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PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Contact: Carol Shipley

Date: November 15, 2010

Assistant District Attorney

Re: Mitchell Martin Coelho  
Auto Thief Sentenced to  
8 Years Prison

Phone: (209) 525-5550

Modesto, California – Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Mitchell Martin Coelho, age 27, of Hilmar, was convicted on November 15, 2010 of two counts of auto theft. Coelho also admitted a prior auto theft conviction as well as a conviction for arson, a “strike” under California’s “Three Strikes” law, from April 2002. Deputy District Attorney Jeffrey W. Mangar prosecuted the case for the People.

On January 25, 2010 at approximately 11:00 a.m., in the area of Tenth Street and Christine Avenue in Keyes, an officer from the Stanislaus County Auto-Theft Task Force (StanCATT) observed Coelho driving a 1999 silver Chevrolet pick-up truck that was reported stolen a week earlier from a dairy in Turlock. The owner had left the key in the ignition while he was working. After being arrested, Coelho posted bail and was released from custody.

On August 14, 2010 at approximately 2:00 p.m., in the area of Zeering Road in Denair, a deputy received a tip that Coelho was driving a 1989 blue Chevrolet 1500 pick-up truck that had been reported stolen the night before out of the owner’s driveway in Stevinson. When deputies arrived, Coelho jumped out of the truck and ran, but was caught a short distance away hiding in a backyard.

Upon entry of the plea, the Honorable Linda McFadden sentenced Coelho to eight 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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