



COUNTY OF YOLO
OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
JEFF W. REISIG, DISTRICT ATTORNEY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: March 26, 2025 **Contact:** Melinda Aiello, Chief Deputy District Attorney
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**PROP 36: DISTRICT ATTORNEY’S RETAIL CRIME “FASTPASS” PROGRAM
SECURES CONVICTION UNDER NEW FELONY PROP 36 LAW**

(Woodland, CA) – On March 25, 2025, Kenneth Matthews, of Woodland, pled no-contest to several felony theft-related crimes, including a new law created by California’s voter-initiative, Prop 36. Matthews pled no-contest to Retail Theft with Two or More Prior Convictions, Grand Theft, and Unlawful Use of Personal Identifying Information with a Prior Conviction. Additionally, Matthews admitted to eight prior qualifying convictions. Per the terms of the plea, Matthews will be sentenced on May 20, 2025, at 9am in Department 10 of the Yolo Superior Court to 3 years 4 months local prison.

These convictions stem from Matthews’ repeated thefts in Yolo County from The Home Depot, Target, and the unauthorized use of credit cards belonging to a Woodland resident. At several Home Depot stores, between July and December of 2023, Matthews was caught on surveillance cameras ticket-switching on numerous occasions, whereby Matthews would scan a lower-priced item in place of the higher-dollar item he had selected. Often paying less than a few dollars for merchandise worth thousands, Matthews’ scheme was caught by The Home Depot loss prevention team, who then submitted their reports directly to the Yolo County District Attorney’s Office through the FastPass program, and charges were filed in March of 2024.

On February 26, 2024, Woodland Police received a report of credit card fraud from a local resident. The investigation led them to Matthews, who had unlawfully obtained the victim’s credit and bank cards. Matthews used the cards several times, charging around \$1000 on the victim’s cards in just one day. Matthews also had a prior conviction for unlawful use of personal identifying information. Charges for this incident were also filed in March of 2024.

While those cases were pending and Matthews was out on bail, California voters passed Prop 36. Aimed at addressing the retail theft crisis by increasing penalties for repeat thieves, the new laws went into effect on December 18, 2024. Just two days later, on December 20, 2024, Matthews was arrested during a retail theft blitz operation conducted by the California Highway Patrol’s Valley Division at Target in Woodland. He was observed ticket-switching, paying only \$2.17 for around \$200 worth of merchandise. Matthews was stopped by CHP as he exited the store with the

unpaid merchandise and arrested after a record-check revealed that Matthews has numerous qualifying convictions, making the conduct a felony offense.

District Attorney Jeff Reising said, "California voters have spoken by an overwhelming majority, passing Prop 36 by nearly 70%, calling for change and accountability for repeat theft offenders. This case is just one example that demonstrates the need for the changes that voters have rightfully demanded. The Yolo County District Attorney's Office will continue to fight to ensure that the voters' will is done by holding serial thieves accountable in a meaningful way to combat the retail theft crisis."

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