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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: February 11, 2014 **Contact:** Jonathan Raven, Chief Deputy District Attorney
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Yolo DA Combats Tobacco Sales to Youth

(Woodland, CA) – February 11, 2014 - Yolo County District Attorney Jeff Reisig announced that during December, 2013 and January, 2014, investigators from the District Attorney's Office arrested five people for the illegal sale of tobacco products to minors.

In an effort to combat the issue of tobacco sales to minors, the Yolo County District Attorney works in cooperation with the Yolo County Health Department to serve the City of Davis and the unincorporated areas of Yolo County. These efforts are funded entirely by licensing fees collected from businesses who sell tobacco within unincorporated Yolo County and the City of Davis. As part of this program, District Attorney staff have received specialized training about issues of compliance so that they can determine whether businesses with licenses to sell tobacco products are lawfully operating.

Rather than only trying to "catch" a business violating the law by selling tobacco products to underage customers, the District Attorney and Health Department offer a balanced approach focused on compliance. DA staff first work to educate businesses about compliance issues they may have, visiting the businesses and even offering a report card of compliance issues that may need correction or improvement. During these outreach visits the businesses are informed about the goals of compliance and that underage tobacco purchase operations will be conducted as part of the overall illegal tobacco sales cessation effort.

Most of those arrested during the underage tobacco purchase operations will be able to choose alternative sentencing options including diversion or participation in Neighborhood Court. The businesses where the clerks were employed face administrative sanctions and fines.

District Attorney Reisig stated, "We have a long-standing partnership with the Health Department to try to enhance the health of our community. These efforts are an important opportunity to educate our youth about healthy choices, but also serve as opportunity to help the business community understand their role and responsibility in the health of our youth."

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