

# Department of Justice

United States Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr.  
Western District of New York

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## **PRISON SENTENCE FOR CALIFORNIA MAN ROLE IN \$76,000 COUNTERFEIT CHECK SCHEME**

BUFFALO, N.Y.--U.S. Attorney William J. Hochul, Jr. announced today that Robert Arron Shobert, 23, of Stockton, California, was sentenced to 15 months in federal prison by Chief U.S. District Judge William M. Skretny. Judge Skretny also ordered Shobert to pay \$68,353.83 in restitution to Home Depot.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Paul J. Campana, who handed the case, said Shobert pleaded guilty April 30<sup>th</sup> to passing counterfeit MoneyGram checks at Home Depot locations in Louisiana, Georgia, New Jersey, Massachusetts, New York and other states from late October 2011 until January 18, 2012. On January 18, Shobert and Michael John Grady, 55, also of Stockton California, were arrested at the Rainbow Bridge in Niagara Falls, New York. Grady also pleaded guilty in April and was sentenced by Judge Skretny to 16 month imprisonment on August 6.

Campana said Grady and Shobert inadvertently drove their car across the Rainbow Bridge towards Canada and were turned back on the Canadian side. Their vehicle was inspected on the U.S. side of the border by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Officers and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Agents. The vehicle was littered with unopened Home Depot merchandise such as locks and electrical and plumbing equipment, as well as 19 counterfeit MoneyGrams in \$500 and \$1,000 denominations. More than \$5,000 cash was seized from the car and went towards restitution. Grady also is responsible for making restitution.

U.S. Attorney Hochul said the convictions were the result of an investigation by Special Agents of the Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and

Customs Enforcement (ICE), under the direction of Special Agent In-Charge James C. Spero.