Administrative Office of the Courts

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 28, 2018

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REPORTS WRONGLY CLAIM MURDER SUSPECT ON PRETRIAL RELEASE AT TIME OF CRIME

SANTA FE – Administrative Office of the Courts Director Arthur Pepin said today that a news media story and police report inaccurately stated that an Albuquerque man charged with murder was out of jail on pretrial release for another offense at the time of the fatal shooting last week.

Court records show no criminal charges were pending against Phillip Joseph Sedillo at the time of the June 18, 2018 murder. He is charged with first-degree murder and aggravated battery with a deadly weapon for fatally shooting a woman who was a neighbor and wounding a man who was with her.

Sedillo had been charged in 2017 with aggravated assault with a deadly weapon, but the charge was dismissed by the district attorney's office "due to insufficient evidence and limited resources," according to court records.

A story broadcast by KOB-TV on Wednesday inaccurately reported that the defendant was out of jail on pretrial release at the time of the murder. The story attributed the information to police. A criminal complaint filed by Albuquerque police about the shooting incorrectly stated that at the time of the murder, Sedillo was "out on conditions of release" in the 2017 case. The news story also appeared on the station's website under a headline, "Murder suspect released from jail prior to crime." The station corrected the story at the request of the AOC.

"Inaccurate reporting like this could easily have been prevented by checking court records available online to members of the press and police," said Pepin. "False information about pretrial release decisions by judges undermines public confidence in the justice system and needlessly fuels the public's concerns about crime in the Albuquerque area."

In the case dismissed last year, Sedillo had been charged for threatening to kill a neighbor with a knife on June 6, 2017. He was released on a $5,000 bail bond while awaiting trial and the charge

was dismissed on June 16, 2017 by a “nolle prosequi” filed by the district attorney’s office in the Second Judicial District.

A criminal history summary of the 2017 case (T-4-FR-2017003202) is attached and available to the public through the Judiciary’s online case lookup. Also attached is a copy of the “nolle prosequi” filed in the 2017 case.

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