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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: October 9, 2008
Re: Jorge Cruz, #1242532

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Modesto, California - Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that former Police Officer Jorge Cruz, of Turlock, was sentenced to 16 months in State Prison. Cruz was immediately taken into custody before the Honorable Charles Stone in Department 3 of the Stanislaus County Courthouse. Deputy District Attorney appeared at the hearing and made the recommendation for Cruz's sentence.

The case arose out of events which occurred on June 20, 2007 when Cruz met with the 17-year old and drove to a motel in the city of Modesto. Cruz was not on duty at the time, however had met the victim through his employment as a police officer. "He had a sworn duty to protect and to serve, not to use his position to manipulate and seduce a 17-year old girl. This family has suffered irreparable harm. The defendant shares the responsibility for that harm," argued Rees. Although the Judge had the discretion to sentence Cruz to probation, he found that the aggravating factors outweighed the mitigating factors, and agreed with the People that a state prison sentence was appropriate.

Cruz also scored a "1" on the STAT-99 test, an indicator for recidivist sex offenders. "That puts him at the lowest risk for a repeat offense" said Rees. Additionally "justice demands that we take into account the facts that this defendant has no criminal history, and by all accounts had been an exemplary peace officer. We do not take lightly the fact that he is being sentenced to State Prison."

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