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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: 09/03/08
Re: People v. Paul Michael Ruiz Sentencing

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Modesto, California - Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that on August 28, 2008 the Honorable Scott T. Steffen sentenced defendant Paul Michael Ruiz to a total of 27 years and four months in state prison, two years of which were stayed pending a separate sentencing of Ruiz in another case. Ruiz was sentenced on ten felonies including two counts of residential burglary, one count of auto theft, one count of being a felon in possession of a firearm, one count of possession of methamphetamine and five counts of receiving stolen property. Ruiz received sentence enhancements for prior convictions and for committing felonies while he was out on bail on two prior felony cases. Ruiz was sentenced as a Two Striker, receiving doubled punishment on each count. He will have to serve 80% of his sentence before he is eligible for parole.

This case began on November 9, 2004, when officers from the Modesto Police Department (MPD) found a stolen van abandoned in a parking lot a couple of blocks from Ruiz's house. The van had been stolen a couple of hours earlier during the burglary of a home in the College District of Modesto. MPD officers then conducted surveillance on Ruiz's house and watched as Ruiz and an accomplice moved several bags of property from Ruiz's house into Ruiz's car. Shortly after Ruiz drove away from his house, MPD officers made a traffic stop. In Ruiz's car they found several items stolen from the same home from which the van had been stolen. They also found property which had been stolen from other residential burglaries, including a firearm that they found hidden in the engine compartment of Ruiz's car. Officers then obtained a search warrant for Ruiz's house where they found property stolen during several residential burglaries. Ruiz had a room with equipment in it that could be used to melt down stolen jewelry, making it unidentifiable and safer to sell. All of the stolen property found in Ruiz's car and in his house came from residential burglaries; none came from any other means of theft.

Ruiz bailed out of jail shortly after his arrest. While he was out on bail, on July 8, 2005, MPD officers saw him and two accomplices leaving another College District home. Ruiz and one accomplice were in a car stolen from that victim's home. The other accomplice drove behind in a separate car. The two cars were observed driving to a dirt area near a canal bank where MPD

officers watched Ruiz and an accomplice move bags of property from the victim's car into their car. Ruiz and his two accomplices then drove away in their car, abandoning the victim's car on the canal bank. A vehicle chase ensued that ended in a parking lot when Ruiz got out of the car and fled on foot. His two accomplices were caught. In the car, MPD officers found property stolen from the College District home they'd just left and also property from a Dutch Hollow home burglarized just one or two days earlier.

Ruiz remained at large for several weeks, missing all of his court dates, while MPD officers searched for him. Finally, on September 27, 2005, Ruiz was captured and arrested by MPD officers in the parking lot of the Red Lion Hotel in Modesto as he tried to flee, once again, on foot. He has remained in custody since this final arrest.