



COUNTY OF YOLO
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: August 24, 2011 **Contact:** Jonathan Raven, Chief Deputy District Attorney
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**Yolo County Agencies Work Together to Save County Money
DA and Department of Social Services preserved over
\$350,000 in Public Assistance Funds**

(Woodland, CA) – August 24, 2011- Yolo County District Attorney Jeff Reisig announced that the District Attorney Attorney’s Office and the Department of Employment and Social Services (DESS) prevented over \$350,000 from going to non-qualified applicants during April through June of this year.

Over the years, the District Attorney has worked closely with DESS to prevent, detect and investigate acts of fraud in the public assistance arena. The \$350,000 in prevention is a result of DESS staff identifying inconsistent or suspicious information during the application process or during the course of a person receiving a grant of public assistance money. DESS then refers these cases to the District Attorney for criminal investigation. In some of the investigated cases there is a true need on the part of applicants, while others involve fraudulent acts.

District Attorney Jeff Reisig praised the teamwork of both agencies. He stated, “Protecting the integrity of the public assistance system is a duty that the District Attorney and DESS take very seriously. In that regard, these anti-fraud efforts are of paramount importance. Our partnership with the DESS allows for these resources to remain available for those Yolo County residents who have fallen on difficult times.”

In the past year the District Attorney has filed 19 cases involving public assistance fraud. One case began in April 2010 when a DESS Eligibility Worker noticed inconsistencies in a case in which a family was receiving food stamps. Forty Five year old Pedro Soto and his wife Alma Soto, 38, of Woodland had been receiving food stamp benefits for a 14 month period. Further investigation revealed that in addition to receiving the food stamp benefits, they had collected Medi-Cal benefits for approximately 5 ½ years. Investigators

discovered that the Sotos had been hiding a substantial amount of income in order to receive public assistance benefits. During the time in question, Mr. Soto owned a trucking company and had earned \$2.4 million dollars. The Sotos fraudulently obtained over \$57,000 in Medi-Cal and Food Stamp benefits.

On August 12, 2011 they pled guilty to felony charges related to Public Assistance fraud. The Sotos will be sentenced by the Honorable David Rosenberg on November 7, 2011. They will be required to repay the money fraudulently obtained and may be sentenced to 90 – 120 days in county jail. Both will be placed on felony probation as a result of this conviction.

If you would like to report suspected public assistance fraud please call the PUBLIC ASSISTANCE FRAUD HOTLINE at (530)661-2624.

For more information regarding the District Attorney Public Assistance Fraud investigation efforts, call 530.666.8180.

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