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**LONG ISLAND WOMAN IS SENTENCED IN HATE CRIME FOR TARGETING
93-YEAR-OLD QUEENS MAN IN \$800,000 MORTGAGE FRAUD SCHEME**

Receives Two To Six Years In Prison

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown today announced that a former Long Island resident has been sentenced under New York State's Hate Crime Law for stealing hundreds of thousands of dollars from a 93-year-old Queens man suffering from Alzheimer's disease by fraudulently refinancing a property that he owned in Bayside to steal its equity and by using a "straw buyer" to steal his primary residence in Jamaica, Queens.

District Attorney Brown said, "Under the provisions of New York State's Hate Crimes Act of 2000, enhanced charges can be filed when a defendant commits a larceny and selects his or her victim because of their age which is defined as being 60 years of age or older. In this particular case, the defendant befriended and took advantage of an elderly, confused man. Crimes against the elderly – whether they involve physical or, in this case, financial harm – are despicable because the victims are often lonely and vulnerable. Today's sentence reflects our lack of tolerance for those who would prey on the elderly. The victim in this case passed away last Christmas Eve at age 94."

The District Attorney identified the defendant as Alexandra Gilmore, 37, formerly of 14 East Grove Street in Massapequa and presently of 1550 Clark Street in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. She pleaded guilty to two counts of second-degree grand larceny as a hate crime earlier this month and was sentenced today by Queens Supreme Court Justice Barry Kron to 2 to 6 years in prison. The case against Gilmore's co-defendant, Rebecca Tharpe, 31, of 44 Third Street in Brentwood, Long Island, is still pending. She is also charged with second-degree grand larceny as a hate crime.

District Attorney Brown said that, according to the charges, between June 14, 2004, and April 10, 2006, Gilmore befriended Artee McKoy, 93, of 146-04 116th Avenue in Jamaica, a retired barber who had been a good friend of her deceased father, and took advantage of McKoy's diminished mental capacity to twice refinance a property he owned at 209-47 45th Drive in Bayside and to sell his Jamaica, Queens, home.

The District Attorney said that the scheme began on July 6, 2004, when Gilmore refinanced the Bayside property with New Century Mortgage for \$150,000. Realizing how much more equity could be drained from the property, Gilmore orchestrated a second refinancing of the property – this time for \$420,000. In order to carry out her scheme, Gilmore submitted a letter to New Century Mortgage, falsely

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claiming that she was McKoy's daughter and that he was refinancing the property in order to make cash gifts to his children.

Thereafter, Gilmore opened an account in her name and – unbeknownst to McKoy – in his name at Commerce Bank in Massapequa and directed that all account statements be sent to her house. A review of bank records by the District Attorney's office revealed that Gilmore withdrew more than \$100,000 from the account on July 13, 2005, four days after an unendorsed check for \$129,268 had been deposited into the account and cleared and that, several months later, she withdrew additional funds from the account after a second check – this time for \$222,160 – had been deposited and cleared.

Furthermore, Gilmore stole McKoy's Jamaica residence between August 12, 2005, and September 9, 2005, by allegedly soliciting an acquaintance, Rebecca Tharpe, as a "straw buyer" to purchase the property. McKoy's signature was forged on a contract of sale – between him as the seller and allegedly Tharpe as the buyer – that was then used, along with other false information, to obtain a mortgage on the property. The house was eventually sold for \$395,000, of which Tharpe allegedly received \$102,000 and Gilmore received more than \$200,000 in proceeds, including a \$97,000 check that had been made payable to McKoy and an additional \$130,000 which she secured by setting up a real estate company and falsely claiming to have been owed the money from a previous mortgage loan on the property.

District Attorney Brown said that, according to bank records, a few initial monthly mortgage payments were made on the property before payment ceased all together and the house went into foreclosure. A civil court case is presently pending before Supreme Court Justice Howard Lane. The Bayside property has also been forced into foreclosure proceedings.

The investigation was conducted by Detective Oniel Miller of the NYPD's Queens District Attorney's Squad under the supervision of Sergeant Frank Horvath and the overall supervision of Captain John M. Zanfardino. Former Detective Ketty Larco, of the District Attorney's Detective Squad, also assisted in the investigation, under the supervision of Sergeant John Kenna, Lieutenant Robert Burke and the overall supervision of Chief Lawrence J. Festa and Deputy Chief Albert D. Velardi.

Assistant District Attorney Allison P. Wright, of the District Attorney's Economic Crimes Bureau, prosecuted the case under the supervision of Gregory Pavlides, Bureau Chief, and Christina Hanophy, Deputy Bureau Chief, Kristen Kane, Chief of the Elder Fraud Unit, and the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney Peter Crusco and Deputy Executive Assistant District Attorney Linda Cantoni of the Investigations Division.

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Note to Editors: Press release e-version posted on www.queensda.org