

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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AG Balderas Announces Roswell Murderer to Stay in Prison

Roswell, NM – Today, Attorney General Hector Balderas announced that the New Mexico Supreme Court agreed with the Office of the Attorney General Criminal Appeals Division and affirmed the convictions of Steven Lee Lucero for the 2014 brutal murder of Isaiah Sanchez in Roswell. The defendant set into motion a methodical plan to rob the defendant that ended in the cold-blooded murder of the victim and the ultimate theft of a mere \$15 from the victim’s wallet.

Attorney General Balderas released the following statement:


“Keeping the most violent, dangerous offenders behind bars in New Mexico is our priority. I am thankful to the Fifth Judicial District Attorney’s Office and the Roswell Police Department for the successful prosecution of this case, and I’m pleased that the Office of the Attorney General’s Criminal Appeals Division was able ensure this hard fought conviction was upheld. The defendant’s methodical actions to lure the victim to a house party, brutally beat and stab him, and then return to the body to deliver the fatal stab wound demonstrates the extreme danger Lucero posed to the Roswell community.”

Assistant Attorney General Elizabeth Ann Ashton handled the appeal for the Office of the Attorney General.

Please see attached for a copy of the opinion and a photo of Lucero.

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Joey D. Moya

1 **IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO**

2 **Filing Date:** _____

3 **NO. S-1-SC-36128**

4 **STATE OF NEW MEXICO,**

5 Plaintiff-Appellee,

6 v.

7 **STEVEN LEE LUCERO,**

8 Defendant-Appellant.

9 **APPEAL FROM THE DISTRICT COURT OF CHAVES COUNTY**

10 Kea W. Riggs, District Judge

11 Robert E. Tangora, L.L.C.

12 Robert E. Tangora

13 Santa Fe, NM

14 for Appellant

15 Hector H. Balderas, Attorney General

16 Elizabeth Ann Ashton, Assistant Attorney General

17 Santa Fe, NM

18 for Appellee

19 **DECISION**

20 **VIGIL, Justice.**

1 **I. INTRODUCTION**

2 {1} In this capital appeal, Steven Lee Lucero (Defendant) appeals his convictions
3 of felony murder and conspiracy to commit felony murder. Defendant was charged
4 in connection with the death of Isaiah Sanchez (Victim). At trial, the State presented
5 evidence that Defendant enlisted his ex-wife, brother, and brother’s girlfriend in
6 luring Victim to a vacant house, fatally stabbing him, and stealing his truck and his
7 wallet. Defendant raises a number of challenges to both convictions and argues that
8 cumulative error requires reversal of the convictions. For the reasons that follow, we
9 reject each of his arguments and affirm both convictions.

10 **II. BACKGROUND**

11 {2} The State presented the case that Defendant—with the help of his brother,
12 Gilbert Lucero (Gilbert), Gilbert’s girlfriend, Sheri Sanchez (Sheri), and his ex-wife,
13 Vanessa Lucero (Vanessa)—beat, stabbed, and killed Victim in the course of stealing
14 his truck and his wallet. Defendant was acquainted with Victim through his ex-wife,
15 Vanessa. Defendant and Vanessa had rekindled their relationship and were living
16 together. Vanessa had recently dated Victim, but left the relationship when Victim hit,
17 punched, and choked her.

18 {3} Defendant, an auto-mechanic, owned a truck similar to Victim’s. Defendant’s

1 truck was not operable at the time. When Victim contacted Vanessa via Facebook,
2 Defendant asked her to arrange to meet Victim so he could steal Victim's truck for
3 its parts. Vanessa complied and arranged to meet Victim at a local bar under the
4 pretense of a drug deal.

5 {4} Vanessa, along with Defendant, Gilbert, and Sheri, went to the bar to meet
6 Victim. Defendant and Gilbert planned to sneak around from behind Victim's truck,
7 pull him out, and drive away in his truck. The brothers hid in the back seat of the car
8 as Victim drove up. Vanessa got out of their car and walked up to Victim, who was
9 sitting in his truck. The plan failed when Defendant and Gilbert heard someone
10 coming and got "spooked." Vanessa proceeded to buy the drugs from Victim, and the
11 four left the scene.

12 {5} Defendant then asked Sheri to call Victim, see if he had plans for the evening,
13 and invite him to "party." Sheri called Victim, put him on speaker phone, and invited
14 him to join them at a house on Maryland Street. Once again, Defendant and Gilbert
15 hid in the back seat of the car while Vanessa and Sheri led Victim inside the house.
16 The brothers then entered and hid in a corner inside the house, waiting for Victim to
17 approach them. The brothers had guns, which belonged to Gilbert, as well as knives.
18 When Victim approached the brothers, they jumped out and attacked. Defendant

1 stabbed Victim, who tried to fight back. At least two shots were fired. As the attack
2 continued, Defendant asked Sheri and Vanessa to go and watch for police.

3 {6} Defendant and Gilbert left the scene in Victim's truck. They met Sheri and
4 Vanessa at the home of a friend. Realizing that he was missing part of his gun,
5 Defendant left Victim's truck at the friend's house and the four returned to the house
6 on Maryland Street.

7 {7} When they returned to the scene, Defendant realized Victim was still alive.
8 Defendant, observing Victim lying on the floor and "[g]asping" for air, remarked,
9 "that fucker[']s still breathing." Defendant then asked Sheri and Vanessa to leave, and
10 they did so. Sheri and Vanessa waited down the road until Defendant called and said
11 that he and Gilbert were ready to be picked up. When Sheri and Vanessa returned,
12 Defendant told Vanessa that he had stabbed Victim again. Defendant took Victim's
13 wallet, fifteen dollars, and one of his shoes. They left and dumped the shoe, weapons,
14 and their bloodied clothes into the Pecos River.

15 {8} Later, Defendant moved Victim's truck from his friend's house to another
16 location, referred to in testimony as a "mechanic shop." The owner of the shop
17 testified that Defendant worked on the truck for about a month. Defendant removed
18 the engine and rims from Victim's truck and placed them in his own truck.

1 {9} At trial, Defendant admitted that he had acquired Victim's truck and had put
2 its parts in his own truck. He testified that Vanessa had given him the truck and that
3 she "promised me a title. But she didn't come up with it." He also testified that the
4 truck was not running and was already missing parts when Vanessa gave it to him.
5 Defendant also testified that he regularly acquired old cars and "part[ed] them out"
6 for money.

7 {10} The jury was instructed on the following offenses: first-degree, willful and
8 deliberate murder, contrary to NMSA 1978, Section 30-2-1(A)(1) (1994); conspiracy
9 to commit first-degree, willful and deliberate murder, contrary to NMSA 1978,
10 Section 30-28-2(A) (1979); felony murder based on the predicate felony of armed
11 robbery, contrary to Section 30-2-1(A)(2) and NMSA 1978, Section 30-16-2 (1973);
12 conspiracy to commit felony murder, contrary to Section 30-28-2(A) and Section 30-
13 2-1(A)(2); and tampering with evidence, contrary to NMSA 1978, Section 30-22-5
14 (2003).

15 {11} The jury convicted Defendant of armed robbery (the predicate to felony
16 murder), felony murder, and conspiracy to commit felony murder. The district court
17 vacated the armed robbery conviction to avoid double jeopardy concerns. *See State*
18 *v. Frazier*, 2007-NMSC-032, ¶ 1, 142 N.M. 120, 164 P.3d 1 (holding that "the

1 predicate felony is always subsumed into a felony murder conviction” for double
2 jeopardy purposes). Defendant appeals his convictions of felony murder and
3 conspiracy to commit felony murder, pursuant to Rule 12-102(A)(1) NMRA. We
4 exercise jurisdiction to review the appeal under Article VI, Section 2 of the New
5 Mexico Constitution.

6 **III. DISCUSSION**

7 {12} Before addressing the merits of Defendant’s claims, we express our concern
8 regarding the obvious inconsistencies between defense counsel’s presentation of
9 Defendant’s arguments on appeal and the actual case before the district court. For
10 instance, defense counsel erroneously contends that “[t]here was insufficient evidence
11 to support the jury verdict for *conspiracy to commit first degree deliberate intent*
12 *murder,*” yet Defendant was not convicted of this offense. We must presume defense
13 counsel actually intended to challenge Defendant’s conviction of conspiracy to
14 commit felony murder, the offense for which he was actually convicted. Given the
15 gravity of Defendant’s convictions and the importance of the issues this Court is
16 obligated to consider, it is simply unacceptable for defense counsel to make such
17 obvious mistakes in the appeal. We caution defense counsel to be diligent in adhering
18 to the record and in framing the issues for review on appeal. Such matters of import

1 require no less.

2 {13} We discern from Defendant’s briefs the following three bases for appeal: (1)
3 the evidence was insufficient to support the conviction of felony murder, in that the
4 State failed to prove an element of armed robbery, the predicate felony, and the State
5 failed to prove that the killing occurred in the commission of the armed robbery; (2)
6 the jury was not instructed on conspiracy to commit felony murder, and there was
7 insufficient evidence to support the conviction of conspiracy to commit felony
8 murder; and (3) cumulative error requires reversal of the convictions. After
9 considering the evidence presented, the pertinent laws, and the instructions given to
10 the jury, we affirm.

11 {14} With respect to Defendant’s challenges to the sufficiency of the evidence, “we
12 resolve all disputed facts in favor of the State, indulge all reasonable inferences in
13 support of the verdict, and disregard all evidence . . . to the contrary.” *State v. Largo*,
14 2012-NMSC-015, ¶ 30, 278 P.3d 532 (internal quotation marks and citation omitted).
15 “[O]ur review never serves as a substitution for the jury’s fact-finding role[.]” *State*
16 *v. Tafoya*, 2012-NMSC-030, ¶ 36, 285 P.3d 604. “It is our duty,” however, “to
17 determine whether any rational jury could have found the essential facts to establish
18 each element of the crime beyond a reasonable doubt.” *State v. Consaul*, 2014-

1 NMSC-030, ¶ 42, 332 P.3d 850 (internal quotation marks and citation omitted). We
2 review issues of law de novo. *State v. Cleve*, 1999-NMSC-017, ¶ 7, 127 N.M. 240,
3 980 P.2d 23.

4 **A. Felony Murder Conviction**

5 {15} We first examine the felony murder conviction. Felony murder is defined as a
6 killing committed “in the commission of or attempt to commit any felony.” Section
7 30-2-1(A)(2). In order to convict a defendant of felony murder, the State must prove
8 the following: (1) “the defendant committed or attempted to commit a felony, which
9 was either a first-degree felony or was committed under circumstances or in a manner
10 dangerous to human life”; (2) “the defendant caused the death of the victim during
11 the commission or attempted commission of the felony”; and (3) “the defendant
12 intended to kill or knew that his or her acts created a strong probability of death or
13 great bodily harm.” *State v. Marquez*, 2016-NMSC-025, ¶ 13, 376 P.3d 815; *see also*
14 *State v. O’Kelly*, 2004-NMCA-013, ¶¶ 24-31, 135 N.M. 40, 84 P.3d 88 (explaining
15 the felony murder doctrine and various limitations on the scope of felony murder
16 liability). In his appeal, Defendant challenges his felony murder conviction on two
17 grounds. First, Defendant argues that the State failed to prove an element of the
18 predicate felony, armed robbery. Second, Defendant argues that the killing did not

1 occur in the commission of the predicate felony. We reject both arguments.

2 **1. Defendant committed armed robbery, the predicate felony for felony**
3 **murder**

4 {16} Defendant’s conviction of felony murder rests on the predicate felony of armed
5 robbery, a second-degree felony. Section 30-16-2. Armed robbery is defined as “the
6 theft of anything of value from the person of another or from the immediate control
7 of another, by use or threatened use of force or violence,” with the use of a deadly
8 weapon. Section 30-16-2; *see also* NMSA 1978, § 30-1-12(B) (1963) (defining a
9 deadly weapon). The jury found that Defendant committed armed robbery by taking
10 Victim’s truck and/or wallet in a manner dangerous to human life. *See Marquez,*
11 *2016-NMSC-025, ¶ 13.* We conclude that the State presented sufficient evidence to
12 prove that Defendant committed armed robbery.

13 {17} To prove armed robbery, the State must first prove that a defendant intended
14 “to permanently deprive the owner or another of the property.” *Lopez v. State,*
15 *1980-NMSC-050, ¶¶ 3-4, 94 N.M. 341, 610 P.2d 745.* The State presented evidence
16 that Defendant wanted Victim’s truck for its parts, that Defendant was observed
17 removing parts from Victim’s truck, and that its engine and rims were eventually
18 discovered on Defendant’s truck. Such evidence sufficiently supported a finding that

1 Defendant intended to permanently deprive Victim of his truck. *Cf. State v. Flores*,
2 2010-NMSC-002, ¶ 19, 147 N.M. 542, 226 P.3d 641 (stating that “[i]ntent is . . .
3 almost always inferred from [the] other facts in the case” (first alteration in original)
4 (internal quotation marks and citation omitted)).

5 {18} Second, the State must prove that a defendant “mov[ed] the property from the
6 place where it was kept or placed by the owner.” *State v. Williams*, 1982-NMSC-041,
7 ¶ 14, 97 N.M. 634, 642 P.2d 1093. The trial testimony established that Defendant left
8 the house on Maryland Street in Victim’s truck. This was sufficient to establish this
9 finding—that Defendant moved Victim’s truck from the place where it was kept or
10 placed by Victim.

11 {19} Third, armed robbery requires the State to prove that a defendant accomplished
12 the taking through the use of force or violence. This is not, by itself, enough to
13 establish an armed robbery, but rather “must be the lever by which the thing of value
14 is separated from the person or immediate control of another.” *State v. Baca*,
15 1971-NMCA-142, ¶ 5, 83 N.M. 184, 489 P.2d 1182. The testimony that Defendant
16 stabbed Victim and that two gunshots were fired was sufficient to support the
17 findings that Defendant took Victim’s truck through the use of force and that
18 Defendant used a deadly weapon in the commission of the offense. *See State v.*

1 *Montano*, 1961-NMSC-174, ¶ 4, 69 N.M. 332, 367 P.2d 95 (recognizing that a gun
2 is a “deadly weapon” for the purposes of armed robbery).

3 {20} On appeal, Defendant argues that the State did not prove the final element of
4 armed robbery: that he took the property from Victim’s “person” or “immediate
5 control.” *See* Section 30-16-2. We disagree. It was enough to establish that Defendant
6 incapacitated Victim before taking his property. *See State v. Pitts*, 1985-NMCA-045,
7 ¶¶ 10-15, 102 N.M. 747, 700 P.2d 650 (citing *State v. Cottone*, 145 A.2d 509, 513-14
8 (N.J. Super. Ct. App. Div. 1958) (“An actual physical removal of the property from
9 the person of the victim is not required, and it is sufficient if the property be taken
10 from the presence of the victim.”). That is what occurred when Defendant, after luring
11 Victim to the house on Maryland Street, attacked him and absconded with his truck.
12 This evidence was sufficient to support a finding that Defendant took the property
13 from Victim’s “immediate control.” *Pitts*, 1985-NMCA-045, ¶¶ 10-15.

14 {21} Not only did the State prove that Defendant took Victim’s truck, it also
15 presented evidence that Defendant returned to the scene to fatally stab Victim and
16 steal his shoe, wallet, and fifteen dollars. This supported the jury’s finding that
17 Defendant was guilty of armed robbery for both the truck and the wallet. For the
18 foregoing reasons, we conclude that there was overwhelming evidence to prove that

1 Defendant committed armed robbery, the predicate felony.

2 **2. Defendant caused the killing in the commission of armed robbery**

3 {22} To sustain a conviction of felony murder, the State must prove that “the
4 defendant caused the death of the victim during the commission or attempted
5 commission of the felony.” *Marquez*, 2016-NMSC-025, ¶ 13; *see also State v.*
6 *Harrison*, 1977-NMSC-038, ¶ 10, 90 N.M. 439, 564 P.2d 1321, *superseded on other*
7 *grounds by Tafoya v. Baca*, 1985-NMSC-067, ¶ 17, 103 N.M. 56, 702 P.2d 1001
8 (explaining the traditional test of felony murder and limiting its application to cases
9 in which the victim died as a result of the defendant’s acts).

10 {23} Defendant contends that the killing did not occur in the commission of the
11 predicate felony of armed robbery. Defendant claims that the armed robbery and the
12 actual killing were “not closely connected” as required to support a conviction of
13 felony murder. This argument is premised on the fact that he had already stolen
14 Victim’s truck when he returned to the house on Maryland Street and delivered the
15 fatal blow. *See State v. Martinez*, 1982-NMCA-053, ¶ 17, 98 N.M. 27, 644 P.2d 541
16 (noting that the killing and the predicate felony must be “part of one continuous
17 transaction and closely connected in point of time, place, and causal connection”).
18 Perhaps a more substantial break in time or the sequence of events would support a

1 legitimate challenge to a felony murder conviction; *see id.*, however, we find no merit
2 to this argument in the instant case. Not only did Defendant stab Victim when he took
3 Victim's truck in the first instance, but when Defendant returned to the house on
4 Maryland Street and realized Victim was still alive, he exerted the fatal blow and took
5 Victim's wallet. This evidence was sufficient to establish that the armed robbery and
6 killing were part of a continuous transaction and closely connected in time, place, and
7 causal relation. Therefore, we reject Defendant's argument to the contrary.

8 {24} There was ample evidence to conclude that Defendant's acts caused the death
9 of Victim. In *Harrison*, we limited the scope of liability to killings in which the death
10 was caused by the acts of the defendant or an accomplice. *See* 1977-NMSC-038, ¶ 11.
11 Consistent with the testimony that Defendant repeatedly stabbed Victim, the official
12 cause of death was multiple sharp and blunt injuries. An autopsy revealed sharp
13 injuries, including stab wounds to the back of Victim's head, neck, face, and chest;
14 blunt injuries, including contusions and lacerations to the face, head, and neck; as
15 well as underlying fractures to the skull. Victim had also suffered "defensive" injuries
16 consistent with an attempt to ward off an attack. We conclude here that there was
17 more than enough evidence to prove that Victim died as a result of Defendant's own
18 acts. *See id.*

1 **3. Defendant intended to kill or knew that his acts created a strong**
2 **probability of death or great bodily harm**

3 {25} Lastly, in accordance with the requirements for proof of felony murder, we
4 acknowledge that the State presented abundant evidence to support a finding that the
5 killing was intentional. *See State v. Ortega*, 1991-NMSC-084, ¶ 25, 112 N.M. 554,
6 817 P.2d 1196, *abrogated on other grounds by Kersey v. Hatch*, 2010-NMSC-020,
7 ¶¶ 17-18, 148 N.M. 381, 237 P.3d 683; *see also* § 30-2-1(B) (explaining that the
8 minimum intent required to sustain a felony murder conviction in New Mexico is
9 equivalent to that required to prove second-degree murder: knowledge that the
10 defendant's acts created a strong probability of death or great bodily harm). The State
11 presented evidence that Defendant "lay in wait," armed with a gun and a knife,
12 stabbed Victim in a prolonged attack, returned and made a derisive comment about
13 his survival before finishing him off. The jury could have also inferred that Defendant
14 had a motive to kill Victim based on Vanessa's ill-fated relationship with Victim.
15 This was sufficient to prove that Defendant not only knew that his acts could result
16 in death, but had the deliberate intent to kill. *Cf. Flores*, 2010-NMSC-002, ¶¶ 19, 22
17 (describing motive, plan, lying in wait, carrying a deadly weapon, and method of
18 killing as evidence sufficient to support the intent requirement for first-degree, willful

1 and deliberate murder). For the foregoing reasons, we conclude that the State proved
2 each and every element of felony murder, and we therefore affirm this conviction.

3 **B. Conspiracy**

4 {26} In addition to felony murder, Defendant was convicted of conspiracy to commit
5 felony murder. Defendant renders two challenges to his conspiracy conviction—the
6 jury was not instructed on conspiracy to commit felony murder, and there was
7 insufficient evidence to support the conviction. We address each argument in turn.

8 {27} The crime of conspiracy is separately punishable from its target offense, *see*
9 *State v. Silvas*, 2015-NMSC-006, ¶ 22, 343 P.3d 616, and is directed at “the special
10 and continuing dangers incident to group activity.” *State v. Gallegos*, 2011-NMSC-
11 027, ¶ 59, 149 N.M. 704, 254 P.3d 655 (internal quotation marks and citation
12 omitted). It is defined as “knowingly combining with another for the purpose of
13 committing a felony within or without this state.” Section 30-28-2(A).

14 {28} In New Mexico, the crime of conspiracy is complete when a felonious
15 agreement is reached. *State v. Lopez*, 2007-NMSC-049, ¶ 21, 142 N.M. 613, 168 P.3d
16 743. There is no requirement that the defendant commit an overt act in furtherance
17 of the target offense in order to be guilty of a conspiracy. *Id.* However, mere “passive
18 submission” and “acquiescence” are insufficient to establish a conspiracy. *State v.*

1 *Mariano R.*, 1997-NMCA-018, ¶ 4, 123 N.M. 121, 934 P.2d 315.

2 {29} Conspiracy is a specific intent offense. *State v. Baca*, 1997-NMSC-059, ¶ 51,
3 124 N.M. 333, 950 P.3d 776. The State must prove both intent to agree and intent to
4 commit the target offense—in this case, felony murder. *State v. Trujillo*, 2002-
5 NMSC-005, ¶ 62, 131 N.M. 709, 42 P.3d 814. We upheld a conviction of conspiracy
6 to commit felony murder in a case where the State presented evidence of a
7 defendant’s specific intent to kill. *State v. Lopez*, 2005-NMSC-036, ¶¶ 25-26, 138
8 N.M. 521, 123 P.3d 754 (upholding a conviction of conspiracy to commit felony
9 murder where, during the course of a robbery, the defendant sealed the victim inside
10 a well), *overruled on other grounds by State v. Frawley*, 2007-NMSC-057, ¶ 22, 143
11 N.M. 7, 172 P.3d 144. Having reviewed the evidence in support of the felony murder
12 conviction itself, we need not repeat that evidence here.

13 {30} Defendant raises two challenges to his conspiracy conviction. First, Defendant
14 argues that the jury was not instructed on conspiracy to commit felony murder and
15 was only instructed on conspiracy to commit willful and deliberate murder. This
16 argument is inconsistent with the record. The record reveals that the jury was
17 instructed on both offenses. For conspiracy to commit felony murder, the jury was
18 instructed as follows:

1 For you to find the defendant guilty of conspiracy to commit first
2 degree murder by felony murder as charged in Count 2, the [S]tate must
3 prove to your satisfaction beyond a reasonable doubt each of the
4 following elements of the crime:

5 1. The defendant and another person by words or acts agreed
6 together to commit first degree murder by felony murder;

7 2. The defendant and the other person intended to commit first
8 degree murder by felony murder;

9 3. This happened in New Mexico on or about the 4th day of June,
10 2014.

11 The jury was also instructed on the elements of felony murder and given a general
12 instruction that the State was required to prove that Defendant “acted intentionally
13 when he committed the crime.” This is consistent with the uniform jury instruction
14 and our precedent regarding the offense. Rule 14-2810 NMRA; *see Lopez*,
15 2005-NMSC-036, ¶¶ 25-26. Therefore, Defendant’s argument is a blatant
16 misstatement of what was presented below. We conclude that there is no merit to his
17 claim that the jury was not instructed on this offense.

18 {31} Second, Defendant asserts that the State did not prove that he conspired to
19 commit armed robbery or murder. Defendant notes that following “the initial
20 conspiracy, there were no discussions between the group of committing murder, an
21 armed robbery, or even a simple robbery.” It is well established that a conspiracy

1 need not be proven by verbal agreement and can be inferred from acts indicating that
2 the “co-conspirator[s] knew of and participated in the scheme.” *State v. Herrera*,
3 2015-NMCA-116, ¶ 18, 362 P.3d 167.

4 {32} The evidence showed that Defendant asked Vanessa to initiate a meeting with
5 Victim, with the express intention of creating an opportunity to steal Victim’s truck.
6 Vanessa complied with Defendant’s request. During the meeting, Defendant hid in
7 the back seat with his brother in order to sneak up on Victim, pull him out of his
8 truck, and drive away with it. When that scheme failed, Defendant asked Sheri to call
9 Victim and invite him to come to the house on Maryland Street, which she did. Once
10 there, Defendant and his brother, Gilbert, once again lay in wait for Victim to
11 approach. Then, along with Gilbert and using his weapons, Defendant attacked
12 Victim. Following the attack, Defendant and his co-conspirators drove Victim’s truck
13 to a friend’s house, left it there, and returned to the scene. Back at the house on
14 Maryland Street, Defendant inflicted the fatal blow and took Victim’s shoe, wallet,
15 and fifteen dollars. Upon leaving the scene, the co-conspirators disposed of the
16 weapons and bloodied clothing in the Pecos River.

17 {33} We conclude that the evidence was sufficient to support the jury’s finding that
18 Defendant conspired to commit felony murder. The jury could have reasonably

1 inferred that Defendant, Gilbert, Vanessa, and Sheri had an agreement to commit an
2 armed robbery and understood that Victim would not likely survive the encounter.
3 *Herrera*, 2015-NMCA-116, ¶ 18 (stating that the agreement may be proven by words
4 or acts (citation omitted)). The evidence leaves no reasonable doubt that Defendant,
5 with others, engaged in a scheme to deprive Victim of his property and exert deadly
6 force if necessary to do so. We conclude that the evidence was sufficient to prove that
7 Defendant committed conspiracy to commit felony murder under New Mexico law.

8 **C. Cumulative Error**

9 {34} Last, Defendant contends that cumulative error requires reversal of the
10 convictions. Absent any identifiable error in the record that would support a reversal
11 of the convictions, we reject this contention.

12 **IV. CONCLUSION**

13 {35} We conclude that the State presented sufficient evidence to sustain Defendant's
14 convictions of felony murder and conspiracy to commit felony murder. We determine
15 that the jury was indeed instructed on the charge of conspiracy to commit felony
16 murder. Defendant's remaining arguments are unavailing. We therefore affirm.

17 {36} **IT IS SO ORDERED.**

Barbara J. Vigil
BARBARA J. VIGIL, Justice

1

2

3 WE CONCUR:

4

Judith K. Nakamura
5 JUDITH K. NAKAMURA, Chief Justice

6

Petra Jimenez Maes
7 PETRA JIMENEZ MAES, Justice

8

Edward L. Chavez
9 EDWARD L. CHAVEZ, Justice

10

Charles W. Daniels
11 CHARLES W. DANIELS, Justice