



COUNTY OF YOLO
OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
JEFF W. REISIG, DISTRICT ATTORNEY

301 SECOND STREET - WOODLAND, CALIFORNIA 95695 - 530.666.8180 - FAX 530.666.8185

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: August 2, 2011 **Contact:** Jonathan Raven, Chief Deputy
Phone: Jonathan.raven@yolocounty.org

**District Attorney Notes Reduction in Court Delays
Over three years courtroom delays have been reduced by nearly 20%**

(Woodland, CA) –August 2, 2011- District Attorney Jeff Reisig announced that over a three year period the average lifespan of a felony case was reduced by nearly 20%. In 2007, after being elected District Attorney, Reisig started paying attention to lengthy case delays and the many inmates who were in the Yolo County jail for months and years awaiting trial. In 2008, he introduced to his staff a new mission to reduce court delays with the mantra, “Justice Finds No Solace in Delay.” The idea was that when cases are delayed and drag through the court system, victims are further traumatized, memories of witnesses fade or witnesses die, and defendants’ speedy trial rights are violated. Additionally, the countless court appearances seen in the past due to unnecessary continuances wasted both time and money.

In 2008, on average, felony cases took 144 days from assignment to a prosecutor to disposition. In 2009, that timeframe was reduced to 132 days. And, the average life of a felony case in 2010 further decreased to 117 days.

Reisig praised the efforts of his prosecutors and the Yolo County judicial system. “Although we spearheaded these efforts to move cases through the criminal courts swiftly, the judicial system as a whole was cooperative.” Reisig continued, “My prosecutors have been very driven to avoid continuances. The court has tried to move cases along. And, victims have noticed a difference.”

The District Attorney sends out surveys to victims asking for feedback on the services they were provided and the impact continuances have had on them. The number one complaint has always been the delay of their cases caused by numerous continuances and the emotional toll this takes. Reisig also noted the benefit to victims and financial benefits. “We cannot afford the delays of the past. It’s not fair to our crime victims and the cost of housing defendants in jail and for court personnel and the attorneys is exorbitant.”

One victim saw her case against Fairfield teacher Carl Testerman resolve in six months. Testerman was convicted of child molestation and possession of child pornography and sentenced to nine years in state prison. This high profile case in the past would have take about twice that time to resolve. The victim stated, “I was amazed. My worst nightmare would have been if it took a year and we had to go to trial.” She continued, “Now we just get to focus on school, friends and other activities.”

Reisig hopes to continue working in partnership with the courts and defense attorneys to reduce court delays even further. “If we all work together, we can continue to shave days and even weeks off these cases while being careful to preserve the constitutional rights of the defendants.”

###