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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**A CREDIT SCAM HAS MADE ITS WAY
TO THE CENTRAL VALLEY**

Following the recent arrest of two women who tried to use bogus paystubs to gain "pre-approval" for financing at a car dealership, the Merced County District Attorney's Office is advising local businesses to be extra vigilant in processing credit applications.

The first woman to try using the fraudulent paystubs was successful in gaining "pre-approval" for a car and was able drive it off of the lot, said Deputy District Attorney Travis Colby. The financing company did decline the application due to the documents being fraudulent, but only after she made off with the car. The second woman was denied credit by the finance manager after he recognized the paystub and knew it was also fraudulent.

The paystubs were created on a website called calistubs.com and will often bear a watermark with the web address, as pictured below. The website allows users to create a paystub in a matter of seconds that may look genuine and print out the same, said Colby. Verifying employment information on a paystub prior to releasing vehicles or merchandise on a credit approval is one way to help protect yourself against fraud, he added.

If you have been a victim of this scam you can contact Anna Hazel, an investigator from Merced District Attorney's Office at (209) 385-7381 ext. 4256.