



**Twelfth Judicial District
State of New Mexico**
OTERO, LINCOLN COUNTIES

SCOT D. KEY
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

PRESS RELEASE

December 21, 2022

RICARDO SOTO SENTENCED TO LIFE

On December 2, 2022 Ricardo Soto was sentenced to Life in prison for his conviction of Child Abuse Resulting in Death of a child less than 12 years old. Jeremiah Navarez was a two year old toddler living in Ruidoso with his mother, Abigail Navarez. The defendant was found to be the biological father after paternity was disputed by him. In 2018, Soto was slowly being introduced to "Miah" when the defendant violently shook and slammed his head against objects in the home in Ruidoso Downs. "Miah" would succumb to massive head injuries at the Children's Hospital in El Paso, Texas on June 10, 2018. The defendant was arrested on June 9, 2018 after he fled to Mexico, leaving "Miah" at the PICU Unit of the Children's Hospital on a ventilator.

After a change of venue, on October 5, 2022, the Otero County jury found him guilty of Child Abuse resulting in Death of a child under 12 years of age. The case was successfully prosecuted by the Twelfth Judicial District Attorney's Office in partnership with the New Mexico Attorney General's Office.

Uniquely, during the pendency of this case, the defendant was charged with and convicted of Perjury for lying at a hearing regarding issues surrounding the Child Abuse Resulting in Death case. Soto has already gone to prison on that conviction and completed his sentence by the time this matter proceeded to trial.