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**FIVE INDICTED FOR IDENTITY THEFT AND MORTGAGE FRAUD SCHEME IN
FLUSHING**

Defendants Charged in 26-count Indictment for Stealing more than \$688,000 by Using Fake Drivers' Licenses and Social Security Cards with Homeowners' Personal Information

Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz announced that five defendants were indicted by a grand jury and variously charged with mortgage fraud, identity theft, forgery and other crimes for falsifying documents to obtain a "cash-out" mortgage of more than \$688,000 on a Flushing home that they did not own. The scheme was allegedly orchestrated by a Queens real estate broker with two of the defendants pretending to be the actual homeowners at the closing. Three corporations were also named in the indictment, and a Jane Doe defendant, whose identity is not yet known.

District Attorney Katz said: "As alleged, the defendants stole the identities of husband-and-wife homeowners, impersonated them at a closing and used fraudulent drivers' licenses and Social Security cards to take out a mortgage on the victims' home. The scheme saddled the victims with a mortgage they did not authorize and allegedly cost a Queens lender more than \$688,000. The defendants have been indicted on numerous charges for these alleged acts of mortgage fraud and identity theft and face possible prison time if convicted. I thank my Housing, Worker and Consumer Protection Bureau for their painstaking investigation into this case as we get justice for the homeowners and the mortgage lender that were harmed."

Tony Wanyiu Cheng, 56, of Bayside; Chun Kong Lau, 46, of Staten Island; Jane Doe; and Gui Li, 45, of Flushing, were indicted on charges of residential mortgage fraud in the second degree, five counts of falsifying business records in the first degree, six counts of identity theft in the first degree, one count of forgery in the second degree, two counts of criminal possession of a forged instrument in the second degree and one count of offering a false instrument for filing in the first degree. The defendants, along with Qiang Li, 59, of Flushing, were also charged with grand larceny in the second degree.

Cheng, Lau and Qiang Li were charged with two counts of money laundering in the second degree, two counts of money laundering in the fourth degree and one count of criminal possession of stolen property in the second degree. Lau and Qiang Li were also charged with one count of forgery in the second degree, one count of criminal possession of a forged instrument in the second degree and two counts of identity theft in the first degree. Three corporations associated with Cheng, CB Direct Store Inc., YW Capital LLC and MTR Development Co. LLC, were charged with two counts of money laundering in the second degree.

Cheng, Lau, Qiang Li and the corporations were arraigned yesterday before Queens Supreme Court Justice Leigh Cheng who ordered the defendants to return to court July 29.

The defendants face up to 15 years in prison, if convicted.

Gui Li and Jane Doe remain at large. Anyone with information about their whereabouts is asked to call Detective Erin Currie of the Queens District Attorney's Office Squad at 929-364-6660.

District Attorney Katz said that, according to the charges and investigation, in November 2024, Gui Li and an unidentified woman allegedly impersonated a husband and wife who legitimately owned a Flushing property during a closing for a cash-out mortgage. Tony Wanyiu Cheng, a real estate broker who allegedly oversaw the scheme, and Chun Kong Lau were both allegedly also present during the closing.

Gui Li and the unidentified woman presented the title closer with fraudulent Pennsylvania drivers' licenses and Social Security cards with the victims' personal information. Cheng was given two checks made out to the male homeowner.

One day later Lau and Qiang Li, who both allegedly impersonated the male homeowner by using a fake Maryland drivers' license with the victims' date of birth, opened a joint bank account in person at the South Flushing TD Bank. The mortgage checks totaling \$688,403 were deposited into the bank account.

After the mortgage check was deposited, some of the money was transferred by check into the three business bank accounts held by defendant Cheng. Some of the funds were then transferred electronically into Cheng's personal bank account. Cheng's personal and business accounts received more than \$269,000 of the funds. The rest of the money was transferred into other bank accounts owned by people with unknown relationships to the defendants. Once all the money was transferred out, the defendants closed the TD Bank account in January 2025.

The legitimate homeowner reported the mortgage fraud to the Queens District Attorney's Office.

The investigation was conducted by Assistant District Attorney Kathryn Ingle of the District Attorney's Housing, Worker and Consumer Protection Bureau and Detective Erin Currie of the NYPD Queens County District Attorney Squad, with the assistance of Trial Prep Assistant Chun-Wen Ko, Investigative Accountant Barak Haimoff of the Financial Analysis Unit, and Senior Intelligence Analyst Hong Man Lam of the Crime Strategies and Intelligence Bureau.

Assistant District Attorney Kathryn Ingle is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Christina Hanophy, Senior Deputy Bureau Chief, and William Jorgenson, Bureau Chief, and under the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Joseph T. Conley III.

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

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