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PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Date: March 30, 2011

Re: Octavio Lawrence Garza

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**Auto Thief Gets
2 Years Prison**

Modesto, California – Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that Octavio Lawrence Garza, age 33, of Turlock, was convicted on March 30, 2011 of auto theft. Garza also admitted a previous auto theft conviction from August 2006. Garza is currently on probation for possession of methamphetamine stemming from a November 2010 conviction. Deputy District Attorney Jeff Mangar prosecuted the case for the People.

On March 5, 2011 at approximately 11:00 a.m. in the area of South Avenue in Turlock, an officer observed Garza driving a 1991 black Acura Legend with no license plates. After performing a routine traffic stop, the officer discovered that Garza had a suspended driver's license. When the officer looked inside the vehicle, he observed that the steering column and ignition were severely damaged. Since the vehicle had no license plates, the officer checked the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) and discovered that the vehicle had been reported stolen on February 19, 2011 out of Lodi. Garza stated that a friend gave him the car, but Garza had no contact information for this friend.

Upon entry of the plea, the Honorable Dawna Frenchie Reeves sentenced Garza to two 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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