



U.S. Department of Justice

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## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Maryland Woman Pleads Guilty to Stealing More Than \$30,000 In Checks From D.C. Government Office**

**- Cleaning Staff Member Took Checks While Working in Building -**

WASHINGTON - Yesenia E. Amaya, 19, who did cleaning work at the Economic Development and Regulation Center, a division of the D.C. Office of the Chief Financial Officer, pled guilty today to a charge stemming from the theft of more than \$30,000 in checks from the government agency, U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. announced.

Amaya, of Hyattsville, Md., pled guilty before the Honorable Gladys Kessler, in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, to one count of interstate transportation of stolen property. As part of her plea, she agreed to pay full restitution, and consented to an order forfeiting \$31,211, the total amount of the stolen checks she deposited.

Judge Kessler scheduled sentencing for July 29, 2011. Under federal sentencing guidelines, Amaya faces a sentence of up to six to 12 months of incarceration.

As part of the plea, Amaya admitted that she was employed by a building services company and worked on the evening shift cleaning the Southwest Washington offices of the Economic Development and Regulation Center. Between July 28, 2010 and November 16, 2010, she took about 30 checks from an office there. Each check had originally been made payable to the District.

According to the government's evidence, after taking the checks, Amaya added her name as a payee and took the checks to Maryland, where she deposited them into her own bank account. When investigators contacted Amaya, she admitted to the offense.

In announcing the plea, U.S. Attorney Machen commended the Special Agent who investigated the case from the FBI's Washington Field Office, as well as Special Agent John DiGravio of the D.C. Office of the Inspector General, and Sergeant Joseph Bonner of the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD). He also acknowledged the efforts of those who worked

on the case from the U.S. Attorney's Office, including Paralegals Margaret McCabe and Krishawn Graham, Assistant U.S. Attorney Scott Sroka, of the Asset Forfeiture and Money Laundering Section, and Assistant U.S. Attorney Jonathan Hooks, who is prosecuting the matter.

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