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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: September 8, 2009
Re: Gilliam Joy Stephens
Prison for Identity Theft, Burglary
And Possession of Stolen Property

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Modesto, California - Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Gilliam Joy Stephens, age 32, of Modesto was convicted on September 8, 2009 of three counts of second degree burglary, one count of identity theft, one count of resisting arrest, and one count of possession of stolen property.

On December 28, 2008, Stephens entered a SaveMart store with a stolen identification card and forged check. Stephens was successful in passing the check and obtaining money. She was later identified through the store's surveillance video after the check was found to be counterfeit.

On February 3, 2009, Modesto Police officers conducted a probation search of the room Stephens was staying in at a motel on McHenry Ave. and discovered stolen property which included stolen checks and identifying information. Stephens was booked into the county jail and posted bail.

On May 29, 2009, Stephens, using a stolen identification card, attempted to pass a forged check at WestAmerica Bank in Turlock. When bank employees realized the check was stolen, the Turlock Police Department was called and officers responded. Stephens was identified by bank employees and arrested by officers. Stephens was in possession of other identification documents, forged documents, and methamphetamine at the time of her arrest. The victim of the stolen identification card was contacted and she advised officers that her identification had been stolen when her car was burglarized in Modesto a few days prior to Stephens's arrest. Stephens was booked into jail and bailed out.

On June 21, 2009, Stephens entered the Fulkerth Road Wal-Mart in Turlock with a stolen identification card and a forged check. Stephens attempted to make a purchase in the electronics department using the stolen identification and forged check. Alert Wal-Mart staff recognized Stephens from her prior attempts to pass bad checks at the store. Turlock officers were called and arrived in time to see Stephens fleeing the store. Officers chased Stephens and

eventually stopped her outside the store. Stephens actively resisted officers, causing officers to deploy a taser to gain control and take her into custody. The stolen identification and forged check were recovered. Stephens was booked into jail and before she could make bail, her bail was raised significantly out of public safety concerns. Stephens was unable to post bail.

Upon the entry of the no contest pleas, the Honorable Nancy Ashley sentenced Stephens to five years and four months in state prison and ordered restitution for the victims.

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