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PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Contact: Carol Shipley

Date: May 26, 2009

Assistant District Attorney

Re: Santiago Flores Ramirez

Phone: (209) 525-5550

Auto Thief Sentenced to 2 Years in Prison

Modesto, California – Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Santiago Flores Ramirez, age 21, of Modesto, was convicted of auto theft, participating in a criminal street gang, and being a felon in possession of a firearm. Ramirez was on felony probation for possessing stolen property from an April 2006 conviction in Stanislaus County. Deputy District Attorney Jeff Mangar prosecuted the case for the People.

The cases arose out of events that occurred on two dates. On March 10, 2008 at approximately 7 p.m., Modesto Police officers were performing a probation search of Ramirez's bedroom and located a loaded Smith and Wesson .38 caliber revolver underneath Ramirez's bed in addition to finding Sureno gang writings.

On August 4, 2008 at approximately noon in the area of Sunrise Avenue and Roseburg Avenue in Modesto, Ramirez was driving a 1996 green Honda Accord which had been reported stolen that morning out of Turlock. Ramirez claimed his friend gave him the vehicle but had no contact information on the person. Ramirez and his two male passengers displayed gang tattoos and admitted to being members of the Sureno street gang.

Upon entry of the plea, the Honorable Nancy Ashley sentenced Ramirez to two years in the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. This is Ramirez's first commitment to prison and first "strike" conviction under California's "Three Strikes" law.

Stanislaus County residents can report suspected vehicle theft activity to their local law enforcement agency or contact the Stanislaus County Auto-Theft Task Force (STANCATT) at: (209) 545-7316.

**IF YOU OBSERVE A THEFT IN PROGRESS, DIAL 911**

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