



OFFICE OF THE
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PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Contact: Carol Shipley

Date: March 3, 2009

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Re: Roberto Juan Oquendo

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Auto Thief Sentenced to 3 years prison

Modesto, California – Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Roberto Juan Oquendo, age 24, of Modesto, was convicted of possession of a stolen vehicle, evading a peace officer, and resisting arrest. The defendant also admitted a prior prison commitment for evading a peace officer and being a felon in possession of a firearm from a September 2007 conviction and for which Oquendo is currently on parole. Deputy District Attorney Jeff Mangar prosecuted the case for the People.

The case arose out of events that occurred on January 31, 2009 at around 10:00 p.m., when the defendant was driving a 1998 red Dodge Neon which had been stolen two hours earlier. When a Sheriff's deputy observed Oquendo run a stop sign at the intersection of Wallasey and Sugar Creek in Salida, the deputy activated his lights and siren to perform a routine traffic stop. Oquendo then accelerated to over 90+ MPH, running the traffic lights at Sisk, Kiernan, and Palendale, until his vehicle collided with a black SUV. Oquendo then climbed out of the vehicle and attempted to flee, disobeying the deputy's command to stop. Oquendo was located a short distance away behind the In-Shape parking lot on Sisk Road.

Upon entry of the plea, the Honorable Nancy Ashley sentenced Oquendo to three years in state prison.

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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