



December 7, 2016

Anchorage Residents Charged With Cashing Forged PFD Checks

(ANCHORAGE, Alaska) – On December 2, 2016, four Anchorage residents were arraigned on felony charges for cashing PFD checks that had been stolen and subsequently altered to reflect their names as payee.

- Jessie Wolfe-Aragon (25) was charged with one count of Forgery in the First Degree and Theft in the Second Degree;
- Jafra Monique White (33) was charged with one count of Forgery in the First Degree and Theft in the Second Degree;
- Taci Lynn Pfingsten (31) was charged with two counts of each Forgery in the First Degree and Theft in the Second Degree; and
- Chengmeng Xiong (28) was charged with two counts of each Forgery in the First Degree and Theft in the Second Degree, and one count of Theft in the Third Degree.

The charges allege that each of the above-named individuals negotiated one or more PFD treasury warrants that they knew had been stolen and altered to reflect their respective name as the payee. One warrant was negotiated at a bank through a "remote deposit" application and subsequent withdrawals, three were cashed at an Anchorage area supermarket, and two were cashed at different Anchorage area department stores. Video footage of the transactions and DMV records helped to confirm the identities of the defendants, all of whom had either not applied for a 2016 PFD, or who had already received their 2016 PFDs.

Under the law, all defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty. The crime of Forgery in the First Degree, a class 'B' felony, relates, in part, to cashing a check issued by a government. If convicted, each defendant would face a maximum penalty of a definite term of imprisonment of not more than ten years and a maximum fine of \$100,000. If convicted of the crime of Theft in the Second Degree, a class 'C' felony,

each defendant would face a maximum penalty of a definite term of imprisonment of not more than five years and a maximum fine of not more than \$50,000. If convicted of the crime of Theft in the Third Degree, a class "A" misdemeanor, a defendant would face a maximum penalty of a definite term of imprisonment of not more than one year and a maximum fine of not more than \$25,000.

The 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. For more information on reporting PFD fraud, go to www.pfd.alaska.gov/fraud.

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