



UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
Eastern District of Virginia

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Fourth Person Pleads Guilty in \$2 Million ID Theft Ring

(**Alexandria, Va.**) – Claire Barker, age 46, of Brooklyn, N.Y., pled guilty today to conspiring to commit bank fraud as a participant in a nationwide identity theft ring that has resulted in a total loss of more than \$2.1 million involving at least 10 financial institutions.

Dana J. Boente, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia; Keith Fixel, Inspector in Charge of the United States Postal Inspection Service, Charlotte Division; and Jeffrey W. Irvine, Special Agent in Charge of the Washington Field Office of the United States Secret Service, made the announcement after the plea was accepted by United States District Judge T. S. Ellis, III.

Barker faces a maximum penalty of 30 years in prison when she is sentenced on Dec. 4, 2009. Nine other co-conspirators have been charged to date in this scheme, and three others have pled guilty to date.

In a statement of facts filed with her plea agreement, Barker admitted that from May through October 2008, she used fake identification and stolen bank information to impersonate victims and make split deposit transactions – depositing a check drawn on the bank account of another victim, and then siphoning the money out of the falsely inflated account. According to court documents associated with this conspiracy, the total fraud loss, including intended loss, attributed to the overall conspiracy is more than \$2.1 million. The total fraud loss attributable to Barker is \$174,000.

This case was investigated by the United States Secret Service and the United States Postal Inspection Service. Assistant United States Attorney Timothy D. Belevetz and Special Assistant United States Attorney Karen Servidea are prosecuting the case on behalf of the United States.

A copy of this press release may be found on the website of the United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Virginia at <http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/vae>. Related court documents and information may be found on the website of the District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia at <http://www.vaed.uscourts.gov> or on <http://pacer.uspci.uscourts.gov>.

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