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PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Contact: Carol Shipley

Date: February 22, 2010

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Re: Francisco Javier Suarez
Auto Thief Sentenced to
3 Years, 8 Months Prison

Phone: (209) 525-5550

Modesto, California – Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Francisco Javier Suarez, age 25, of Patterson, was convicted of auto theft and auto burglary. The defendant also admitted a prior auto theft conviction from January 2007. Deputy District Attorney Jeff Mangar prosecuted the case for the People.

On December 17, 2009 at approximately 3:00 a.m. on I Street in Patterson, the owner of a 1994 gold Ford Escort heard noises coming from outside his home. When he looked out his window, he observed Suarez trying to break into his car that was parked on his driveway. When the owner yelled at Suarez to leave his vehicle alone, Suarez walked away. The next morning, the owner observed damage to the passenger door lock and realized that Suarez had tried to pry it open.

On January 5, 2010 at approximately 5:00 p.m. in the area of N. 3rd Street in Patterson, Suarez was observed driving a 1992 red Toyota truck that had been reported stolen two hours prior from the driveway of the registered owner. The owner had parked his truck at his home in Patterson, but left the doors unlocked and the keys in the ignition while he went inside to quickly retrieve something. After deputies made contact with Suarez, he claimed that he borrowed the truck from a friend but had no contact information for him.

Upon entry of the plea, the Honorable John Freeland sentenced Suarez to three years and eight months in state prison.

The District Attorney's Office urges citizens not to leave their keys inside their unlocked vehicles no matter how brief.

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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