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United States Attorney's Office
District of Minnesota**

News Release

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Albert Lea woman pleads guilty to passing counterfeit currency

MINNEAPOLIS — Earlier today in federal court, a 34-year-old Albert Lea woman pleaded guilty to her role in a counterfeiting ring that targeted businesses along the Interstate-35 corridor between the Twin Cities and the Iowa border. Heather Ann Cameron pleaded guilty to one count of counterfeiting United States currency. Cameron, who was indicted along with seven co-defendants on August 2, 2011, entered her plea before U.S. District Court Judge Ann D. Montgomery.

In her plea agreement, Cameron admitted that from December of 2010 through June of 2011, she chemically washed \$5 bills and reprinted them as \$100 bills. In addition, Cameron admitted she intended to defraud businesses by passing those bills and receiving actual currency and goods in return for them.

On October 24, 2011, two co-defendants pleaded guilty in this case. Travis Allen Cameron, age 31, also of Albert Lea, pleaded guilty to one count of counterfeiting. In his plea agreement, Cameron admitted that from May through June of 2011, he produced altered bills, which were sold for about 50 cents on the dollar. Sarah Ann Wood, age 27, of Owatonna, pleaded guilty to one count of uttering altered U.S. currency. In her plea agreement, Wood admitted that on May 18 and May 22, 2011, she used altered currency at five Mankato businesses with the intent to defraud.

On October 20, 2011, three other co-defendants pleaded guilty. Eric Michael Dorman, age 34, of Fairmont, pleaded guilty to one count of counterfeiting. Dorman admitted that from May through June of 2011, he produced altered bills to be passed at retail businesses for the purpose of obtaining actual currency and goods. Meranda Lynn O'Connor, age 29, of Albert Lea, pleaded guilty to one count of uttering altered currency. O'Connor admitted that between December 21, 2010, and January 1, 2011, she passed altered currency at businesses in Bloomington and Burnsville with the intent to defraud. Vincent Dwayne Tampio, age 33, of Faribault, pleaded guilty to one count of counterfeiting. Tampio admitted that from May through June of 2011, he, too, produced altered bills to be passed at retail businesses for the purpose of obtaining actual currency and goods.

On October 14, 2011, Dustin David Hanson, age 34, of Northfield, pleaded guilty to one count of uttering altered currency. Hanson admitted that on June 16, 2011, he used altered currency at a Rochester business with the intent to defraud. The altered currency was washed \$5 bills reprinted as \$100 bills.

On September 14, 2011, Daniel Jay Wilson, age 27, of Owatonna, pleaded guilty to one count of uttering altered currency. Unlike his seven co-defendants, Wilson did not enter a plea agreement.

For their crimes, each defendant faces a potential maximum penalty of 20 years in prison. Judge Montgomery will determine the sentences at future hearings, yet to be scheduled.

This case is the result of an investigation by the U.S. Secret Service, the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, the South Central Drug Investigations Unit, and the Rice County Drug Task Force. It is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Clifford B. Wardlaw.

The Secret Service and the Minnesota U.S. Attorney's Office want to remind people how to check for counterfeit currency. For more information, visit http://www.secretservice.gov/know_your_money.shtml

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