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**PRESS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release**

Date: January 3, 2011  
Re: Josue Rojas Jara  
Auto Thief Gets 3 Years Prison

**For More Information Contact:**

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Modesto, California – Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Josue Rojas Jara, age 29, of Modesto, was convicted on January 25, 2011 of auto theft. Jara is currently on probation for auto theft stemming from a June 2010 conviction. Deputy District Attorney Jeffrey W. Mangar prosecuted the case for the People.

On November 20, 2010 at approximately 11:00 a.m. in the area of Thomasnell Way in Ceres, officers received a phone call that Jara was acting “odd” while knocking on homeowners’ doors asking for assistance to fix a flat tire on a 1989 maroon Toyota Camry. The reporting party indicated that Jara was not wearing a shirt and had a large tattoo on his stomach. When officers arrived, they located Jara next to the Camry. A check of the license plate revealed that the vehicle had been reported stolen out of Modesto that morning. After his arrest, Jara claimed that a friend dropped him off at that location. When officers confronted Jara that witnesses saw him in the vehicle, he claimed that a friend loaned him the car and that he did not know it was stolen. Jara was booked and then released.

On November 27, 2010 at approximately 2:30 p.m., an officer was notified through On-Star of the location of a stolen 2007 black Chevy Tahoe in the area of Carpenter Road and Maze Boulevard in Modesto. When the officer arrived, he located Jara driving the stolen Tahoe. After the officer activated his lights and siren to perform a traffic stop, Jara jumped out of the vehicle and ran, but was caught a short distance away. The Tahoe was stolen earlier that day at noon on Boulder Creek Drive in Modesto. The owner had started her vehicle in her driveway, but then returned inside her house to get something leaving her purse, cell phone, and keys inside the still running Tahoe. When the owner came outside a few seconds later, she saw her Tahoe being driven away.

The Honorable Nancy Ashley sentenced Jara to three years in state prison. This is Jara’s first commitment to prison.

The District Attorney's Office urges citizens to never leave their vehicles running unattended.

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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