



*United States Attorney  
Southern District of New York*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**FORMER PRINCIPAL OF AFW WEALTH ADVISERS PLEADS GUILTY  
IN MANHATTAN FEDERAL COURT TO MULTIMILLION-DOLLAR FRAUD**

PREET BHARARA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that MATTHEW D. WEITZMAN, a former principal of AFW Asset Management, Inc., doing business as AFW Wealth Advisers, Inc. ("AFW"), pleaded guilty today to fraud charges related to his misappropriation of millions of dollars from AFW investors, lying to the investors about how their money was used, and converting their money to his own use. WEITZMAN, 43, of Armonk, New York, entered his guilty plea today before United States District Judge ALVIN K. HELLERSTEIN in Manhattan federal court.

According to the Information to which WEITZMAN pleaded, the criminal Complaint previously filed in this case, and statements made during the guilty plea proceeding:

AFW is a financial planning and investment management firm with offices in Purchase, New York and Natick, Massachusetts. WEITZMAN was a co-founder of AFW, and until early April 2009 was a Certified Financial Planner at AFW. AFW had more than \$190 million in assets under management at the end of 2008, which it held at an independent brokerage firm (the "Brokerage Firm").

Between 2002 and March of 2009, WEITZMAN fraudulently obtained more than \$7 million of AFW investor funds and converted those funds to his own personal use. WEITZMAN obtained the funds by submitting forged documents to the Brokerage Firm which made it appear as if clients had authorized him to transfer their funds, and by lying to investors about how their funds would be used.

WEITZMAN pleaded guilty to one count of investment adviser fraud, two counts of securities fraud, and five counts of wire fraud. He faces a maximum sentence of five years in prison and a maximum fine of the greatest of \$10,000 or twice the gross

gain or loss from the offense on the investment adviser count; 20 years in prison and a fine of \$5 million or twice the gross gain or loss from the offense on each of the securities fraud counts; and 20 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000 or twice the gross gain or loss from the offense on the wire fraud counts. WEITZMAN is scheduled to be sentenced by Judge HELLERSTEIN on January 29, 2010.

Mr. BHARARA praised the work of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and thanked the Securities and Exchange Commission for its assistance in the investigation of this case.

Assistant United States Attorneys JOAN LOUGHNANE and VIRGINIA CHAVEZ ROMANO are in charge of the prosecution.

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