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STEPHEN L. D'ARCY
UNDERSHERIFF

To: Board of Supervisors
Date: March 20, 2007
From: Edward N. Bonner, Sheriff-Coroner-Marshal
Subject: Public Hearing to consider adopting a resolution for the collection of a fee from the Department of Motor Vehicles for the Purpose of establishing an Auto Theft Task Force in Placer County



ACTION REQUESTED

Your Board is requested to:

- 1) Conduct public hearing to consider adopting a resolution for the collection of a one-dollar (\$1) annual vehicle registration fee on vehicles registered in Placer County pursuant to Vehicle Code Section 9250.14 for the purpose of establishing a countywide vehicle theft task force. In addition to the one-dollar fee, commercial vehicles would be subject to an additional fee of two dollars (\$2).
- 2) Approve the attached Resolution (Attachment A) authorizing the County to approve the required terms of implementation with the California Department of Motor Vehicles and participate in the fee collected on vehicle registrations as outlined above.
- 3) Authorize the County Auditor-Controller to establish an interest-bearing Placer County Regional Auto Theft Task Force trust fund account for the deposit and transfer of funds received for the purpose of staff and equipment to accomplish the goals set by the task force.

BACKGROUND

Vehicle Code section 9250.14 was enacted for the purpose of vehicle theft deterrence, investigation, and prosecution and for deterrence of driving under the influence. This vehicle code has been extended several times. Most recently, in 2004, Governor Schwarzenegger signed Assembly Bill 1663 into law extending the sunset clause in VC 9250.14 until January 1, 2010.

Sacramento County Auto Theft Task Force was established in 1989 as the first task force in California to be enacted pursuant to Vehicle Code 9250.14 to deter vehicle theft in California. Since that time, there are now forty-five counties participating in this program with revenues supporting the program totaling close to \$30 million dollars (Source: State Controller's Office - Allocation of \$1 for Vehicle Theft Deterrence). The Attorney General of California reports there is an auto theft on the average every two minutes. Many other crimes are linked to auto theft. Vehicle thefts in Placer County have grown from 531 in 1990 to 1,323 in 2005, an increase of auto thefts of 150%. Of the 1,323 vehicle thefts, 951 were recovered, or 71%. In comparison, auto thefts in Sacramento County increased 40% in the same time period. It was just released for 2006 that 1,053 vehicles were stolen, with 800 recoveries, or 76%. Although this was a 20% decrease in the number of vehicles stolen, the recovery rate increased by only 4%. The

Sacramento County Auto Theft Task Force was able to recover 93% (Source: California Highway Patrol). Based on the Report to the Legislature prepared by CHP of participating counties from 2002 to 2003, auto thefts for participating agencies increased by 10% on the average while recoveries increased by 11%. Placer County is one of the fastest growing counties in the nation. From 1995 to 2005, the county's population increased 98,475 from 207,200 to 305,675 or 47.5%. This contributes to the increases of vehicle theft and driving under the influence. Population projections are expected to increase to 364,936 by 2010 and 413,184 by 2015, an increase of 19.4% and 35.2% respectively (Source: Sacramento Regional Research Institute).

Placer Law Enforcement Agencies (PLEA) is comprised of the city police departments, Sheriff, Auburn Area CHP commander, District Attorney and Chief Probation Officer. They recognize auto theft as a growing problem in Placer County. Statewide auto thefts have been on the rise since 2001/2002 (Exhibit 4). To reduce the corresponding incidence experienced in Placer County of vehicle theft and to increase the apprehension of the active vehicle thief, PLEA discussed and recommended the formation of a Placer County Regional Auto Theft Task Force. PLEA recognized CHP as the expert statewide. Pursuant to Vehicle Code 2413, they requested that the Auburn Area CHP take the lead in the formation of the task force. It was further agreed that the Sheriff's Department would request the Board of Supervisors adopt the resolution pursuant to VC 9250.14 to collect one-dollar (\$1) vehicle registration fees for each vehicle registered in Placer County to support this program. There are currently 357,472 vehicles registered in Placer County (Source: DMV estimated fee paid vehicle registrations).

The money collected would be appropriated for the development of a multi-agency, multi-jurisdictional, countywide task force to investigate, apprehend and prosecute the professional thief. CHP has committed one sergeant and one officer to lead and participate in this task force. Rocklin Police Department has volunteered facility space to house the task force participants. Participating agencies would provide one officer to the task force along with their vehicle, safety equipment, and miscellaneous items to support their assigned personnel. Placer County Law Enforcement Agencies would make recommendations on strategic planning and distribution for participating agencies. The initial plan is for the task force to fund the proportionate share of one officer each from the City of Roseville, the City of Rocklin, and the Sheriff's Department along with telephones, surveillance equipment, video cameras, etc. to support the program as recommended by the task force. The cities will be providing similar resolutions to their Councils as well. As participation and funding is expanded to the other cities and District Attorney, distribution would expand as well.

The task force will specifically define operational objectives, but typical operational objectives in other regional task forces are:

- Locate, investigate, arrest and prosecute the professional auto thief
- Reduce vehicle theft
- Increase stolen vehicle recovery
- Identify suspicious business locations for chop shop activity
- Provide a centralized location for vehicle theft investigations, expertise, assistance and cooperation, and training for local police agencies and insurance company special investigation units
- Identify, evaluate and document various trends and patterns of vehicle theft
- Interface with local law enforcement, the public, and private industry
- Provide a public awareness forum through training and the local media

The vehicle code requires annual reporting submitted in November of each year. Placer County would be responsible for the annual reporting due to the State. This includes expenditure and revenue information, a summary of vehicle theft abatement activities, statistics on vehicle thefts, recoveries and values, and any other program activities funded under VC 9250.14. This information would be compiled on an annual basis by the task force and submitted to the County for the annual reporting.

FISCAL IMPACT

Based on the number of registered vehicles, the estimated amount of fees collected is \$357,472 plus any commercial fees as applicable. The Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) is allowed to reduce distributions to the county for the cost of administering the collection of fees. If approved by the Board, it would take four to six months before initial deposits were made from DMV. We are estimating this to be \$275,000 the first year. Thereafter, deposits would be made on a quarterly basis based on current registrations. We expect the growth rate in fees to be about 5% per year based on the population projections.

The cost of a deputy or police officers, without one-time post employment benefit (OPEB) costs, is estimated at \$136,000 currently. The DMV deposits would not initially cover all the costs related to three positions plus the necessary equipment and start-up costs. It will be requested that some matching funds be required to offset one-time start-up costs by each agency. For Placer County, this would include the one-time OPEB costs of \$110,000 and a vehicle and equipment costs for approximately \$175,000. It would be anticipated that staff matching costs, depending on the hire dates, might range up to \$35,000 for Placer County for the initial period. Grant opportunities for gap funding for the first year will be pursued as a collaborative effort with the cities but cannot be guaranteed.

Before the Board of Supervisors
County of Placer, State of California

In the matter of: A resolution approving the collection of one dollar (\$1.00) fee on non-exempt vehicles registered in Placer County Code Pursuant to Vehicle Code 9250.14 for vehicle theft deterrence, investigation, and prosecution

Resol. No: _____

Ord. No: _____

First Reading: _____

The Board of Supervisors of the County of Placer duly passed the following **resolution** at a regular meeting held on **March 20, 2007**,

By the following vote on roll call:

Ayes:

Noes:

Absent:

Signed and approved by me after its passage.

Chairman, Board of Supervisors

Attest:
Clerk of said Board

The Board of Supervisors of the County of Placer hereby resolves as follows:

WHEREAS, the Attorney General reports that an auto theft occurs in California every two minutes; and

WHEREAS, Placer County has experienced a growth in auto theft and auto theft-related crimes of 150% from 1990 to 2005; and

WHEREAS, Placer County is one of the fastest growing counties in the State; and

WHEREAS, Placer County Law Enforcement Agencies (PLEA) recognize auto theft as a rising problem in Placer County and are recommending the formation of a Placer County Regional Auto Theft Task Force for the purpose of deterring, investigating and prosecuting vehicle theft crimes; and

WHEREAS, the California Highway Patrol will provide expert leadership for the task force and the participating agencies will provide one deputy or officer; and

WHEREAS, Section 9250.14 of the California Vehicle Code provides for the collection of one dollar (\$1) to be paid at the time of registration or renewal of every non-exempt vehicle registered in Placer County for the sole purpose of funding programs that enhance the capacity of local law enforcement and prosecutors to deter, investigate, and prosecute vehicle theft crimes; and

WHEREAS, no money collected pursuant under this section shall be expended to offset a reduction in any other source of funds.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Placer County Board of Supervisors approves the formation of the Placer County Regional Auto Theft Task Force to be led by California Highway Patrol and staffed by participating law enforcement and allied agencies; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Board imposes and formally requests the State of California Department of Motor Vehicles to implement and commence collection of the one dollar (\$1) fee as specified in Vehicle Code Section 9250.14 on all non-exempt vehicles registered in Placer County and in addition, upon the implementation of the permanent trailer identification plate program, to collect the two dollar (\$2) fee as specified in Vehicle Code Section 9400.1; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the funds generated by these fees be placed in an interest-bearing Placer County Regional Auto Theft Task Force trust fund to be established by the County Auditor-Controller, and will be used to fund staff and equipment in support of this task force for the purpose of deterring, investigating and prosecuting vehicle theft; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the fee will be repealed as of January 1, 2010 unless the Legislature extends the authorization for the fee to a later date, in which case the fee will be repealed as of the date the statutory authorization for the fee expires.

