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Press Release

ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE

Anchorage Women Charged with Defrauding the Permanent Fund Dividend Program

Anchorage resident Carolyn Owens (62) allegedly submitted PFD applications for her adult daughters while they were living in another State for over 10 years. In total, Carolyn and Akilah Owens received over \$50,000.00.

The original charging documents allege that Carolyn Owens filled out, signed, and submitted PFD applications for her adult daughters Akilah and J.R. without disclosing that Akilah had been living in Texas between 1997 and 2008, and that J.R. had moved to Texas in 1986 and has not returned to live in Alaska since that time. As a result, the State alleges that Akilah received \$20,170.28 from the applications submitted in her name between 1997 and 2009, and Carolyn Owens received a total of \$33,321.97 from the applications submitted in J.R.'s name between 1986 and 2013.

Carolyn and Akilah Owens have been indicted on charges of Unsworn Falsification in the First Degree, Theft in the Second Degree, and Scheme to Defraud.

The crime of Scheme to Defraud relates to conduct constituting of a scheme to obtain \$10,000 or more by false or fraudulent pretenses and is a class 'B' felony. If convicted, Carolyn and Akilah Owens face a possible maximum penalty of a definite term of imprisonment of ten years and a maximum fine of \$100,000. The crime of Unsworn Falsification in the First Degree relates specifically to providing false information on an application for the Permanent Fund Dividend. Unsworn Falsification in the First Degree and Theft in the Second Degree each carry a maximum penalty of a definite term of imprisonment of five years and a maximum fine of \$50,000. Both First-Degree Unsworn Falsification and Second-Degree Theft are class 'C' felonies.

An indictment is only an allegation and is not evidence of guilt. All defendants are presumed innocent and are entitled to a fair trial at which the government must prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

This investigation was conducted by the Criminal Investigations Unit of the State of Alaska Department of Revenue, which is the agency tasked with investigating fraud against the Permanent Fund Dividend Program.

CONTACT: Assistant Attorney General Lisa Kelley @ (907) 269-6250 at the Office of Special Prosecutions.