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For Immediate Release
June 3, 2011

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Stanislaus County releases budget proposal for 2011-2012

More cuts and less revenue continue a trend

Stanislaus County, CA – The national economic turmoil continues to impact local communities such as Stanislaus County. The Central Valley of California has been one of the hardest hit regions in the United States and the financial crisis continues to negatively impact the Stanislaus County budget.

Stanislaus County recently released its Recommended Proposed Budget for the 2011-2012 Budget Year that will go to the County Board of Supervisors on June 7, 2011 for consideration. The budget reflects the ongoing negative financial pressure that local government is facing.

A Public Hearing to adopt the Recommended Proposed Budget has been scheduled for 9:05 a.m. on June 7, 2011, to be continued if necessary on June 8 and 9, 2011 at 9:00 a.m. The meeting will take place at 1010 Tenth Street in Modesto in the basement Board Chambers.

The Proposed Budget submitted by the Chief Executive Officer recommends \$894,271,968 in total spending authority. This is an overall decrease of approximately \$24.5 million, or 2.7 percent, from the Adopted Final Budget for 2010-2011 and a spending decrease of more than \$72 million from the 2008-2009 Adopted Final Budget.

"The Recommended Proposed Budget, when taken as an integral element of the County's multi-year budgeting approach, will support the County's efforts to proactively respond to the financial crisis we continue to face as a region and as a nation," stated Rick Robinson, Chief Executive Officer for Stanislaus County. "As an organization, we have worked collaboratively to define program solutions that will work in our rapidly changing environment."

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Most County funding is restricted by State and Federal programs for a very specific use. Local discretionary revenue is unrestricted money the County is free to use for things like law enforcement, healthcare, parks and other services. Unfortunately, discretionary revenue, which is largely driven by sales tax and property tax revenue, has continued to fall. While discretionary revenue was at a high of \$181 million in Fiscal Year 2007-2008, the Recommended Proposed Budget estimates just slightly over \$140 million in discretionary revenue for the coming year, down nearly 23% from its high and down \$3.9 million from the current year's budget.

If the budget is approved, the County will have deleted more than 1,000 positions from a high of 4,603 in 2007-2008, down to 3,576 as submitted in the proposed budget. Most remaining employees will continue to take 13 unpaid furlough days per year, amounting to 5% pay deductions. This past year, the County was also one of the first in the State to institute pension reform for new hires to the organization.

"We are now staffing the organization at less than 1996 levels," stated Stan Risen, Assistant Executive Officer for Stanislaus County. "It is becoming increasingly more challenging to address the growing needs of our community with fewer and fewer resources."

The Stanislaus County 2010-2011 Recommended Proposed Budget is available for public review. It can be viewed at the Board of Supervisors Office of the County of Stanislaus at 1010 Tenth Street, Suite 6500 in Modesto, or in any of the County's libraries. It is also available on the County's website, www.stancounty.com/budget.

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