforcement and responds to the scene as needed to assist law enforcement with any legal matters that arise during the crash investigation. Vehicular Homicide cases are often some of the most complex and difficult cases to investigate and prosecute.

Since 2018, Dallas County has had the highest rate of Fatal Crashes and DWI Fatalities among the largest Texas Counties. In 2020, Dallas has the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest fatality rate in the Country.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Rate of Fatalities</b>	<b>Rate of DWI Fatalities</b>
<b>2015</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>
<b>2016</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>
<b>2017</b>	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>
<b>2018</b>	1 <sup>st</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>
<b>2019</b>	1 <sup>st</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>
<b>2020</b>	1 <sup>st</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>
<i>Data source: TX Department of Transportation</i>		