



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
COUNTY OF TULARE

Tim Ward, *District Attorney*

PRESS RELEASE

11/9/20

**STATE PRISON SENTENCE HANDED DOWN IN DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE STANDOFF**

On November 5, 2020, the Tulare County Superior Court sentenced Fresno man Jonathan Soto, age 34, to 23 years, 4 months in prison for a 2019 standoff with police in which he threatened to kill his girlfriend.

Around 5 pm on April 8, 2019, Visalia Police Department officers responded to a residence on E. Hillcrest Drive for a violation of a restraining order. When they arrived, they heard loud banging and a female yelling. Witnesses at the scene told officers Soto had pushed his way into the residence, dragged his girlfriend into a bedroom, and put a screwdriver to her neck. The witnesses had removed Soto and his girlfriend's two young children from the residence. Soto refused to comply with police orders to surrender.

As the hours went by, Soto continually threatened violence against his girlfriend and hoped officers would shoot him to death. Soto demanded to speak on the phone with various family members and get pizza delivered, which officers allowed. At 1:30 am, officers threw a distraction grenade through the sliding glass door of the bedroom. Soto used his girlfriend as a shield and then began to choke her as officers rushed into the room to take him into custody.

On October 9, 2020, Soto pleaded no contest to all charges filed against him: attempted murder, kidnapping, false imprisonment of a hostage, first-degree burglary, criminal threats, assault with a deadly weapon, injuring a spouse / girlfriend, false imprisonment by violence, and six counts of resisting an executive officer. Each count is a felony. Soto possesses two prior felony convictions in Fresno County: violating a restraining order in 2010 and corporal injury to a spouse / girlfriend in 2018.

The case was prosecuted by Supervising Deputy District Attorney Erica Gonzalez and was investigated by the Visalia Police Department.

*Media inquiries can be directed to the Office of the District Attorney, County of Tulare
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