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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: 2-10-11
Re: Michael Johnson

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Modesto, California - Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Michael Johnson, age 42, of Modesto, was convicted of Embezzlement from a Dependent Adult, Forcible Oral Copulation, and Rape in a jury trial which began February 1, 2011 and ended with a verdict on February 10th. Deputy District Attorney Annette Rees prosecuted the case for the People.

Johnson was the caretaker for two female dependent adults. Both women lived on their social security benefits. One victim is cognitively impaired as well as having mental health issues, and the other suffers from cerebral palsy which affects her speech and the left side of her body. The three individuals lived on a ranchette style home on Poland Ave. Johnson took over the care of these women, including their finances, in 2002. He had known the women since 1987 when he moved in with their prior caretaker who died in 2004.

One of the victims received a very large inheritance in 2002 when her aunt died. Johnson set up a CD account and then took out 5 different loans against the CD containing the inheritance money in addition to loaning a friend/relative \$10,000.00 which was never completely repaid. Rees stated that "these two women were isolated by their disabilities, unable to drive or get to the bank, and had no social network to depend on and report to. They were totally and completely vulnerable to Johnson's abuse. I'm sure it was a nightmare for them for a very long time."

Johnson faces a maximum prison sentence of 11 years. Victim impact statements may be presented at the sentencing hearing scheduled for March 17, 2011.

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