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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Date: November 14, 2008
Re: Omar Gonzalez Chavez
Gang Member Sentenced to 9 years
and 8 months in prison

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Modesto, California - Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today Omar Gonzalez Chavez, 22, of Ceres, was sentenced to a total term of 9 years, 8 months in state prison. The Honorable Judge Marie S. Silveira imposed the sentence. The sentence is the result of convictions in three cases.

In the first case, law enforcement officers served a search warrant at Chavez's home in January 2006. During the execution of the warrant, marijuana and sales indicia, as well as gang paraphernalia, were located. On June 22, 2006, Chavez entered a plea of guilty to a violation of possession of marijuana for sale and admitted a gang enhancement for his membership in the Norteno criminal street gang/M.O.B. Chavez received 3 years of formal felony probation, including specific gang terms.

In the second case, members of the Modesto Police Department's Narcotics Enforcement Team were conducting surveillance on Chavez's home in an effort to serve an arrest warrant that had been issued for defendant on an unrelated case. During the surveillance, a vehicle occupied by Chavez and others tried to flee from the police. At the conclusion of the vehicle chase, large amounts of methamphetamine and marijuana were located, including indicia of drug sales. Chavez was charged with transportation of marijuana, possession of marijuana for sale, and participation in a criminal street gang.

In the third case, members of the Ceres Police Department responded to an assault call that occurred at a house party. Upon arrival, they contacted the victim who had suffered a great amount of injury to his face, torso, and arms and required medical attention. During the investigation, it was determined Chavez assaulted the victim. In addition, it was determined that the defendant threatened the victim with a handgun prior to the assault. Chavez was charged with assault with a semi-automatic firearm, brandishing a firearm, and that the assault resulted in great bodily injury.

On February 1, 2008, Chavez admitted violating his probation in the first case and pled to transportation of marijuana, assault with a deadly weapon and admitted the enhancement of

great bodily injury. Judge Silveira sentenced Chavez to a total of 9 years 8 months, with an understanding that if he returned for his sentencing on a later date, with no new law violations, he would receive a lesser sentence of 6 years, 8 months. On May 5, 2008, which was the date set by the court for sentencing, defendant failed to appear. A bench warrant was issued for Chavez's arrest. In early June 2008, Chavez was arrested pursuant to the bench warrant at the California-Mexico border. He was transported back to Stanislaus County and the sentence of 9 years 8 months was imposed by Judge Silveira on November 13, 2008.

These convictions are the result of efforts by the Modesto Police Department's Narcotics Enforcement Team, Ceres Police Department, the Central Valley Gang Intelligence Task Force, Deputy District Attorneys Doug Maner and Abel C.K. Hung prosecuted the cases..

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