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PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Contact: Carol Shipley

Date: June 22, 2010

Assistant District Attorney

Re: Billy Ensminger
Auto Thief Sentenced to
6 Years Prison

Phone: (209) 525-5550

Modesto, California – Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Billy Ensminger, age 28, of Modesto, was convicted on June 22, 2010 of two counts of auto theft. Ensminger also admitted a prior auto theft conviction from September 2000 as well as a conviction for residential burglary, a “strike” under California’s “Three Strikes” law, from April 2003. Deputy District Attorney Jeffrey W. Mangar prosecuted the case for the People.

On February 2, 2010 at approximately 6:00 p.m., officers from the Stanislaus County Auto-Theft Task Force (StanCATT) received an anonymous tip that Ensminger possessed a 1994 black GMC Yukon in a garage on Glenwood Avenue in Turlock. The vehicle had been reported stolen the day before out of the owner’s driveway on Richland Avenue in Ceres. After the officers arrived at the garage, they located the stolen SUV. Witnesses then identified Ensminger as the driver who had arrived in the stolen vehicle. A warrant of arrest for Ensminger was then issued.

On February 16, 2010 at approximately 3:00 p.m., officers from StanCATT received another anonymous tip that Ensminger was now driving a 1993 black Jeep Cherokee in the area of Inyo Avenue in Modesto. This vehicle had been reported stolen the day before out of the parking lot of the Meadow Lake Apartments in Modesto. When officers arrived, they observed Ensminger next to the stolen SUV. Ensminger then tried to run away, but was caught a short distance away. Officers then observed damage to the ignition switch of the stolen Jeep.

Upon entry of the plea, the Honorable Timothy Salter sentenced Ensminger to six 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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