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**NEW JERSEY MOTHER AND SON ARRESTED ON BURGLARY AND RELATED CHARGES
FOR DEED FRAUD/SQUATTING SCHEME TO STEAL FAR ROCKAWAY HOME**

*Defendants Allegedly Used Name Similarity to Acquire Bogus Title to House;
Accused Pair Face Up to 15 Years in Prison if Convicted*

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz today announced that Tanya M. Howard, 47, and her son Trevon Howard, 26, have been charged with burglary, grand larceny and other crimes for allegedly assuming a prior owner's identity in order to obtain false title papers and take possession of a home in Far Rockaway. The pair allegedly occupied the home on several occasions through September 2021, despite the rightful owners' attempts to get them out.

District Attorney Katz said, "As alleged, the defendants in this case became tenacious squatters who repeatedly forced their way into a house they did not own and obtained a false deed to steal the property from the rightful owners."

Tanya M. Howard, of Brinkerhoff Street in Jersey City, NJ, and her son Trevon Howard, of Beach 24th Street in Far Rockaway, Queens, were arraigned yesterday before Queens Criminal Court Judge Jeffrey Gershuny on a seven-count complaint charging them with burglary in the second degree, grand larceny in the second degree, offering a false instrument for filing in the first degree, three counts of identity theft in the second degree and criminal trespass in the second degree. Judge Gershuny ordered the defendants to return to Court on December 16. If convicted, Tanya and Trevon Howard each face up to 15 years in prison.

According to the charges, on several occasions in September 2021, the defendant Tanya M. Howard and her son Trevon allegedly forced their way into a house on Beach 15th Street near New Haven Avenue. The home already had two tenants, who were renting from the legitimate owners. As alleged, the female defendant claimed to own the two-story brick house. The Howards moved in with their belongings and appliances and took control of several rooms on the first floor of the home. The renters – including an elderly, disabled individual – were cut off from using parts of the house, including the kitchen and bathrooms.

Continuing, DA Katz said, on September 18, 2021, the victims – a man and his mother who are the actual owners of the property – discovered the Howards and a third individual inside the house and contacted the police to remove them. When law enforcement arrived, defendant Tanya M. Howard refused to vacate the premises and continued to insist she was the rightful owner of the house. After being arrested, the defendants allegedly returned to the home and barged inside again refusing to cede occupancy.

District Attorney Katz said, on September 2, 2021, defendant Tanya M. Howard exploited the similarity between her name and that of the prior owner - Tanya L. Howard – and allegedly filed for a new title in both her

and her son's names with the Department of Finance Business Center in Queens. The true owners of the property purchased the house from Tanya L. Howard in 2019 for \$500,000.

Continuing, on September 29, 2021, the male homeowner discovered the defendants Tanya M. Howard, her son Trevon Howard and a teenager inside the house again. He called police and the pair were again arrested.

The investigation was conducted by Detective Michael Trano of the New York City Sheriff Office.

Assistant District Attorney William Jorgenson, Bureau Chief of the District Attorney's Housing and Worker Protection Bureau, is prosecuting the case under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for the Investigations Division Gerard Brave.

Criminal complaints and indictments are accusations. A defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

Note to Editors: Archived press releases are available at www.queensda.org.

