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**ELDERLY BRONX WOMAN PLEADS GUILTY TO STEALING NEARLY \$655,000
IN SOCIAL SECURITY AND HRA BENEFITS
Defendant Sentenced to Five Years' Probation, Ordered to Pay Restitution**

Bronx District Attorney Darcel D. Clark today announced that a 77-year-old Bronx woman has pleaded guilty to illegally collecting Social Security and Human Resources Administration benefits for decades, using multiple fake identities to claim benefits. She was sentenced to five years' probation and was ordered to pay back the money, most of which was spent gambling at a casino.

District Attorney Clark said, "The defendant collected money under three different names, and carefully orchestrated a scheme to collect benefits she was not entitled to. The defendant was caught after she attempted to renew her driver's license, and the Department of Motor Vehicles' facial recognition software determined the defendant had multiple identities."

Sharon MacDermott, Special Agent in Charge of the Social Security Administration Office of the Inspector General, New York Field Division, said, "This sentencing should stand as a warning to those who are thinking of defrauding the Social Security Administration to receive benefits – we will hold you accountable. The Office of the Inspector General will continue to work to ensure the integrity of SSA's programs, which provide a critical safety net for those who qualify." Special Agent in Charge MacDermott thanked the Bronx District Attorney's Office, and law enforcement partners for their efforts leading to today's sentencing.

District Attorney Clark said the defendant, Carmen Soto, 77, AKA Gloria Sanchez, AKA Carmen Maldonado, was sentenced today to five years of probation by Bronx Supreme Court Justice Jeffrey Rosenblueth. Soto pleaded guilty to second-degree Grand Larceny on May 11, 2022.

According to the investigation by the Bronx District Attorney's Office and the Office of the Inspector General, Soto defrauded the city's Human Resources Administration of \$266,479.40 and the United States Social Security Administration of \$388,322.24. In 1960, Soto was issued three Social Security numbers, under the names Carmen Soto, Gloria Sanchez, and Carmen Maldonado. The defendant applied for Social Security under all three names, eventually getting approved for



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Social Security in 1994 under the Sanchez and Maldonado aliases. She also obtained drivers licenses or non-driver IDs under all names. Between November 4, 1993 and April 1, 1996, the defendant applied for and received HRA benefits under multiple identities.

Soto subsequently opened two separate bank accounts to receive Social Security payments and well as two PO boxes. She also applied for and obtained passports under her name and aliases. Soto was caught after having her driver's license renewed. The DMV used facial recognition software revealing her multiple identities.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Samantha Sizemore of the Economic Crimes Bureau, under the supervision of Michelle Milanese, Deputy Chief of the Economic Crimes Bureau; and Herman Wun, Chief of the Economic Crimes Bureau, and under the overall supervision of Denise Kodjo, Deputy Chief of the Investigations Division; and Wanda Perez-Maldonado, Chief of the Investigations Division.

District Attorney Clark thanked Trial Preparation Assistant Olawunmi Ajibola, and Principal Accountant Investigator Je T'aime Mann.

District Attorney Clark also thanked NYPD Detective Eric Bolger and Sergeant William Planeta from the NYPD Financial Crimes Specialty Section, Document Fraud Squad.

District Attorney Clark thanked Special Agent Mark Balsam of the Social Security Administration New York Field Division, Associate Fraud Investigator Sarah Zaveloff of the Human Resources Administration, and Senior Investigator Doug Jones of the NYS Department of Motor Vehicles, Division of Field Investigation, Bronx Office.

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