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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: February 3, 2012
Re: Office of Traffic Safety Grant

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Modesto, California - Stanislaus County District Attorney Birgit Fladager announced today that the District Attorney's Office has been awarded a one-year grant from the Office of Traffic Safety aimed at preventing deaths and injuries on our roadways and holding those at fault accountable. The \$344,055 grant will fund two Deputy District Attorneys to prosecute felony and misdemeanor vehicular manslaughter cases involving drugs or alcohol, felony driving under the influence and causing great bodily injury cases, as well as felony and misdemeanor driving under the influence cases. Specific attention will be given to those cases in which the driver is under the influence of drugs-- illegal or prescription. The two Deputy District Attorneys will provide training, attend training, and work with the various law enforcement agencies and their Drug Recognition Experts (DRE).

Drunk driving is one of America's deadliest crimes. In 2010, 791 people throughout California died in roadway crashes that involved a driver or motorcycle operator with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 percent or higher. Stanislaus County saw 394 killed and injured. In Stanislaus County in 2009, the District Attorney's Office prosecuted over 100 cases with alcohol involved collisions in which victims were injured; two of those were fatalities. Stanislaus County ranked 12th highest in the state for alcohol involved collisions compared by daily vehicle miles traveled.

"There's no such thing as 'just a DUI,'" states District Attorney Birgit Fladager. "While the majority of DUI incidents may not result in actual injury to another person, there's no predicting which one will. There has been a significant rise in the number of people abusing prescription medication. Driving under the influence of drugs, prescribed or otherwise, can be just as deadly as driving under the influence of alcohol. This message needs to be heard loud and clear."

This program is funded by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Traffic Safety Administration.