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**QUEENS WOMAN CHARGED IN 88-COUNT INDICTMENT WITH ANIMAL CRUELTY,
CRIMINAL CONTEMPT AND OTHER CRIMES**

*Three Dead Cats Among Dozens of Animals Found in Feces and Urine-Saturated Residence;
Surviving Animals Appeared to be Emaciated, Suffering from Various Preventable Ailments;
Defendant Faces Up to Two Years in Prison, if Convicted*

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced today that Elizabeth Grant, 56, has been charged in an 88-count indictment with aggravated cruelty to animals, criminal contempt and other crimes for allegedly having more than 20 dogs and cats in a filthy, two-story home in Jackson Heights. The animals did not have accessible water, were living in squalid conditions amid feces and urine-caked floors, and three cats were found dead in the home.

District Attorney Katz said, “Pets are not collectibles. They require care, adequate food and water, and a clean place to live. Sadly, this defendant is charged with doing little more than accumulating pets and failing to provide the basic sustenance for life. Three animals are dead as a result of this defendant’s alleged negligence and the others suffered from diseases and other ailments.”

Stacy Wolf, senior vice president of ASPCA Policy, Response & Engagement, said: “The severity of this recurring hoarding situation – which has resulted in the suffering of countless animals and has put a tremendous strain on local resources – shines a light on the complexities and far-reaching effects of animal hoarding and how incredibly challenging it can be to effectively address and prevent. These animals – and the rescue teams that helped bring them to safety – were exposed to severely dangerous hazards and deplorable conditions. We thank our partners at the NYPD and the Queen’s District Attorney’s Office for continuing to pursue justice in this case, and we hope to see an end to the ongoing pain this situation has caused for all of those involved over the years – animals and people alike.”

Grant, of 82nd Street in Jackson Heights, was arraigned yesterday before Queens Supreme Court Justice Toni Cimino on an 88-count indictment charging her with aggravated cruelty to animals, overdriving, torturing or injuring an animal, criminal contempt and failing to provide proper food and drink to an impounded animal. The criminal contempt charge stems from an alleged violation of a standing court order that the defendant shall not own, harbor or have custody or control of any animal through April 30, 2028. Justice Cimino ordered the defendant to return to court on September 27, 2024. If convicted, Grant faces up to two years in jail.

According to the charges, police executed a court-authorized search warrant for the defendant’s home on May 21, 2024. At the entrance there was a very strong odor of ammonia and numerous dogs could be seen on the first floor, as well as one deceased cat under a table. After entering the residence, the police officer allegedly observed feces, fur and urine on furniture, as well as the floor. There was an infestation of flies, trash and clutter

throughout the first floor and there was no clean water accessible to any of the animals.

Grant's home also showed significant signs of disrepair. The stairs were so damaged that a ladder had to be used by first responders to access the second floor. The first-floor ceiling appeared peeling and rotting due to fluid damage. The ammonia odor was so strong it caused eye irritation and members of the NYPD and the ASPCA at the scene had to wear respirators and protective clothing.

According to the criminal complaint, 26 dogs and 12 cats were rescued from the home and three deceased cats were removed. A veterinarian examination concluded that an approximately 3-year-old Shih Tzu mix was extremely underweight, had matted fur infused with urine and feces, an inflamed skin condition and a corneal ulcer on her left eye. A male Shih Tzu dog was dehydrated, emaciated and underweight. This dog was blind in his right eye, likely caused by a corneal rupture.

The veterinarian stated that the environment where the animals lived was completely inappropriate and insufficient to maintain their health. The overpowering odor made it difficult for the pets to breathe. The overcrowding, unsafe and filthy conditions exacerbated medical problems and caused suffering, discomfort and pain.

The animals were relocated to the ASPCA's Animal Recovery Center in Manhattan for immediate medical and behavioral care. Some of the animals demonstrated fearful behavior and entered ASPCA rehabilitation programs where they received specialized treatment to overcome their fear. Many of these cats and dogs have since been adopted into new, loving homes.

The investigation was conducted by police officers with the New York City Police Department's 115th Precinct.

Assistant District Attorney Justin Bobko, of the District Attorney's Animal Cruelty Prosecutions Unit, is prosecuting the case, under the supervision of Supervising Assistant District Attorney Nicole Reid, Assistant District Attorney Lauren Michalski, Section Chief of the Animal Cruelty Prosecution Unit, Assistant District Attorney Mary Kate Quinn, Bureau Chief of the Domestic Violence Bureau, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Special Prosecutions Joyce A. Smith.

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

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