Close-out Memorandum of the Investigation Regarding Daniel Lewis May 30, 2024



State Attorney's Office Eleventh Judicial Circuit Miami-Dade County

August 28, 2025

KATHERINE FERNANDEZ RUNDLE STATE ATTORNEY



INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO:

KATHERINE FERNANDEZ RUNDLE

State Attorney

DATE: August 26, 2025

DATE. August 20, 2023

FROM: STAFFING/REVIEW TEAM

RE: SAO Case #: 62/24/05/30/002

Deceased: Daniel Lewis

Based on the information obtained and reviewed during the course of the investigation, the conclusion of the staffing/review team is the following:

While conducting surveillance of a residence associated with criminal activity, officers and federal agents observed a Nissan Altima with several occupants depart from the house and followed the vehicle. The driver made several turns, appearing to notice the surveillance vehicles, and headed back toward the residence. The passenger of the Altima extended his torso outside the vehicle by sitting on the window frame and began shooting at police. ATF Special Agent Alvarez returned fire, shooting twice through the windshield of his vehicle, but did not make contact. The Altima returned to the house it departed from, crashed into the backyard fence, and the four occupants attempted to flee the vehicle. Several law enforcement officers shouted "police" at the fleeing occupants, and the passenger who had discharged at police, complied when instructed to get on the ground and surrender. The remaining three occupants attempted to flee but were apprehended by police.

Daniel Lewis, who was inside the residence, exited the back door armed with a firearm and started walking toward the officers securing one of the vehicle occupants. ATF Special Agent Alvarez turned his mounted weapon light toward Lewis, and Lewis raised his firearm toward Alvarez. Special Agent Alvarez, Detectives Ruiz and Hernandez discharged their weapons at Lewis, who was struck several times, and did not survive. Pursuant to Florida Statute 776.012, after a full investigation and review of the facts and evidence, the use of deadly force by ATF Special Agent Rodolfo Alvarez, Detective Hernandez, and Detective Ruiz, is determined to be legally justified.

The members of the staffing	review team for this c	ase are:	10 -
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Howard Rosen	Deisy Hernandez Stephen K. Talpins		
/s/ Kathleen Hoague	A	0	AMANS
Kathleen Hoague	Nilo Cuervo	Jos	e Arrojo
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Marie Jo Toussaint			
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KATHERINE FERNANDEZ RUNDLE

State Attorney



INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

RE:

TO: STAFFING/REVIEW TEAM

DATE: August 26, 2025

FROM: SCOTT WARFMAN

Assistant State Attorney

POLICE SHOOTING CLOSEOUT MEMO

SAO Case # 62/24/05/30/002

JOHNATHAN NOBILE Assistant State Attorney

OFFICERS INVOLVED:	Detective Rudy Hernandez-Azueta, 100-354 Miami Gardens Police Department Detective Michael Ruiz 100-321, Miami Gardens Police Department Special Agent Rodolfo Alvarez, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives		
DECEASED	Daniel Lewis		
DATE & TIME:	May 30, 2024 at approximately 10:48 pm.		
LOCATION:	16140 NW 27 th Place, Miami Gardens, FL		
WEAPONS:	Glock 45, 9 mm SN: AHWG850 (Det Hernandez)		
	Glock 34, 9 mm SN: HBN824 (Det Ruiz)		
	M4 5.56 mm Carbine SN: CR805801 (SA Alvarez)		
LEAD/REPORTS:	Special Agent Luis Alvarez, FDLE / Reports Received May 23, 2025		
CASE #:	MI-27-0259		
SAO CASE #:	62/24/05/30/002		

SUMMARY OF FACTS

On May 30, 2024, a multi-agency task force, including the Miami Gardens Police Department (MGPD), Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), was conducting "Operation Safe Street," a proactive enforcement operation designed to address a recent increase of gang and drug related shootings and violent crimes within the City of Miami Gardens. All involved police officers were wearing tactical gear printed with "Police" markings.

Police were directed to 16140 NW 27th Place by a confidential informant who advised that drug dealing, and possibly unlawful gun activity was taking place at this location. The CI information was corroborated, in part, by prior information obtained by police regarding unlawful possession of firearms by persons residing at the address. During July 2022, the decedent's brother (Domenique Lewis) and Dodrie Forbes were arrested for unlawful possession of firearms – both residing at the subject address.

On this date, May 30, 2024, officers and federal agents observed a gray 4-door Nissan Altima leave the residence. They began to follow in multiple unmarked police vehicles. The driver of the Altima made several turns and appeared to notice they were being followed as they drove in a circuitous route.

Shortly afterwards, the Altima appeared to be driving back toward the residence, traveling west on NW 161st Street east of NW 27th Place. At this point, the Altima was being followed by police in an unmarked gray Chrysler Pacifica minivan equipped with emergency red and blue lights, but not readily observable, driven by Detective Rudy Hernandez-Azueta and occupied by ATF Special Agent Rodolfo Alvarez. The Altima was also being followed by police in another unmarked white Kia sedan also equipped with emergency red and blue lights, but not readily observable, driven by Aventura Police Department Detective Daniel Marti and occupied by Miami Beach Police Department Detective Campos and ATF Special Agent Hugh Cunningham. None of these emergency lights were activated.

While following the Altima, police observed a subject sitting on the passenger side window frame of the Altima with his torso outside the car just prior to the subject shooting towards the police vehicles. ATF Special Agent Alvarez returned fire, shooting twice through the windshield of his vehicle. No one was struck by this exchange of gunfire. This gunfire took place shortly before 10:48 pm in the vicinity between NW 27th Court and NW 27th Place on NW 161st Street, a short distance from where the Altima first departed from 16140 NW 27th Place.

The Altima continued driving west toward 16140 NW 27th Place and drove through the area on the north side of the house, then turned south into the backyard and east where it stopped between the south wall of the residence and the fence on the south property line.

There were four occupants in the Altima. Philip Marsh was observed fleeing the passenger side and running north into the backyard of the residence at 16200 NW 27th Place, adjacent to 16140 NW 27th Place. Several officers were shouting "police" at the subjects fleeing the Altima. ATF Special Agent Alexis Kelly instructed Marsh to get on the ground and he complied. ATF Special Agent Kelly was assisted by Detective Marti and ATF Special Agent Cunningham in the rear, southwest corner of the backyard at 16200 NW 27th Place. The remaining three occupants, Jafari Russell, Gerald Franco, and Daniella Lewis all fled the Altima and were all subsequently detained on scene. None of the occupants of the Altima were charged by local police.

Daniel Lewis ("Decedent") was inside the residence as Russell, Marsh, Franco and Daniella Lewis, returned to the residence. Daniella Lewis told the decedent to get his gun because they were being chased. The decedent exited the back door of the residence armed with a firearm, and raised the firearm at officers, when he was shot and killed by ATF Special Agent Alvarez. Detective Ruiz and Detective Hernandez also shot at the decedent but none of their projectiles were recovered. Based on the autopsy, it is uncertain whether any of the shots fired by Detective Ruiz or Detective Hernandez struck the decedent.

CIVILIAN STATEMENTS

Phillip Marsh (Post-Miranda)

Russell, Marsh, Franco, and Daniella Lewis left 16140 NW 27th Place in the decedent's Altima to go to the store. The brother of the decedent drove the vehicle, and Marsh was in the rear driver's side seat while the decedent remained at the residence. Upon leaving the residence, they noticed that a minivan, and a white Charger began to follow them. They all got scared which prompted the driver to make several U-turns to see if the vehicles continued to follow them. After they confirmed that the vehicles were following them, Marsh called the decedent to try and let him know what was happening, but the decedent did not pick up the phone. They decided to return to the residence and while returning

¹ It is believed that Marsh is referring to Russell when he refers to the brother of the decedent. The decedent's brother, Domenique Lewis, never left the residence prior to the shooting.

to the residence, Marsh leaned outside of his window and fired one round toward the minivan because he was afraid.

The Altima returned to the residence, drove through the north side gate, drove through the backyard, and then was surrounded by police. Marsh exited out of the passenger side rear window and ran into the neighboring yard where he was apprehended and placed in handcuffs. He was on his stomach when he saw the decedent come out the back door and get shot by police.

Jafari Russell

Russell was visiting 16140 NW 27th Place for a couple of months and had known the decedent since he was about 10 years old. The decedent's mother is like an aunt to him. Russell, Marsh, Franco and Daniella Lewis, left the residence in the decedent's vehicle to get gas and snacks while the decedent stayed at the house. Russell did not know Marsh or Franco well. Russell was seated in the rear driver's side seat; "the other guy with the dreads" drove the vehicle; "the guy with the colored hair" was seated next to Russell in the rear; and Daniella Lewis was in the front passenger seat. Upon leaving the residence, he observed vehicles begin to follow them. They all thought they were being chased as the driver of the car drove in multiple directions "hauling ass." At some point, he heard a shot go off from inside the car from the passenger side back seat and then heard one gunshot coming into the car. They returned to the residence and drove into the backyard. He fled from the vehicle, hopping two fences before he returned to the scene to surrender to the police.

Gerald Franco

Franco was hanging out with the decedent at 16140 NW 27th Place when he, Marsh, Daniella Lewis, and "Trell's cousin" (believed to be Russell) left the residence. "Trell's cousin" was the driver; Daniella Lewis was the front seat passenger; Franco was in the rear driver's side seat; and Marsh was in the rear next to him. Upon leaving the residence, they all noticed that vehicles were chasing them, and the vehicles opened fire on their vehicle. He was unsure if anyone inside their vehicle returned fire. They returned to the residence and drove into the back yard when he fled out of the rear passenger side window. He attempted to enter the rear of the residence, but the door was locked. He ran to a friend's house nearby where the friend asked him to leave. He returned to the scene and was detained by police.

Daniella Lewis

Daniella Lewis is the decedent's sister. She resided at 16140 NW 27th Place and she was hanging out with Russell, Marsh, Franco, and the decedent. The decedent gave Russell money for gas and Russell, Marsh, Franco, and she, left in the decedent's Altima while the decedent stayed at the residence. She was seated in the front passenger seat, Russell was the driver, Franco was seated in the rear driver's side seat, and Marsh was seated in the rear passenger side seat.² Upon leaving the residence, they all noticed three vehicles following them. The vehicles continued to follow them through the rear of a shopping plaza. As they approached a stop sign, one of the cars following them opened fire on them. She thought she heard Marsh fire three or four times in retaliation as he was leaning outside of the window. The Altima returned to the residence and drove to the south side of the residence where she bailed from the vehicle and began to bang on the back door which was locked. The decedent opened the door, and she told him, "Get your gun, they're chasing us." She went inside the house and laid on the floor as the decedent went outside and she was "pretty sure" he took a gun with him.

Domenique Lewis

Domenique Lewis is the decedent's brother. He was inside the house at the time of the shooting. While he was standing by the kitchen window, he saw the decedent walk out of the house and heard five gunshots. He did not hear anyone identify themselves as police and did not see any emergency lights or hear sirens. He did, however, see that the officer who shot his brother was wearing a vest that, "said ATF." When the decedent walked out, he was facing a car that was located on the south side of the house and "didn't raise the gun" when he was shot.³

LAW ENFORCEMENT STATEMENTS

ATF Special Agent Rodolfo Alvarez

ATF Special Agent Alvarez provided a written statement regarding his involvement.⁴ Police were conducting a surveillance on a black sedan⁵ believed to be associated with a gang known as "Behind

² This appears to have been the actual seating arrangement.

³ As described below, ATF Special Agent Alvarez describes that the decedent was facing north/northeast when he was shot in the front of his body.

⁴ Neither Det. Hernandez nor Det. Ruiz gave any statement during the FDLE investigation.

⁵ Some witnesses refer to the Altima as a black or dark sedan. The Altima was dark gray and may have appeared black in the night.

the Plaza Boys." He was the front seat passenger in an unmarked gray Chrysler Pacifica minivan being driven by MGPD Detective Rudy Hernandez-Azueta. While following the Altima westbound on NW 161st St. near 27th Place, he observed a black male with long hair lean out of the passenger side window with a pistol in his hand and shoot directly at their police vehicles. ATF Special Agent Alvarez then fired two rounds with his M4 rifle through the front windshield of their vehicle after which the black male retreated back inside the Altima. They continued to follow the Altima until it crashed through a fence of the residence at 16140 NW 27th Place. Detective Hernandez stopped their vehicle nearby, and ATF Special Agent Alvarez exited the vehicle with his rifle. ATF Special Agent Alvarez observed the same male who shot at the police vehicles, as he and other officers yelled "police" multiple times. He saw Marsh apprehended by other officers and continued to scan the backyard area. He states,

While scanning the area, I noticed another black male with a white shirt walking from the south side of the yard directly towards the Officers, who were in the process of arresting the subject [Marsh] on the ground. I was approximately 7 to 10 yards from this person as he closed the distance between myself and the arresting Officers. I immediately turned my weapon mounted light on toward this person. I observed a black pistol in this person's right hand. This person immediately turned towards me and raised the muzzle of his pistol and pointed it in my direction. Based on the previous shooting by the black male in the black sedan [Altima] and having shouted "Police" multiple times into the yard, I believe I was about to be shot, and in order to stop this deadly threat to me and the other Officers on scene, I fired multiple rounds at this person. I stopped shooting when I observed this person fall to the ground and drop his pistol.

ATF Special Agent Alexis Kelly

ATF Special Agent Kelly was the front seat passenger in an unmarked white Dodge Charger being driven by MGPD Detective Michael Ruiz during a surveillance detail. ATF Special Agent Kelly advised that Detective Ruiz followed behind the black sedan [Altima] and advised over the radio that it was returning back to the residence. At that time, Detective Ruiz made a right turn to go southbound on NW 27th place to return to the residence. As they were travelling south on NW 27th Place, ATF Special Agent Kelly observed the Altima driving directly towards them and heard gunshots. Detective Ruiz drove past the Altima and two unmarked task force cars which were following the subject vehicle, and he made a U-turn and followed behind them.⁶ Detective Ruiz parked his vehicle in the roadway just past 16140 NW 27th Place when ATF Special Agent Kelly exited the vehicle and saw three subjects running from the Altima. ATF Special Agent Kelly ran north to 16200 NW 27th Place (the adjacent residence), where she observed Marsh and ordered him on the ground. Marsh was being handcuffed by other officers

⁶ According to all the other evidence, the Altima was travelling west on NW 161st Street when shots were exchanged.

as she was facing south from the adjacent backyard. She observed a black male wearing a white shirt in the backyard of 16140 NW 27th Place holding a handgun. She saw the black male raise the handgun and saw gunfire from "a couple of our guys" on the northwest corner of the residence at 16140 NW 27th Place. She confirmed that she saw smoke coming from ATF Special Agent Alvarez's rifle. She also stated that during the incident she heard numerous officers identify themselves as police.

Detective Sergio Campos

Detective Campos was the front passenger in an unmarked white Kia sedan being driven by Detective Marti, and occupied by ATF Special Agent Cunningham. They were following the Altima when he observed a subject sitting on the frame of the passenger side window. The subject pointed his hand in the direction of the unmarked Chrysler Pacifica which was following behind the Altima. He didn't see the subject with a gun due to the lighting conditions and did not see a muzzle flash but heard a gunshot as the subject pointed at the Chrysler Pacifica. He heard an additional gunshot as the Altima began to turn north onto NW 27th Place. Detective Campos stated that they followed the Altima to 16140 NW 27th Place, where the Altima came to rest. He observed the shooter from the Altima [Marsh] flee and run toward the north side of the residence, followed by several officers, while he was shouting, "police, police, police." Detective Campos ran to the south side of the residence to establish containment, and as he reached the southeast corner of the residence, he heard gunfire coming from the backyard. He did not witness the shooting.

ATF Special Agent Hugh Cunningham

ATF Special Agent Cunningham was the rear passenger in the unmarked white Kia Sedan being driven by Detective Marti. They began to follow the Altima. While following the Altima, a black male with dreadlocks exposed his upper body from the passenger side window and faced towards their vehicle. A short time later, he observed a muzzle flash and heard a gunshot coming from the passenger side of the Altima, and then heard multiple additional gunshots. They continued to follow the Altima until it came to rest at 16140 NW 27th Place. Detective Marti parked next to the unmarked Chrysler Pacifica. ATF Special Agent Cunningham exited the vehicle and ran to the rear of 16200 NW 27th Place where another officer had a subject on the ground giving loud verbal commands. He and other officers placed the subject in handcuffs and then he heard multiple gunshots coming from the area of the residence to their south. He did not witness the shooting.

Detective Daniel Marti

Detective Marti was the driver of the unmarked white Kia sedan and was following the Altima. As the Altima travelled west on NW 161st Street, a black male exposed his upper body from the passenger side open window and faced towards their vehicle. A short time later, Detective Marti heard multiple gunshots coming from the Altima and heard additional gunshots. He continued to follow the Altima as it entered the north side yard of 16140 NW 27th Place and then come to rest on the south side. He observed a subject flee from the passenger side of the Altima and run in a northerly direction. Detective Marti ran after the subject to the rear of 16200 NW 27th Place, where he and additional officers apprehended the subject. While apprehending the subject, he heard gunfire from the back yard south of his location. He did not witness the shooting.

CRIME SCENE

Two spent 5.56x45 spent shell casings were recovered between NW 27th Court and NW 27th Place on NW 161st St.

In the front south corner of 16140 NW 27th Place, a gray Chrysler Pacifica had two bullet defects on the lower right side of the windshield and one 5.56x45 spent shell casing was recovered inside the vehicle.

Nine spent 5.56x45 spent shell casings were recovered in the backyard of 16140 NW 27th Place. They were all located approximately fifteen to eighteen feet east and more than fifteen feet north of the decedent.

Two 9mm spent shell casings were recovered in the backyard of 16140 NW 27th Place.

Six 9mm spent shell casings were recovered in the backyard of 16200 NW 27th Place.

One 9mm spent shell casing was recovered between the trunk and rear window on the outside of the Altima.

One Springfield XD 9mm semiautomatic pistol was recovered near the decedent's body in the backyard of 16140 NW 27^{th} Place.⁷

⁷ DNA analysis of the Springfield XD 9mm pistol near the decedent's body reflected "moderate statistical support" that the DNA present on the magazine is consistent with the decedent's DNA. [According to FBI standards, more than 10,000 and less than 1,000,000.]

One CZ 9mm semiautomatic pistol was recovered on the south side of 16200 NW 27th Place which was identified as Marsh' firearm per his statement.⁸

In total, there were four recovered projectiles. Two projectiles were recovered from the decedent's body during the autopsy. One projectile was recovered from the roadway on NW 161st Street and NW 27th Place. One projectile was recovered from the inside of the Altima.

FIREARMS ANALYSIS

Detective Ruiz, Detective Hernandez, and ATF Special Agent Alvarez, all surrendered their firearms. Based on the round counts of the surrendered firearms from the involved officers, it was determined that Detective Rudy Hernandez-Azueta fired two 9mm rounds, Detective Michael Ruiz fired six 9mm rounds, and ATF Special Agent Rodolfo Alvarez fired twelve 5.56x45 rounds.

One of the 5.56x45 spent shell casings recovered between NW 27th Court and NW 27th Place on NW 161st St. was fired by ATF Special Agent Alvarez. The other was not associated with any of the submitted firearms. The 5.56x45 spent shell casing recovered in the Chrysler Pacifica was fired by ATF Special Agent Alvarez.

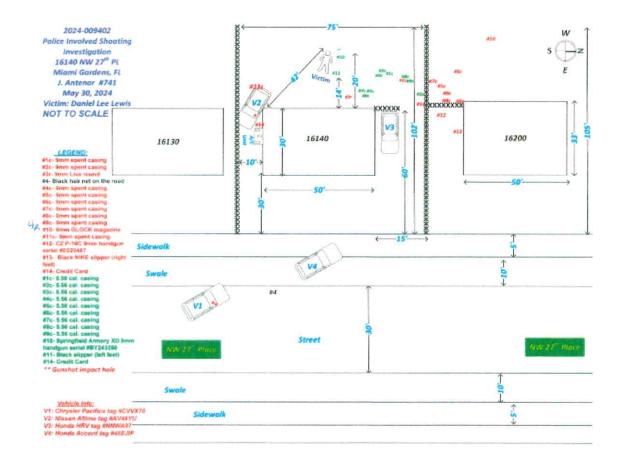
The nine 5.56x45 spent shell casings recovered in the backyard of 16140 NW 27th Place were fired by ATF Special Agent Alvarez. In sum, the police recovered eleven spent shell casings fired by ATF Special Agent Alvarez.

One of the 9mm spent shell casing recovered in the backyard of 16140 NW 27th Place and one of the 9mm spent shell casing recovered in the backyard of 16200 NW 27th Place were fired by Detective Hernandez. All six remaining 9mm spent shell casings recovered in the backyards were fired by Detective Ruiz.

The one spent 9mm shell casing recovered by the rear window of the Altima was fired from Marsh's firearm.

All four recovered projectiles were fired by ATF Special Agent Alvarez. See Crime Scene Sketch.

⁸ DNA analysis of the CZ 9mm pistol magazine reflected "very strong statistical support" that the DNA on this magazine is consistent with Marsh's DNA. [more than or equal to 1 million]



MEDICAL EXAMINER

According to the autopsy performed on the decedent by Dr. Barna of the Miami-Dade County Medical Examiner's Department, the decedent was struck by three projectiles. One entered through his left shoulder and traveled downward through the scapula. This projectile was recovered from the decedent's back. A second projectile entered and exited the decedent's left arm and re-entered his left chest, striking his heart and liver; it was recovered in his abdomen. The third projectile entered the left shoulder, traveling downward through the left ribs and exited through the lower left back damaging the left lung. This projectile was not recovered. All of these projectiles traveled front to back.

⁹ This means that while Detective Ruiz and Detective Hernandez shot at the decedent, there is no ballistics evidence that reflects whether they actually struck the decedent. The two projectiles recovered from the decedent's body were shot by ATF Special Agent Alvarez.

CONCLUSION

The role of the State Attorney in this investigation and in conducting this review is limited to determining whether a criminal violation of Florida law has occurred, whether any person may be held criminally responsible, and whether such criminal responsibility can be proven beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law. The State Attorney does not establish agency policy, procedures, and training requirements. Nor does the State Attorney have any responsibility for determining disciplinary action or pursuing civil litigation in these matters. In other words, given the applicable law, the State Attorney's role is to determine whether the actions of Detective Rudy Hernandez-Azueta, MGPD, Detective Michael Ruiz, MGPD, and/or Special Agent Alvarez, ATF, constitute a criminal act that can be proven beyond and to the exclusion of every reasonable doubt. Florida Statute 776.012 which governs the use of force states that:

A person is justified in using or threatening to use deadly force if he or she reasonably believes that using or threatening to use such force is necessary to prevent imminent death or great bodily harm to himself or herself or another or to prevent the imminent commission of a forcible felony. A person who uses or threatens to use deadly force in accordance with this subsection does not have a duty to retreat and has the right to stand his or her ground if the person using or threatening to use the deadly force is not engaged in a criminal activity and is in a place where he or she has a right to be.

In this case, based on the totality of the circumstances, the officers' use of deadly force was justified as the evidence shows that the decedent was visibly holding a firearm and approaching various officers, as they were apprehending Marsh. ATF Special Agent Alvarez states that the decedent raised his firearm before the officer opened fire. This account is confirmed by ATF Special Agent Kelly. In contrast, the decedent's brother, Domenique Lewis, who was inside the house during the shooting, states that his brother "didn't raise the gun" when he was shot. Mr. Lewis also describes that he was watching from the kitchen window and his brother was facing south when he was shot. The physical evidence (bullet entry wounds and location of the firearm casings) reflects that the decedent was facing in a north/northeast direction when he was shot. Special Agent Alvarez recounts that the decedent was walking from the south side of the house before he was shot. The only other witness to the shooting was Philip Marsh. He only describes that he saw the decedent get shot when he walked out of the back of the house. Mr. Marsh was on the ground in handcuffs when he states that he saw the decedent get shot. Mr. Marsh also states that he knew ATF agents shot the decedent because they were wearing vests

with attached placards indicating ATF. Special Agent Alvarez witnessed the subject from the Altima open fire on the police. As such, Detective Ruiz, Detective Hernandez, and ATF Special Agent Alvarez had an objectively reasonable belief that the use of deadly force was necessary to prevent the death or great bodily harm to themselves or other officers on scene.

Accordingly, the use of deadly force by Detective Ruiz, Detective Hernandez, and ATF Special Agent Alvarez was reasonable and legally justified.

Prepared by:

/s/ Scott L. Warfman

/s/ Johnathan Nobile

Scott L. Warfman Assistant State Attorney Johnathan Nobile Assistant State Attorney