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News Release

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Tri-County Real Estate Fraud Advisory Team Convenes

District Attorney Jeffrey S. Rosell announced today that his office, in partnership with the District Attorney's Offices of Monterey and San Benito Counties, held the second meeting of the Tri-County Real Estate Fraud Advisory Team (REFAT) in Salinas. The mission of the REFAT is to develop private and public sector relationships that will facilitate the sharing of information that will protect the integrity of real estate transactions in the three counties.

Event attendees included Monterey County Assessor/Clerk Recorder Steve Vagnini, Assistant Commissioner of the Bureau of Real Estate, Rick Fong, local law enforcement investigators and officers, forensic auditors, brokers, real estate agents, lenders, and representatives from the Tri-County lending, escrow, title company and realty association communities.

Santa Cruz County Assistant District Attorney William Atkinson discussed frauds and scams related to the real estate industry. Additionally, Jeff Davi, Monterey real estate agent and former California Real Estate Commissioner, impressed upon the audience the importance of communicating with each other to identify new real estate scams. The theme of the meeting was that the attendees representing the different facets of the real estate industry should have a mechanism to work together towards protecting the integrity of their respective professions and detecting, reporting and eliminating fraud in real estate transactions.

The next REFAT meeting will be held at the San Benito County Sheriff's Office at 2301 Technology Parkway, Hollister, CA 95023 on May 12, 2016. The featured speaker will be Assistant Commissioner of the Bureau of Real Estate, Rick Fong. The meeting is open to interested people involved in the real estate and related professions.