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**JUST-RETIRED POLICE OFFICER CHARGED WITH RUNNING RENT SCAM;
OFFERED APARTMENT HE LEASED TO RAKE IN THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS**

*Defendant Charged with Grand Larceny and Other Crimes;
Faces Up to Four Years in Prison if Convicted*

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz, joined by New York City Police Commissioner Dermot Shea, announced today that Burbran Pierre, a former NYPD police officer, has been charged with grand larceny and scheme to defraud for allegedly conning nearly a dozen would-be renters out of thousands of dollars. The defendant is accused running a scam offering to rent his own rented basement apartment between December 2020 through May 2021.

District Attorney Katz said, “This defendant was an active member of law enforcement when he allegedly conned 11 people, who were just looking for a place to call home, out of an average of \$2,200 each. The defendant recently retired and relocated to another state, but he has been extradited and now faces very serious charges here in Queens County.”

Police Commissioner Shea said, “The NYPD has zero tolerance for corruption of any kind and the crimes this former officer is charged with represent a disgraceful violation of his oath of office and the public trust. Our NYPD investigators in the Internal Affairs Bureau, together with prosecutors in the Queens District Attorney’s Office, worked tirelessly to ensure a measure of justice was achieved in this case.”

Pierre, 42, of Minnesota, was arraigned today before Queens Criminal Court Judge Mary Bejarano on a complaint charging him with grand larceny in the fourth degree, and two counts of scheme to defraud in the first degree. Judge Bejarano ordered the defendant to return to Court on January 27, 2022. If convicted, Pierre faces up to four years in prison.

According to the charges, nearly a dozen people responded to a Craigslist advertisement online touting a basement apartment available for rent. On March 20, 2020, a woman spotted the ad and responded indicating she was interested in renting the basement unit on 95th Street in Ozone Park. The defendant showed the apartment to the victim, who agreed on a year-long lease and signed the paperwork. A couple weeks later, the woman used a mobile app to send Pierre \$2,300. However, when it was time to move in on June 1st, the defendant allegedly told her the previous renter had not left yet. The victim eventually asked for a refund of her \$2,300. The defendant allegedly gave her a check for the amount she was owed, but the check was returned by the bank for insufficient funds.

DA Katz said the defendant allegedly repeated this scenario with 10 other prospective renters. Just before each move-in date, Pierre would allegedly offer an excuse as to why the new renter could not move in, such as building code violations, plumbing issues, an infestation of mice or the current tenant had not yet vacated.

According to the charges, in April 2021 a woman gave the defendant \$2,400 to cover the first month's rent and security deposit. She was supposed to move in on May 1st. But as that date approached, the defendant allegedly told the victim she could not move in and told her he would not be returning her money and that she would have to sue him to get her money back. Another female victim who'd allegedly been duped tried calling the defendant only to realize he had blocked her number on his phone.

Several weeks ago, Pierre retired from the NYPD and moved to Minnesota. He was arrested in Minneapolis and returned to Queens on November 18, 2021.

DA Katz added that, if anyone believes they may have been victimized in a scheme of this nature, please call my Office at (718) 286-6560.

The investigation was conducted by the New York City Police Department's Internal Affairs Bureau, Group 12, under the supervision of Deputy Commissioner Joseph J. Reznick.

District Attorney Katz would also like to thank the New York County District Attorney's Office Police Accountability Unit for their assistance in this investigation.

Assistant District Attorney Yvonne Francis, a Supervisor in the DA's Public Corruption Bureau, is prosecuting the case, under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys James Liander, Bureau Chief, and Khadijah Muhammad-Starling, Deputy Bureau Chief, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Gerard A. Brave.

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

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