



Department of Justice

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Northern District of California

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**OAKLAND BOOKKEEPER SENTENCED TO 27 MONTHS FOR EMBEZZLING FROM SMALL
BUSINESSES**

Agreed to Pay Restitution of More Than \$500,000

OAKLAND, Calif. – An Oakland bookkeeper was sentenced yesterday to two years and three months in prison, and ordered to pay more than \$525,000 in restitution for defrauding three established small businesses, United States Attorney Melinda Haag announced.

Catherine Bullard pleaded guilty to one count of wire fraud and two counts of bank fraud. According to the plea agreement, Bullard admitted to embezzling funds from *A Step Forward*, a clothing and accessories store located in the Oakland Piedmont Avenue shopping district, *Molly B*, a fashion retailer with two locations in Berkeley, Calif., and *Monsoon Corporation*, a custom jewelry establishment in the Montclair neighborhood of Oakland, between 2003 and 2010 while working as a bookkeeper. Bullard admitted to depositing in her own personal bank accounts checks that were intended for third party vendors. Bullard agreed to pay restitution to her former clients in the amount of \$525,136.78.

Bullard, 38 of Oakland, was indicted by a federal grand jury on July 15, 2010. She was charged with four counts of wire fraud and five counts of bank fraud. The sentence was handed down by U.S. District Court Judge Sandra Brown Armstrong following a guilty plea on one count of wire fraud, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1343, and two counts of bank fraud, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1344. Judge Armstrong also sentenced the defendant to a five-year

period of supervised release. Judge Armstrong also ordered the defendant to liquidate her IRA account and to begin making immediate restitution payments. The defendant will begin serving her sentence on Oct. 28, 2011.

Joshua Hill is the Assistant U.S. Attorney who prosecuted the case with the assistance of Vanessa Vargas. The prosecution is the result of an investigation by the United States Secret Service.

Further Information:

Case #: CR-10-0542-SBA

A copy of this press release may be found on the U.S. Attorney's Office's website at www.usdoj.gov/usao/can.

Electronic court filings and further procedural and docket information are available at <https://ecf.cand.uscourts.gov/cgi-bin/login.pl>.

Judges' calendars with schedules for upcoming court hearings can be viewed on the court's website at www.cand.uscourts.gov.

All press inquiries to the U.S. Attorney's Office should be directed to Jack Gillund at (415) 436-6599 or by e-mail at Jack.Gillund@usdoj.gov.

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