

December 18, 2007

**ROCKFORD WOMAN PLEADS GUILTY
TO SOCIAL SECURITY FRAUD**

ROCKFORD – PATRICK J. FITZGERALD, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, together with WILLIAM J. COTTER, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Office of Inspector General of the Social Security Administration, today announced:

JOAN L. JARRETT, 61, Rockford, Illinois, pleaded guilty today in federal court in Rockford, to stealing and knowingly converting to her own use \$79,152 of Supplemental Security Income (“SSI”) benefits, between 1991 and October 2005. Jarrett had been charged with the offense by an information filed in federal court on December 12, 2007. In the plea agreement entered today, Jarrett admitted that she applied for SSI benefits in 1990. Because she was not living with her husband at that time, she was eligible for SSI benefits and began receiving them. However, as she acknowledged in her plea agreement, she and her husband resumed living together in 1991, and lived together through October 2005. Jarrett admitted in her plea agreement that during that time period, she was not entitled to receive SSI benefits and that she failed to notify the Social Security Administration of that fact. She further admitted that on three occasions between 1991 and October 2005 she falsely advised the Social Security Administration that she was living apart from her husband in order to keep receiving the SSI benefits.

Jarrett faces a maximum possible penalty of ten years in prison without the possibility of parole, followed by up to 3 years of supervised release, and a fine of up to \$250,000. He must be ordered to pay \$79,152 in restitution to the Social Security Administration. The actual sentence will be determined by the United States District Court, guided by the federal Sentencing Guidelines and the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure. Sentencing of Jarrett was set by U.S. District Judge Frederick J. Kapala for April 4, 2008, at 2:30 p.m.

The case was investigated by Special Agents of the Office of Inspector General of the Social Security Administration. The case is being prosecuted in United States District Court by Assistant United States Attorney JOHN G. MCKENZIE.

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