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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Jury Finds Aaron Ortiz Guilty of Engaging in Organized Criminal Activity
for Gang-Related Murder**

Defendant sentenced to life in prison

WHAT: In the case of the *State vs. Aaron Ortiz*, tried in the 282nd Judicial District Court, the Honorable Judge Andy Chatham presiding, a jury found the defendant Aaron Ortiz, guilty of first degree engaging in organized criminal activity. The defendant's participation in organized criminal activity led to a gang-related shooting that resulted in the victim's murder. Mr. Ortiz was sentenced to life in the Texas Department of Corrections (TDC) and a \$10,000 fine. The lead prosecutor on the case from the Dallas County District Attorney's Office was Stephanie Councilman.

WHEN: The jury's verdict was handed down on Thursday, April 10, 2008.
The trial began on Wednesday, April 2, 2008.

WHERE: Frank Crowley Courts Building
133 N. Industrial Blvd.
Dallas, Texas 75207

BACKGROUND: Defendant Aaron Ortiz, two other co-defendants, the victim and witnesses were all active members of the East Side Homeboys gang at the time of the offense on March 30, 2006. The victim and his brothers had a long-standing conflict with the defendant and his brothers. The defendant and his brothers went looking for the victim at his house and allegedly threatened the victim's aunt. When the victim found out about the threat he and a friend did a drive-by on the defendant's house with a shot gun. Fortunately, no one was injured by the drive-by shooting. Then the defendant, his father and brothers went searching for the victim in retaliation. When Mr. Ortiz caught up with the victim, Ortiz unloaded an AK 47 military assault rifle on him and the witnesses near the intersection of Military Pkwy. and Jim Miller Rd. in Dallas. The victim and witnesses were in a truck and the defendant and his brothers were in a car when the shooting took place. Another witness in the truck also suffered gun shot wounds.

Prior to committing this offense of engaging in organized criminal activity, the defendant had one prior juvenile offense and a misdemeanor possession of prohibited weapons. Mr. Ortiz had been on bond for two years leading up to trial.

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