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For Immediate Release

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## Two Men Sentenced in Organized Retail Theft at Sunglass Huts and Other High-End Stores

*Total Reported Loss is More than a Quarter Million Dollars*

San Diego County District Attorney [Summer Stephan](#) announced today that two men were sentenced for a series of brazen organized retail theft crimes where multiple Sunglass Hut store locations were targeted, resulting in a reported loss of \$238,847. Hundreds of pairs of sunglasses were stolen from nine Sunglass Hut store locations, some of which were targeted more than once. The defendants also targeted other high-end stores, stealing more than \$4,000 in shoes from Nordstrom Rack, more than \$7,000 in merchandise from Bloomingdales, and over \$6,000 in jackets from Burberry.

Both defendants Ernesto Louis Cruz, 27, and Jordan Guzman Lopez, 27, who pleaded guilty to robbery and grand theft charges, were sentenced to three years and eight months in state prison.

**“This prosecution and prison sentence should serve as a warning that we’re holding organized retail theft crime rings accountable for the harm to retailers, their employees and community who are often traumatized by these crimes,”** said DA Stephan. **“Unfortunately, this is another example of ‘smash and grab’ robberies that have been on the increase in the past five years. Organized criminal rings steal large amounts of goods from businesses of all types and sizes with the intent to resell them, particularly through unregulated online marketplaces. A recent change in the law will bring a much needed fix to outdated state and federal laws that allow the unregulated sale of stolen goods online and provide little recourse to stop repeat offenders.”**

DA Stephan has taken a tough stance against organized retail thieves and is continuing to explore additional ways to hold these criminals accountable amid high-profile thefts across California. Stephan participated in two national discussions to strategize ways to stop organized retail crime last year: one roundtable discussion with the Retail Industry Leaders Association and the National District Attorneys Association, and a national virtual panel discussion with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Beginning in 2019, with the passage of California’s Organized Retail Theft Law (PC 490.4), the San Diego County District Attorney’s Office began a partnership with the California Highway Patrol’s Organized Retail Theft team of special investigators. Since that time, several successful prosecutions have occurred. Crews of thieves coming to San Diego from other parts of the California have been prosecuted in a single case for all crimes they committed against retail stores up and down the state, allowing prosecutors to hold the defendants more accountable for the breadth and history of their crimes.

Deputy District Attorney Steven Nguyen, from the DA's Economic Crimes Division, prosecuted this case. The DA's Economic Crimes Division is responsible for prosecuting a wide variety of wrongdoing, including complex fraud, organized retail theft, cybercrimes, real estate fraud, consumer, and environmental protection crimes.

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**About the San Diego County District Attorney's Office**

*The San Diego County DA's Office prosecutes all felony crimes in the county and misdemeanor crimes committed outside the City of San Diego. The office files about 40,000 criminal cases a year and balances prosecution with numerous crime prevention programs. District Attorney Summer Stephan leads the office of more than 1,000 dedicated employees who pursue fair and equal justice, and support victims daily across San Diego County.*