



United States Attorney's Office District of Connecticut Press Release

April 3, 2008

SOUTHBURY WOMAN ADMITS STEALING \$816,129 FROM EMPLOYER

Kevin J. O'Connor, United States Attorney for the District of Connecticut, announced that LESLIE TAVOLACCI, 56, of Grasslands Road, Southbury, waived her right to indictment and pleaded guilty today before United States District Judge Stefan R. Underhill in Bridgeport to one count of wire fraud and one count of income tax evasion.

According to documents filed with the Court and statements made in court. TAVOLACCI was a part-time employee of *RZM Imports, Inc.* of Southbury. As part of her duties, TAVOLACCI opened and sorted incoming mail, and then deposited checks received by *RZM Imports, Inc.* from customers into *RZM's* bank account. In pleading guilty, TAVOLACCI admitted that she unlawfully took a large number of checks payable to *RZM Imports, Inc.* and deposited them into other checking accounts she had opened under the *RZM Imports Inc.* name. She then withdrew the money from these accounts, usually using bank debit cards, and used the funds for her own use and enrichment. Through this scheme, TAVOLACCI embezzled approximately \$816,129 between 1997 and 2004.

With regard to the tax charges, TAVOLACCI admitted that, on April 15, 2004, she a filed joint Federal individual income tax return, Form 1040, for the tax year 2003, with her husband in which she stated that their joint taxable income for the calendar year 2003 was \$95,197, and that they owed \$7,321 in income tax. In truth, their joint taxable income that year was \$240,265 and they owed an income tax of \$42,898.

Judge Underhill has scheduled sentencing for June 20, 2008, at which time TAVOLACCI faces a maximum term of imprisonment of 25 years and a fine of up to \$350,000.

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Internal Revenue Service – Criminal Investigation Division. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney James G. Genco.

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