



**U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Texas**

Johnny Sutton, U.S. Attorney

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Shana Jones, Special Assistant
Daryl Fields, Public Information Officer
(210) 384-7452

December 10, 2007

PROLIFIC COUNTERFEIT CHECK PASSER SENTENCED TO FEDERAL PRISON

United States Attorney Johnny Sutton announced that Yolanda Denise Wright, 39, of Midland was sentenced this morning to 110 months in federal prison for passing a counterfeit security. In addition, United States District Judge Robert Junell ordered that Wright make more than \$154,000 in restitution to various businesses whom she defrauded and be placed on three years of supervised release following her release from custody.

On August 30, 2007, Wright pleaded guilty to the charge. In her plea, Wright admitted that on August 17, 2006, she used a computer to make a fictitious payroll check payable to herself in the amount of \$877.41, drawn on the account of a Midland business that had been defunct for several years. She further admitted successfully cashing that check at a local liquor store. Her formal sentencing for this offense also took into account a habitual course of conduct involving check forgeries that dated as far back as 1995, which implicated in excess of 580 counterfeit checks that were passed by Wright in several Texas counties, including Midland and Ector.

Wright has fifteen (15) prior convictions for forgeries, theft by check, and related conduct at both the misdemeanor and federal level. She is currently serving a six (6) year sentence in the Colorado Department of Corrections for similar conduct in which she engaged in the Colorado Springs area in 2006 and 2007.

A several-month investigation by the Midland Police Department led to Wright's indictment in July. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney John S. Klassen.

#####